

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

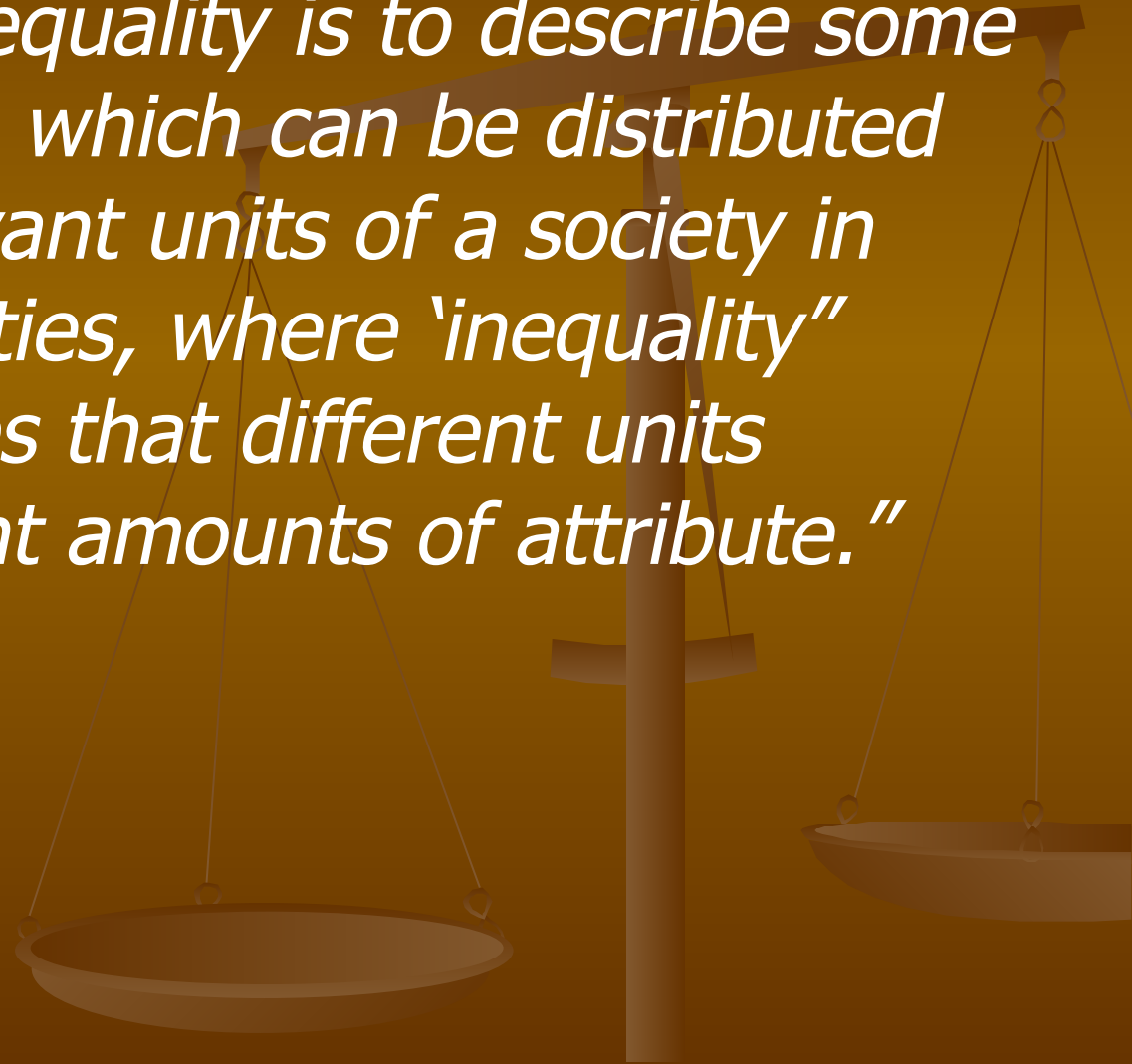


1. STRUCTURE OF INEQUALITY



Inequality

- *“To speak of inequality is to describe some valued attribute which can be distributed across the relevant units of a society in different quantities, where ‘inequality’ therefore implies that different units possess different amounts of attribute.”*



Inequality



- Irregularly distributed resources valued by everybody in this society.
- Everybody wants to have them but not all are able to get them.
- Unequal distribution of valued rewards or opportunities for different status positions or groups of positions within a society.

SUBJECTS OF INEQUALITY

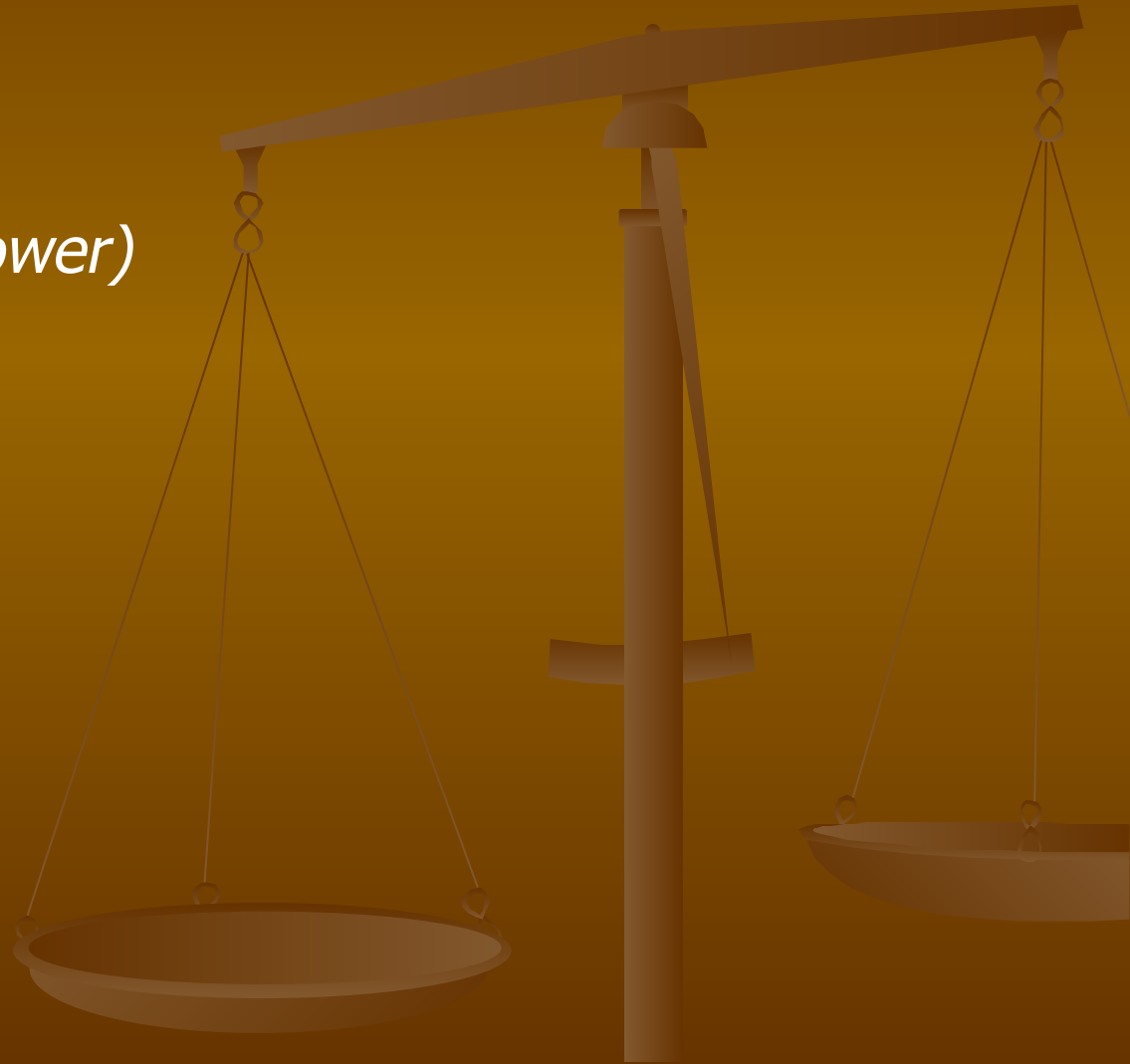
The units can be

- *Individuals,*
- *families,*
- *social groups,*
- *communities,*
- *nations .*



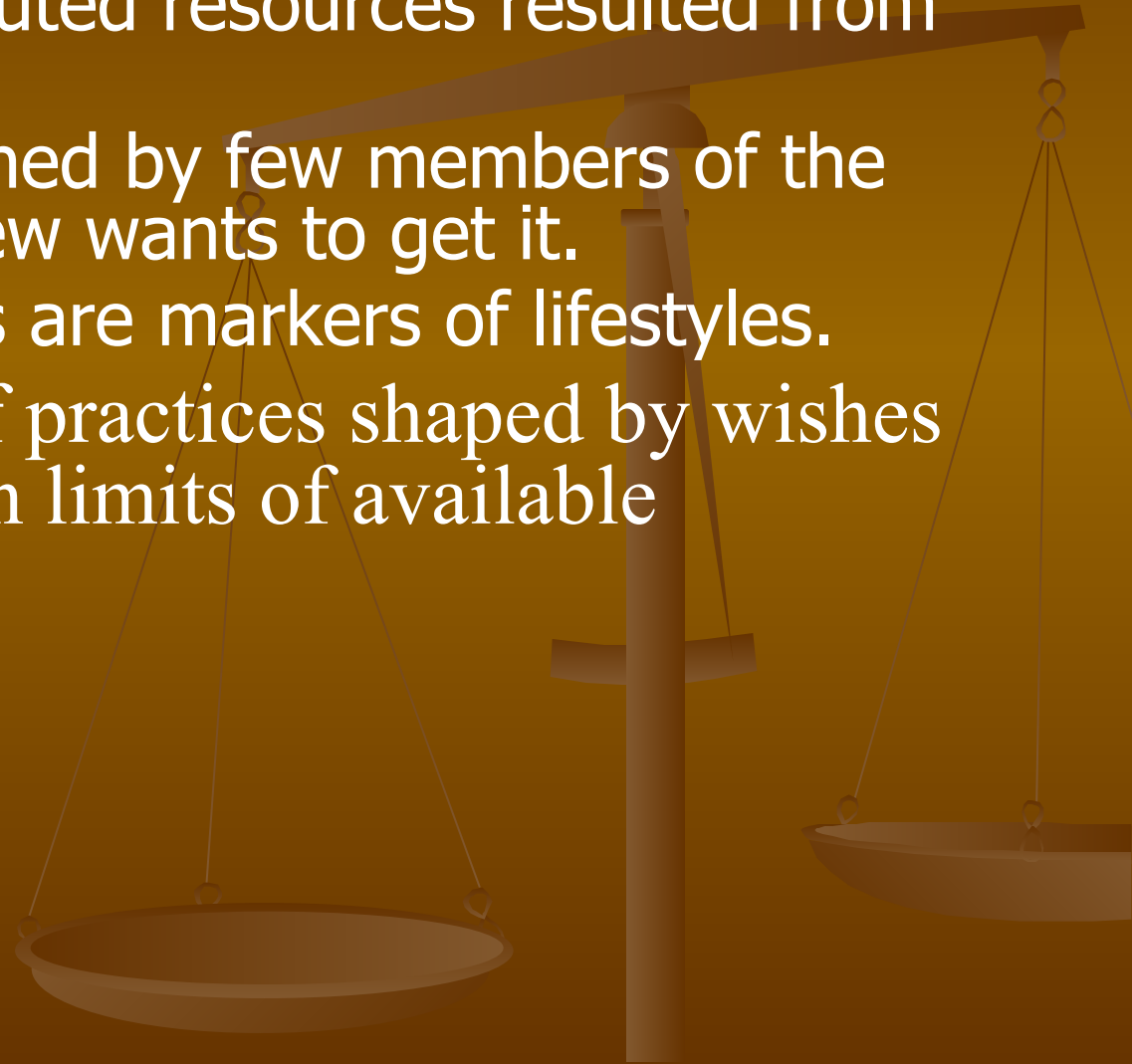
OBJECTS OF INEQUALITY

- *power*
- *capital (economic power)*
- *income*
- *wealth*
- *prestige*
- *Knowledge*
- *living conditions*
- *security and risk*
- *etc.*

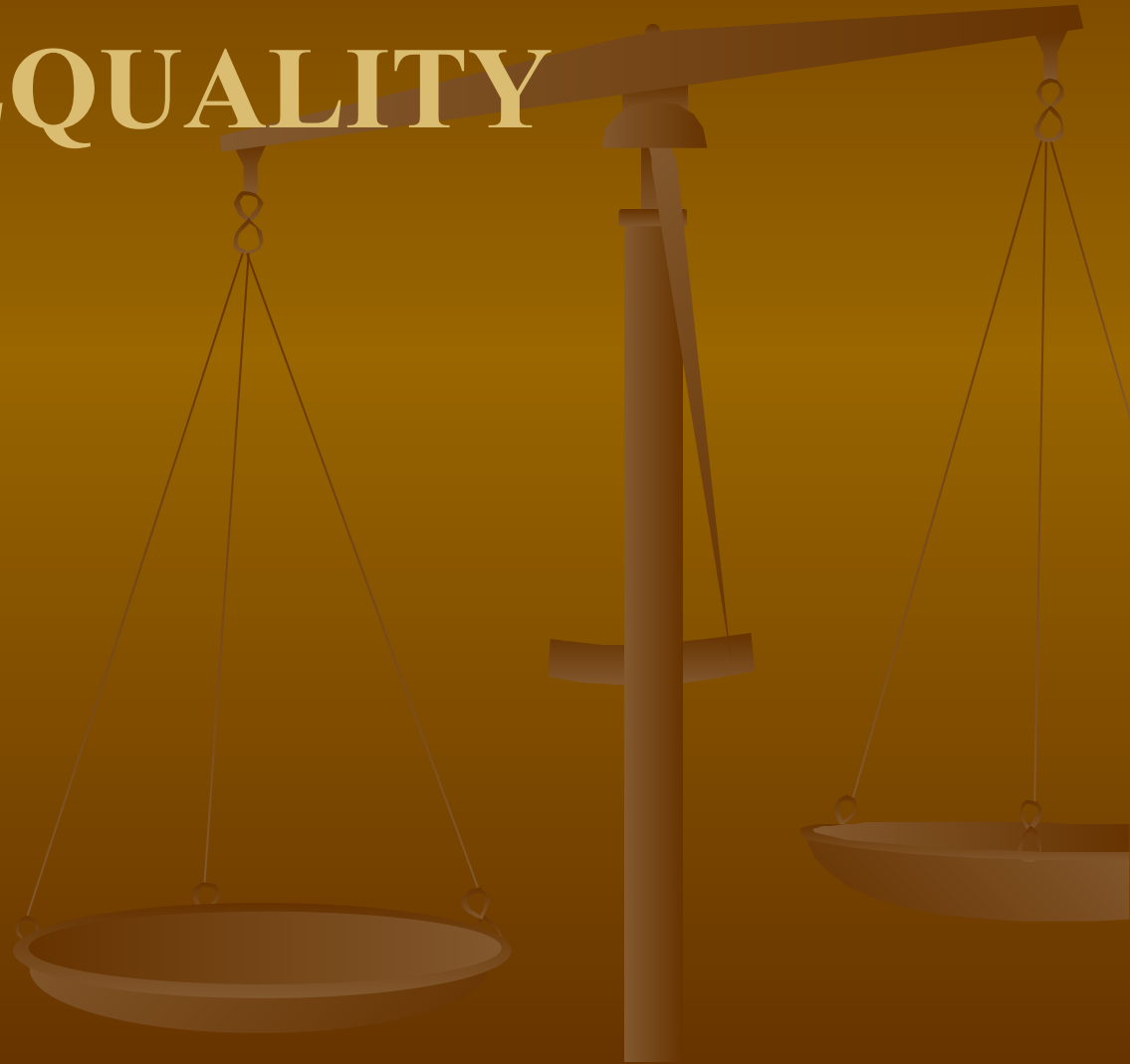


SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS

- Irregularly distributed resources resulted from taste distinctions.
- This object is owned by few members of the society but only few wants to get it.
- Social distinctions are markers of lifestyles.
- It is a structure of practices shaped by wishes and desires within limits of available opportunities.



2. EXPLANATION OF INEQUALITY



- **Is an Inequality a Necessary Feature of modern societies?**



Inequalities in Material Welfare: Achievement versus Exploitation

Achievement model of income determination

Income acquisition is a process of individuals acquiring income as a return for their own efforts, past and present.

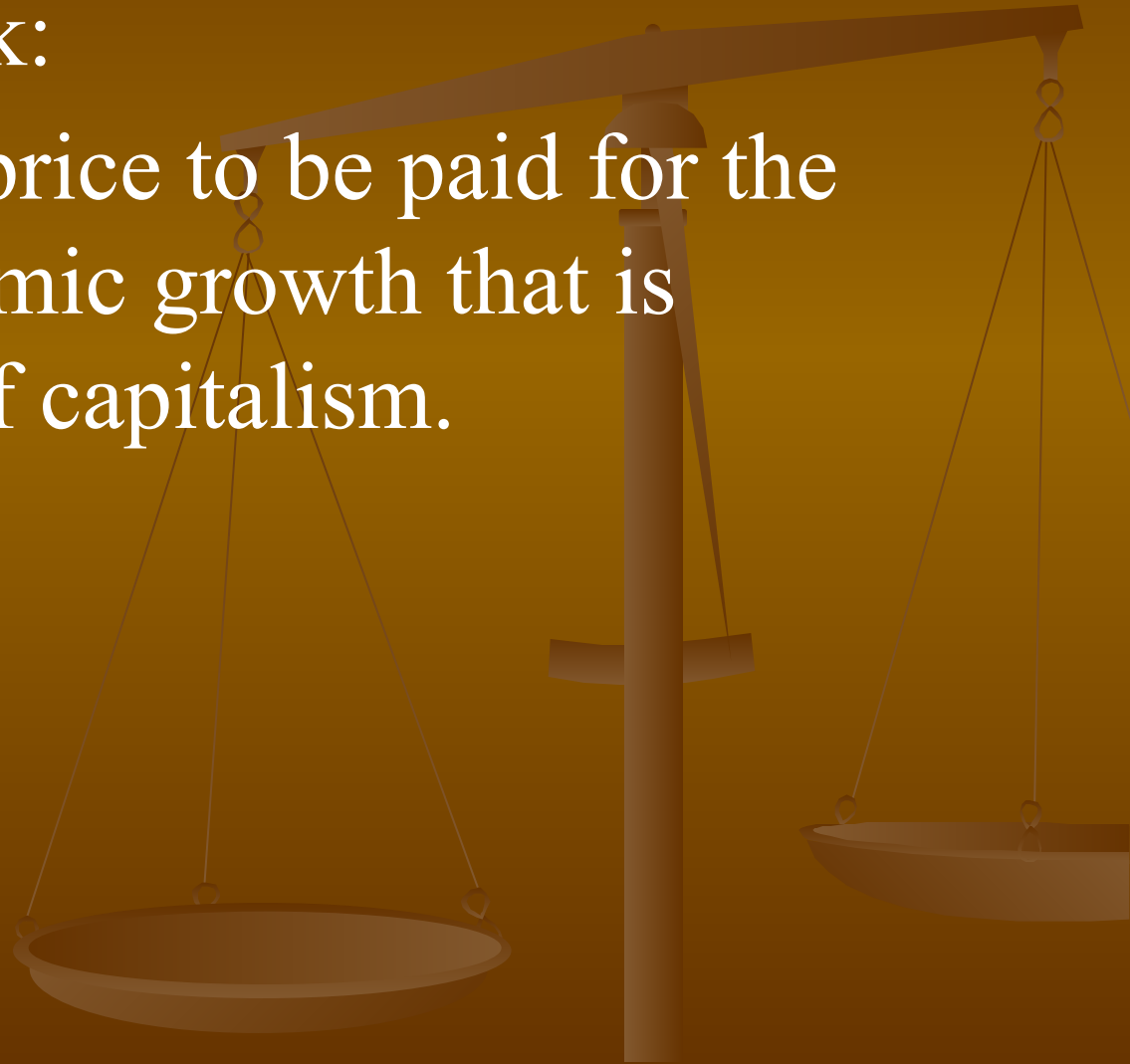
Exploitation models

Through a variety of different mechanisms one group of people can appropriate the fruits of labor of another group.

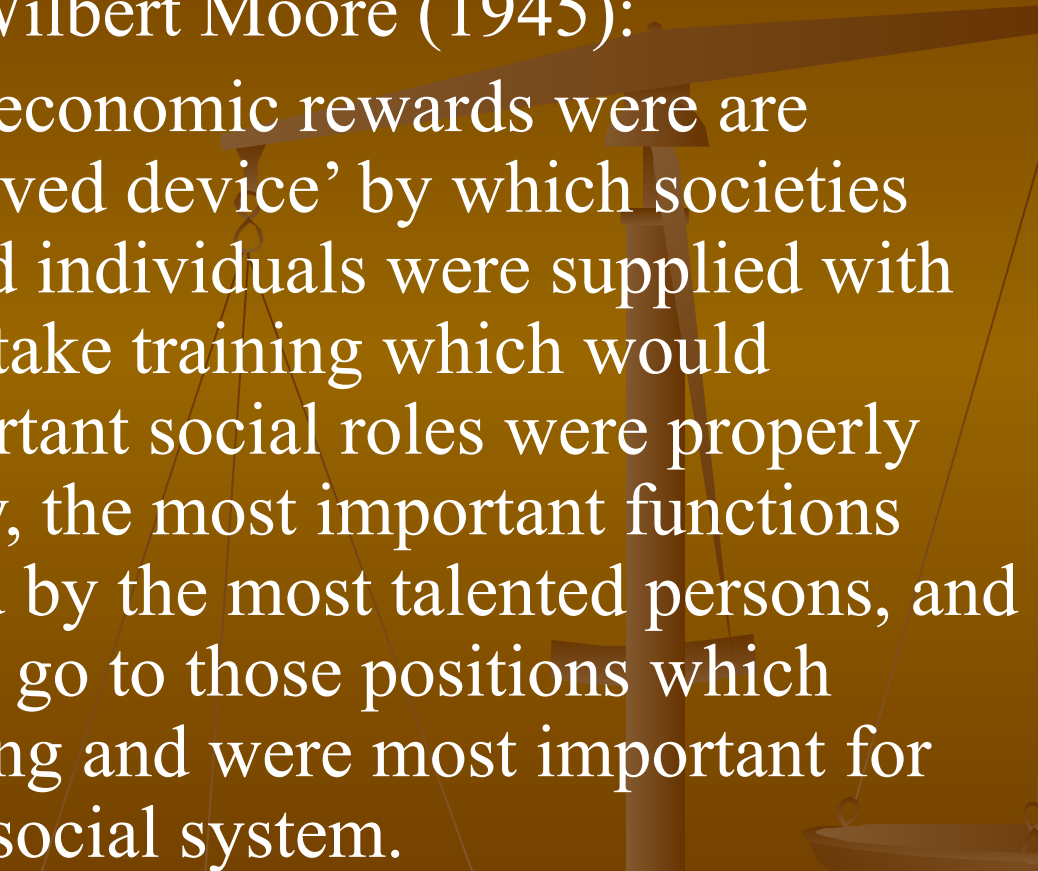
Liberals' position

- Friedrich Hayek:

Inequality is the price to be paid for the dynamic economic growth that is characteristic of capitalism.

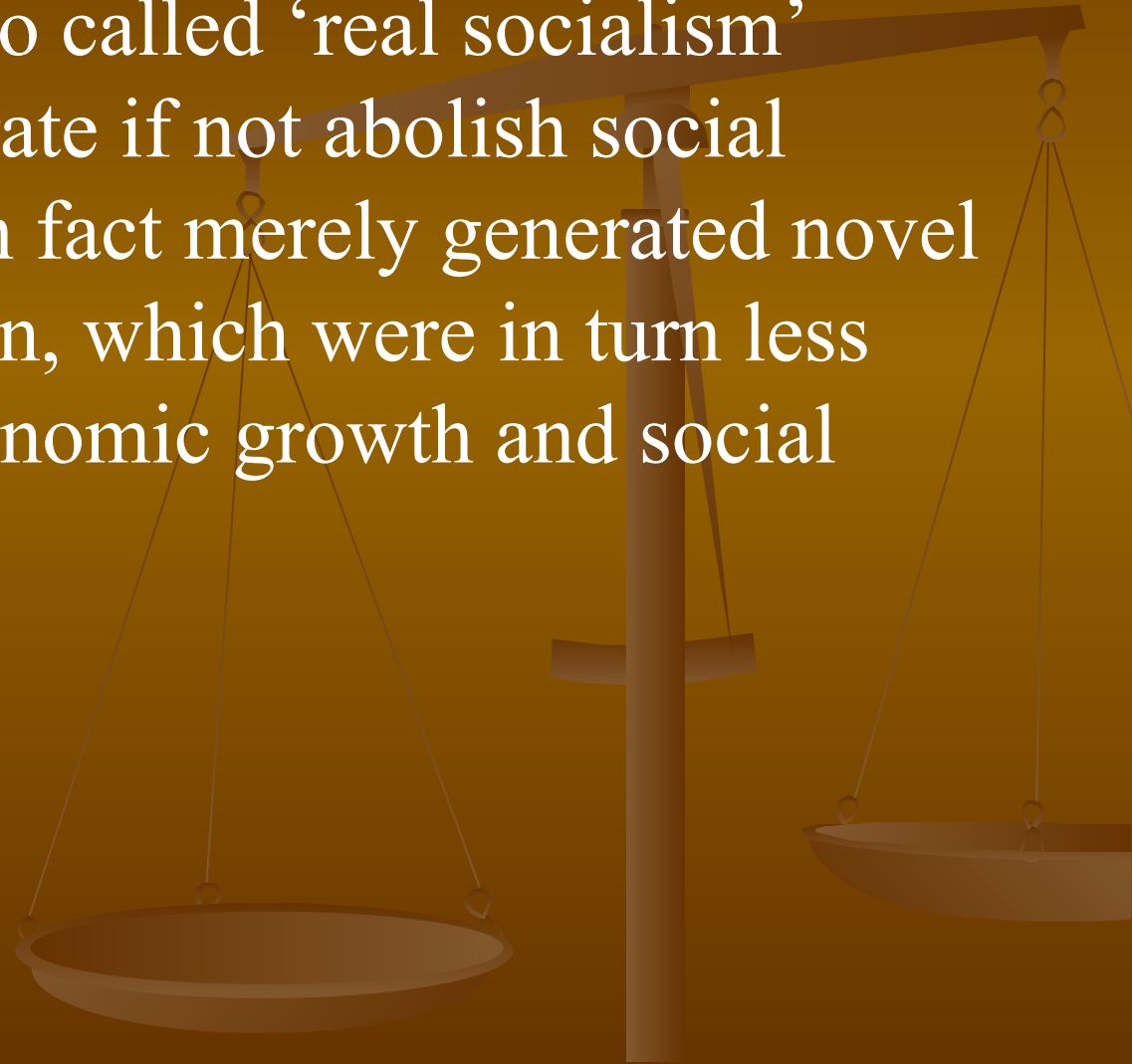


A FUNCTIONALISTS' RATIONALE FOR INEQUALITY

- Kingsley Davis & Wilbert Moore (1945):
 - Unequal social and economic rewards were are 'unconsciously evolved device' by which societies ensured that talented individuals were supplied with motivation to undertake training which would guarantee that important social roles were properly fulfilled. In this way, the most important functions would be performed by the most talented persons, and the greatest rewards go to those positions which required most training and were most important for maintenance of the social system.
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COMMUNISTS' EXPERIENCE

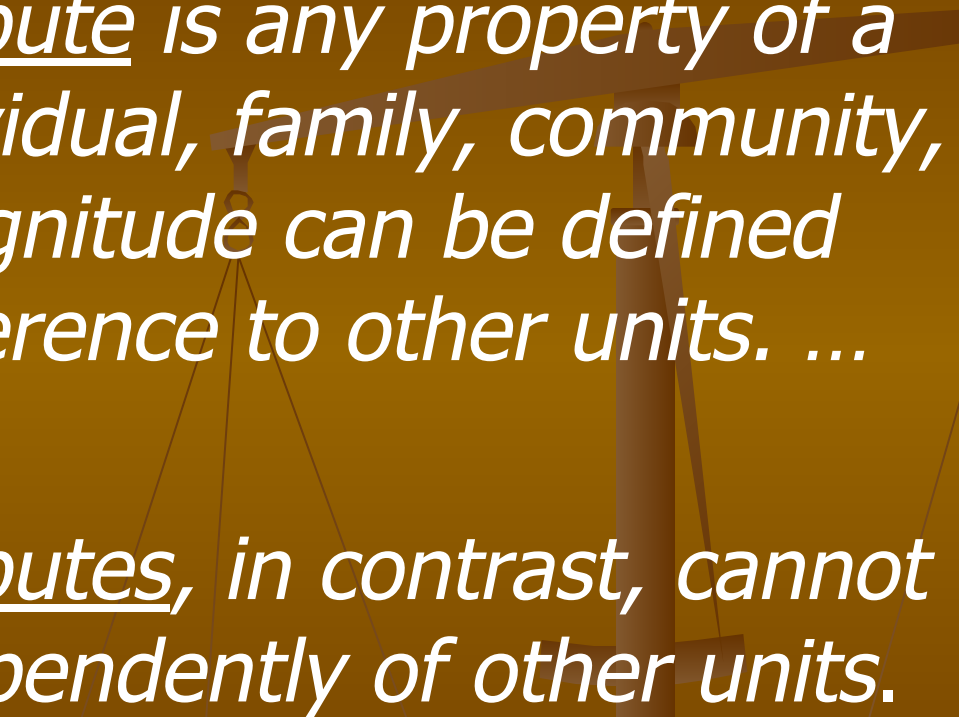
- The societies of so called 'real socialism' sought to ameliorate if not abolish social inequalities but in fact merely generated novel forms of their own, which were in turn less productive of economic growth and social welfare.



3. A TYPOLOGY OF INEQUALITIES

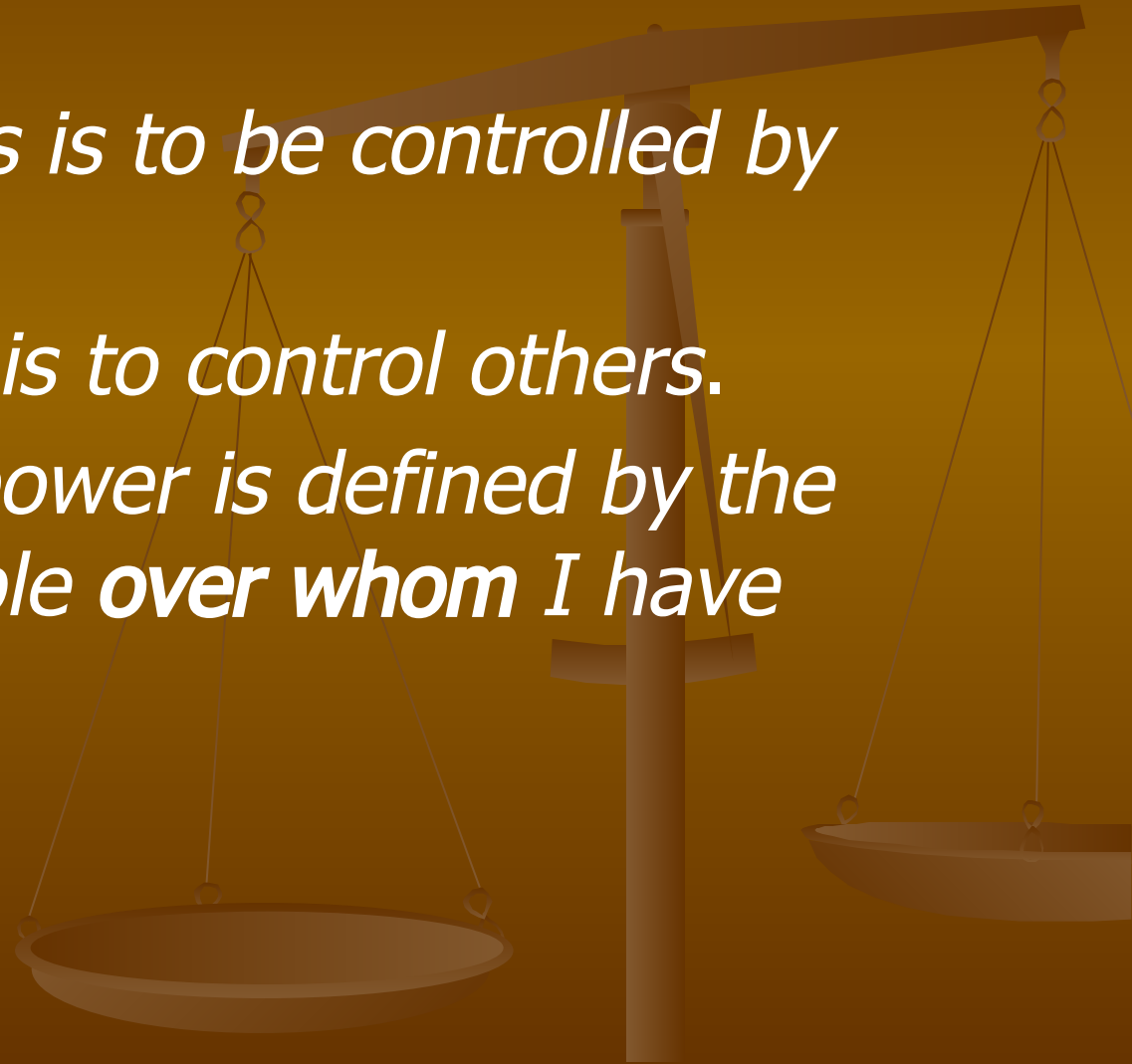


Monadic and relational attributes

- *A monadic attribute is any property of a given unit (individual, family, community, etc.) whose magnitude can be defined without any reference to other units. ...*
 - *Relational attributes, in contrast, cannot be defined independently of other units.*
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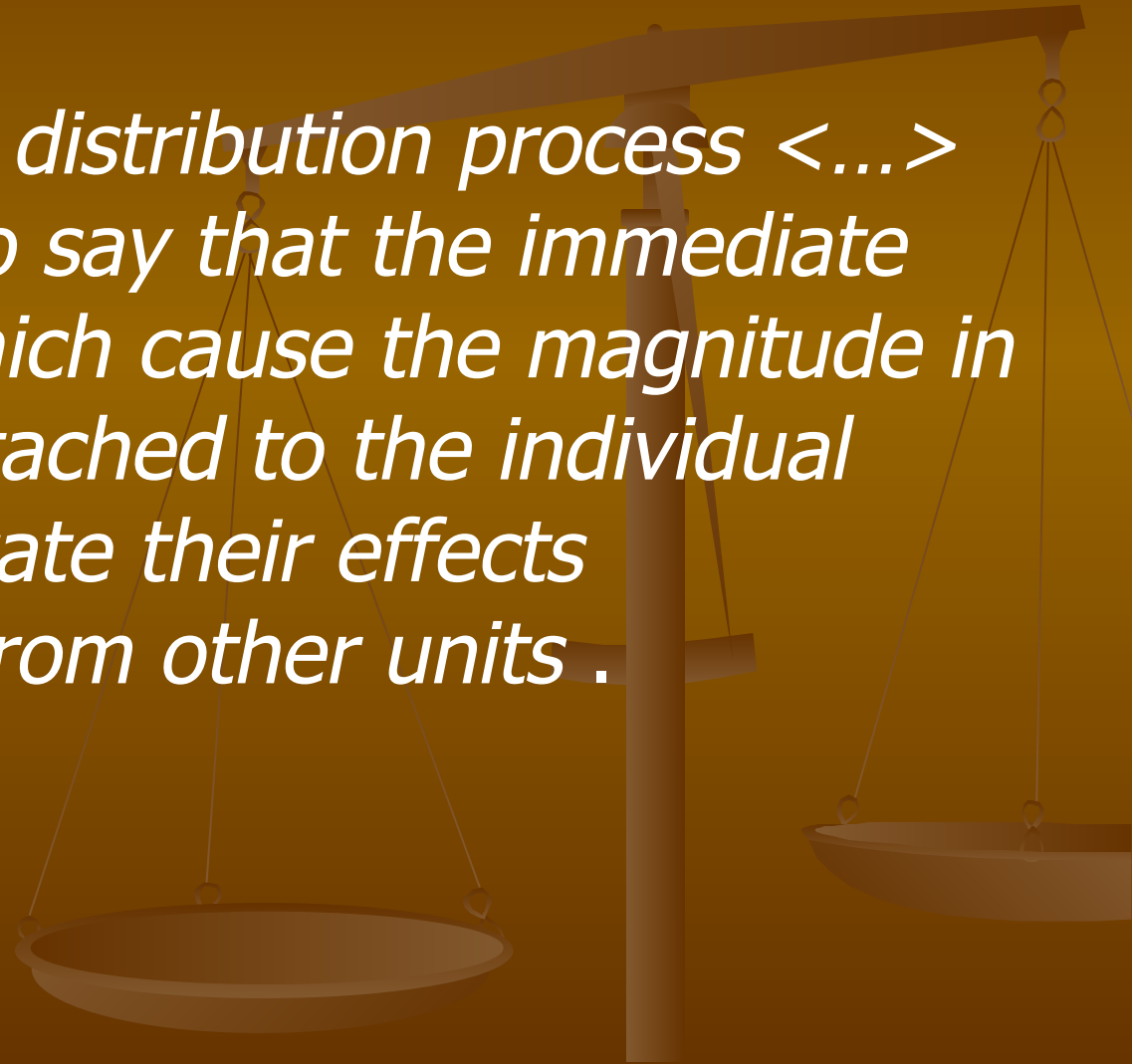
POWER as RELATIONAL ATTRIBUTE

- *To be powerless is to be controlled by others.*
- *To be powerful is to control others.*
- *My amount of power is defined by the number of people **over whom** I have control .*



Monadic and relational processes

- *To describe the distribution process <...> as monadic is to say that the immediate mechanisms which cause the magnitude in question are attached to the individual units and generate their effects autonomously from other units .*



Is distribution of body weight in a population monadic or relational process?

