

**Research Article**

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# **A Debate of Human Slavery in Society: An Analysis on Theory and Practice**

**Dr. Md. Tanzilul Islam<sup>1\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Department of Political Science, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Md. Tanzilul Islam

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur

Email: [tanzilul.pol@brur.ac.bd](mailto:tanzilul.pol@brur.ac.bd)

## **Abstract**

Slavery has been treated as a curse of the social system. The emergence of slavery system is a part of human civilization. From the beginning of world history, it was seen in all society. Meanwhile, the slavery system became an agent of social change in all ages. It helped to contribute to socio-economic development in society and enhanced the possibility of social change. Social structure has again been changed in the result of the slavery system. The importance of slavery should never be ignored because of providing physical contribution of the slave. Indeed, this study attempts to discuss the social system from a philosophical point of view. Aristotle, the father of Political Science, first explored the slavery theory in his writing'.

### **High Lights**

- Analyses the progression of slavery from historical practices to modern manifestations such as human trafficking and forced labour.
- Examine intellectual, ethical, and socio-economic views that either support or condemn slavery.
- Evaluates the efficacy of international laws and policies in addressing slavery.
- Examine the influence of slavery on the formation of communities, economies, and global labour systems.
- Emphasis resistance movements and initiatives aimed at abolishing slavery via education, technology, and legislative reforms.

### **Keywords**

Slavery,  
Human Society,  
Experience of  
Slavery,  
Theory,  
Practice

## Introduction

Human slavery, a historically entrenched practice, has manifested in several ways, including chattel slavery, debt bondage, and forced labor. Commencing in the 15th century, European nations, notably Portugal, Spain, Britain, France, and the Netherlands, participated in the transatlantic slave trade by instituting colonial dominion. Throughout the history of human slavery, millions of Africans were forcibly transported from their homelands to the Americas to serve the needs of landowners or the bourgeoisie. The transatlantic slave trade constituted one of the most horrific and organized manifestations of slavery in history (Williams, 1944). They were predominantly enslaved for labor on plantations, chiefly in the cultivation of crops like as sugar, tobacco, and cotton. The transatlantic slave trade persisted for decades, concluding in the 19th century, while its legacy continues to influence contemporary communities. This study endeavors to examine the contemporary existence of human slavery. Although formally abolished in numerous regions, the legacy of slavery endures, and modern instances of exploitation and human trafficking provoke discussions over their theoretical foundations and actual expressions. This study seeks to rigorously analyze the theoretical frameworks that have either defended or condemned slavery, while simultaneously evaluating its practical repercussions across many cultural contexts. Slavery, as a mechanism of coerced labor and dehumanization, has been rationalized through several ideological, economic, and racial frameworks. Aristotle's notion of natural slavery, which asserted that certain persons were intrinsically predisposed to service, and the racialized ideologies behind the transatlantic slave trade, has led to the justification of slavery through narratives of superiority and inferiority (Aristotle, Politics; Davis, 2006). Abolitionist views, grounded in Enlightenment principles of liberty, equality, and human rights, have contested these justifications, resulting in substantial social and political changes (Blackburn, 2011).

Modern slavery, while frequently less apparent, persists as a global concern, with over 40 million individuals ensnared in forced labor, human

trafficking, and exploitation (International Labour Organization, 2017). By synthesizing academic and practical viewpoints, to enhance comprehension of the lasting impact of slavery and its ramifications for modern society. It will examine the function of legal, ethical, and humanitarian frameworks in addressing slavery and advancing human dignity. This essay aims to contribute to the current discourse regarding the essence of slavery, its societal repercussions, and the actions required to eliminate it in all manifestations.

## Objectives of the Study

The extreme concentration of the present study is to examine the justification of slavery theory of Aristotle. The study attempts to provide a comparative discussion between philosophical view and modern approach of slavery system. In fact, the study gives attention to analyzing the speech of Aristotle regarding this issue. The paper attempts to search out the limitation of slavery theory as well as. Finally, the paper tries to analyze is slavery system seen today in society.

## Methodology

This Study has been conducted by descriptive manners. Qualitative analyses have been represented in this study. All data has been collected from the Secondary Sources. The relevant qualitative information collected from various books, online database, Journals, reports and other documents. In this study, it is keenly analyzed on slavery theory in terms of Aristotle's philosophy. A comparative and a critical observation have been presented here.

## Conceptual Framework:

Slave means a person who is submissive or obedient to another, who is considered the property of another (Kervin, 1999). Slavery is a social system in which people of the same blood and flesh lose their human dignity and degenerate into non-human beings. He is a man of alone. He has no right to

have a family, wife and children. In general, a slave always has to be submissive and obedient to his master. Slave as a human being has no right to speech against his master. Indeed, human entity and human rights in favour of him are absolutely denied by his master.

Philosophy means the study of knowledge of a branch in a specific academic field based on moral values, norms and ideology. It may change in the demand of time and society. Philosophy refers to the discipline concerned with question of how one should live (ethics); what sorts of things exist and what are their essential natures (metaphysics); what counts genuine knowledge and what are the correct principles of reasoning (Logic). (Philosophy: Wikipedia,2017)

A respective number of social researchers and philosophers give their opinion regarding the issue of slavery. Aristotle opined that there are two kinds of people in this world, one in terms of wisdom and ability, one class of people possesses wisdom another class of people possesses only physical strength. Those men who have wisdom can give orders. On the other hand, those people who have lack wisdom are unable to give orders, these People will obey the orders of wise and conscientious people. According to him, those who can give orders are the Lord on the other hand, those who have only physical strength and are ignorant are slaves. In his words, slaves a living possession of his master and an instrument of action. Kevin Bells said, Slavery is the worst form of theft. This theft steals a person's life, robs him of the joy of life, robs him of his energy, Steals his future and future offspring. This theft is a thousand times more heinous than stealing human property or anything. Ralph waldo said, Slavery is an institution that turns people into apes (Theresa, 2008).

### **Types of Slavery in the Human Society:**

Slavery system was an indispensable part of social system from ancient period to eighteenth century in American and European society. Many political and social philosophers believed that the slavery system helps to enrich the socio-economic development of the society. From this point of view, Aristotle

classified two types of slaves in human society i.e., natural slave and legal slave. The people who are naturally or innately short-sighted and do not have the proper qualifications to govern or give orders are considered as natural slaves. They will always be under the Lord. Aristotle opined that it is not right to imagine that the children of these natural slaves would become slaves all the time (Bowe, n.d.).

Aristotle mentions natural slaves as well as legal slaves. There is also a legal basis for slavery in the Greek society of that time. Legal slavery is usually born out of war. Aristotle Classified prisoners of war and losers as legal slaves this class of slaves is called traditional slaves in Greek society. However, there is a tendency to use force and coercion in such slavery so many do not consider such slavery to be reasonable. But Aristotle thinks this Idea is reasonable. The rationale behind his rational analysis of such slavery is that since war is the result of unethical or unjust claims. Slavery is Justified by moral standards (Barker, 1946). Aristotle says that a slave is not only the slave of his master. He surrenders all his body, mind and deeds to the master. But the duties and responsibilities of the master are very little towards him. There is no such thing as a slave's reasoning, and he is as irrational and foolish as an animal. The slave will have no such thing as his own being or freedom and he will dedicate himself completely to the service of the Lord (Dunning, W, 1970).

### **Observation on Slavery System as a Conducive Approach in the Development of Society:**

Aristotle was a person who always strongly supported the slavery system to progress social development. The theory of slavery becomes an important aspect in the philosophy of Aristotle. In this study, it is tried to explore the inner meaning of slavery and why the philosopher invented this system.

### **Slavery System as a Natural Phenomenon:**

The nature teaches us some things are good, and some things are bad. Naturally, some people are by born with merit and wisdom. Again, some people

are born with only physical strength. Aristotle said that those who possess wisdom are conscientious and representatives of the soul. On the other hand, those who have Physically strength are the representatives of body and naturally the body is subject to the soul. So, it is natural system that the soul will manage the body. Nature itself has created some as masters and some as slaves (Suda, J, 1970).

### **Ensuring Betterment of Master or Ruling class:**

Those who have that wisdom deserve to be ruled. So, if slaves are given the responsibility to complete the work of physical Labour, they will be able to do it smoothly. Not only this, with the help of meritorious Lords You can pay more attention to giving orders, especially in running the state. So, Aristotle said, "A Slave is Living possession of his master"(Dunning, W, 1970).

### **Promoting Social Development:**

Aristotle said that if the ignorant slaves were under a master, they would be able to perform and task beautifully, easily and perfectly. Because as a result, the physical strength of the slave and the Judgement of the Lord will be combined. (Gettle R, 1953)

### **Slavery System as a Doctrine of Morality:**

Aristotle said that in terms of morality strong an ignorant people will be ruled as physical and those who are possessed of wisdom and conscience will rule.

### **Slavery Theory as a State Machinery System:**

Aristotle believed that slavery was an essential prerequisite for the welfare of the state. He said that just as every industry requires machinery (Bhandari D, 2002). So, physical labor or the command of slaves is necessary to ensure the welfare of the state.

### **Disciplinary Approach on the Way of Social System:**

Aristotle believed that slavery as an approach of social system is a fundamental condition for

ensuring discipline in the society. Because if everyone does the same thing, the chain will be broken. So, in the need of discipline, someone will say, someone will listen and obey (Barman, 2014).

### **Mechanistic Approach to Policy Formulation and Implementation:**

The person who is wise should formulate the policy and the person who are ignore and not wise but belonging in physical strength should implement the policy. Because the implementation of the plan is possible only if they physical strength of the slaves is combined with the plan of the wise (Barman, 2014).

### **Slave as a Component of Safeguard for Master:**

The man who are wise should lead the country. In many cases, their life may be in danger for the sake of the country. Political system will never get success without ensuring good leadership. It is an important task to secure the life who leads the nation. From this point of view, a slave should keep attention to protect the life of his master as a safeguard.

### **Debate on Slavery System in the Society:**

This practice is the worst kind of system. which is contrary to the normal life of the people. The reasons for not supporting this practice are as follows.

(a) Slavery is a system of exploitation. In this system, the powerful elites turn the poor and weaker sections of society into their subordinates, uses as a means of acquiring resources (Kervin, 1999).

(b) Degrades man from his dignity. people no longer have people. He brought him down to the level of cattle.

(c) Slavery is a system that is a gross violation of human rights. Slave people are not established in society as human dignity, so there are no rights. But according to the UN universal Declaration of Human Rights (Orlando, 1982).

- All human beings are both free with equal dignity and rights. They are adorned with ornaments of conscience and rationality. They should have a spirit of brotherhood towards each other in all matters (Sathi, 2017).

- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of a person, there are rights. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; all forms of slavery and servitude shall be prohibited. The practice of slavery violates all the provisions of this declaration. (Tables, 1994)

(d) Slavery is the use of force or the threat of force. The origin of slavery is called power (Theresa, 2008).

(e) The practice of slavery creates a legacy of inequality and disadvantage among human beings. (Tables, 1994)

(f) Slavery is both the inspiration and the result of racism.

(g) Slavery makes people unhappy overall.

(h) The practice of slavery serves as an inspiration for gender inequality. Again, it is the result of gender inequality.

(i) Slavery perpetuates the abuse of children. (Sathi, 2017)

Samuel Johnson argued that slavery was in no way justified. Many of his writings have expressed irrefutable arguments against human slavery. such an opinion

- Slaves have been part of the race for many centuries in almost all ages. Nevertheless, there is considerable doubt as to whether slavery is a natural condition in human life.

-A person can lose his freedom by committing a crime. But that person may be deprived of the freedom of his sons and daughters because of that crime. So, Slavery can never be acceptable in any human settlement. (Sathi, 2017)

## Conclusion

Aristotle's slavery theory is incompatible with modern society. No philosopher has ever supported this doctrine in any human reason, nor will anyone support it. Now or in the future yet it is unfortunate that a wise philosopher like Aristotle would want to perpetuate slavery anyway (Barman, 2014). People as human beings are equal by birth. This everlasting policy on human beings has led society to abolish slavery, and the world was freed from the curse of slavery by the nineteenth century. It is true that, however, that Aristotle's slavery was a social image of the time (Ralph, 1979). But human slavery has not ceased yet. In fact, two classes have been clearly seen in the modern era, i.e., rule and ruled. On the contrary, capitalists always attempt to exploit labor in industrial society. Though slavery system is not properly seen in the modern society in philosophical point of view, socio-economic exploitation again creates a proletariat class in the reign of capitalism. According to Karl Marx, a proletariat class has no right to speech and freedom of action as well as movement like a slave. It is true that the slavery system helped to change the social structure during the ancient and medieval period. It helped to promote materialistic development at that time, but this approach should never be accepted in modern society.

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