

1973-06-14d: [MERITOCRACY] Rawl's Theory of Justice.

[p. 74] The notion of "natural aristocracy"--i.e, a system of social and economic inequalities wherein it works to everyone's advantage, and are attached to positions and offices open to all, in which the "difference principle" prevails (as opposed to the principle of efficiency). It is justified only when less would be had by those below, if less were given to those above.

This formulation of the aristocratic ideal is derived from Santayana's account of aristocracy in Ch. IV of *Reason and Society*, 1905, 109f. Rawls also acknowledges that Robert Rodes pointed out to him that natural aristocracy fell within his categories, and that an ideal feudal system might also try to fulfill the difference principle.

This is not Rawls' preference, of course. He moves one step further, and by considering the matter of "inequality of fair opportunity" (as opposed to just open to talents, upon which the natural aristocracy is based), arrives at what he calls Democratic Equality wherein no advantage of inequality is allowed unless the least favored person (representative type) gains from it (as opposed to the average gain of the utilitarians.)