

shrinkage of economic opportunity. His arguments are applicable to the current economic situation in the United States as he explains and portrays the actual and possible reactions of the various classes to declines in America's historic abundance and to the increasing dependence of the American economy on an internationalized and more competitive world economy.

Thus, the book presents a comprehensive picture of the problematics of middle class both at the theoretical and empirical levels. It also enables one to understand the nature of processes taking place currently in the class structure of United States of America in the recent past. Although, it is basically written for the students of Sociology, Psychology and Social work but it is also useful for those who have some general interest in the problematics of middle class.

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Chaudhary, S. N. 1999: *Power Deependence Relations: Struggle for Hegemony in Rural Bihar*, New Delhi: Har Anand Publications Pvt. Ltd., pp.293, Price Rs. 495.

Sociological interest in the problematic of political power is as old as the discipline itself. Weber's famous essay "Class, Status and Party" and his conceptualization of the power and authority provided a strong basis for political sociology and sociology of social stratification. Since then the concept of power and its various facets have been examined by a number of social scientists in context of developed and developing societies both at micro and macro levels. A number of issues have been raised by the social scientists during the course of their studies in this fertile area of research. The book under review raises some of the fundamental queries in relation to power structure at theoretical level in Chapter 2, 3 and 4 and then in Chapter 5, 6 and 7 the patterns of power relations in a north Indian state, namely, Bihar are analysed first in historical perspective broadly in colonial and post-colonial era. The book also takes a note of current political processes in rural Bihar and also addresses the questions related to the future of other Backward classes dominance in the state. The present work seems to be an extension of author's earlier work *Community Power structure: Search for an Alternative Paradigm* (1993) both at theoretical and empirical level. The author has confined his analysis to three major resources of power-land, education and politics. He analyses the nature of relationship between land and caste since 1793, the year of permanent settlement in Bihar. He then examines the interface between caste and education from 1835 onwards the time when first educational survey was conducted in two districts of Bihar. The relationship between caste and politics is although examined from 1937 onwards. He finds that during colonial period there was a domination of upper castes on most of the sources of power viz. land and other sources of rural economy, politics, education, bureaucracy, high ritual status etc. He pointed out that although the changes in the patterns of rural power structure started to appear during the colonial rule but in post independence period process of change got momentum with the abolition of Zamindari system and land emerged as one of the important power resource and the dependency of lower castes on upper castes decreased. The transfer of significant amount of land from the upper castes to upper backward castes reduced the economic dominance of the upper castes. Similarly, protective major for SCs & STs and later on for OBCs in the field of education empowered these section of society to move upward in occupational hierarchy. It was further enhanced by their conscious efforts to grab political power at different level in a democratic set up in different combinations of different castes at different levels. The dominance of some

particular castes in new rural power structure witnessed an important shift in power-dependence relations in rural Bihar. The analysis of historical data and the present scenario in the present work provides the reader a clear-cut understanding of the changes in community power structure of the rural Bihar. The work is very useful not only for academicians but also for general readers interested in the historicity of the current processes of change in the society of Bihar.

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Abbasi, Parvez A. 1999: *Social Inequalities among Indian Muslims*, Udaipur: A. C. Brothers, pp.x+ 128, Rs. 180 (HB).

Social inequities of status, class and power-rank formed of influence, income and dominance originate from the unequal distribution of prestige, wealth and power (resources) among human beings. Such a distribution is inherent in the differences of moral consciousness, technical efficiency and regulatory legitimacy of human energies operated in the time-space context. Hence, the social inequalities present a universal phenomenon of vertical, complex and dynamic nature. This trinitarian (Weberian) model of the inequality formation in social, economic and political dimensions offers a vast variety of combinations ranging from a perfect co-relation to a clear-cut separation among the three types. With egalitarian values forming the core of the Islamic faith and the Indian society grounded in the institutionalized inequality, the Indian Muslims attract special attention of social scientists with strong field orientation. Systematic studies of recent origin on inequalities among Indian Muslims show the existence of caste-like groups; namely, the Ashrafs (pure Muslims descended from the Sayyid, etc.) and the Non-Ashrafs (Converts) attributed with membership by birth, endogamy, traditional occupation, *Biradari* (caste) panchayat and secular orientation substituting for the Hindu rituals. The structural (caste) inequalities persist even on conversion to the Islam and the Christianity as is evident from a number of social movements for the recognition of 'backward caste status' among them.

The study focuses on the Gaddi of Western Uttar Pradesh, originally an offshoot of the Ghosi, associated with the pastoralism-based traditional occupation of vegetable-growing and dairying and, now, caught in the process of social transformation. The occupation determines their status as a lower middle order of clean occupational castes, i.e., near to the Jat and the Ahir in the social hierarchy. The Meerut region, the extreme western part of Uttar Pradesh, in the 'upper doab' between the Ganges and the Jamuna that came increasingly under intensive cultivation in view of various infra-structural developments taking place right from the Mughal period and remained in the centre of political activities, social reforms and revolutions in the vicinity of the national capital is the regional setting of their social organization. Rural hard work ethos of the middle and lower order peasantry are quite dominant in the region.

The internal organization of the Gaddi that reflects a process of their traditional adjustments to the ecological change transformed from the pastoral life characterized by 'pahalwan' (wrestler) as the status symbol of the Biradari (community) as a whole to vegetable-growing and dairying and, later, to mechanized agricultural activities for producing grains for domestic consumption and potatoes for marketing. In the town setting the traditional occupation gets along through the selling of *Khoya* (a milk product) in and around the capital city. Consequently, the Gaddi peasants have been transformed into farmers amidst whom the pahalwan has now lost lustre and the Chaudhary