Social honor: from status groups to status beliefs and recognition gaps[1]

Mathieu Ferry
Printemps Research Centre, Université Paris-Saclay (UVSQ)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9588-6032
Email: mathieu.ferry@uvsq.fr

Abstract: Though social status is reckoned as a central dimension of social stratification, its conceptualization and operationalization are demanding given the polysemic use of the term. This chapter locates the conceptual roots of social status with Weber's canonical distinction between class and status. Social status processes are salient in the most ordinary events of social life. They are at the basis of the legitimization of the social order and at the root of its contestations, while also providing ground for the social closure of social groups. Status is indeed a central issue for social stratification; as a mechanism at the foundation of inequalities but also as a dimension of these inequalities. Two empirical avenues for deepening our understanding of status processes are suggested: status inconsistencies and differences in status processes according to class, caste, race, and gender. The study of social status thus calls for mixed methodological approaches in order to fully grasp its different strands.

Keywords: social status, distinction, status belief, recognition gap

1. Introduction

Social status is both a central and elusive reference in sociology. This "elephant in the room" is due as much to the multiple origins of the concepts in the discipline as well as to the polysemy of the term and the difficulties of its empirical operationalization.

The term seminally appeared in the conceptualization of social stratification from Sorokin (1927) where he distinguishes different horizontal and vertical dimensions—economic status, political status and occupational status—of society, conceived as measuring rods so that distance and proximity can be established between social positions. The theory thus makes it possible to grasp social positions and mobility in a multidimensional way. But it is since Weber's canonical distinction between class and status that status is specifically defined as "social honor," a theoretical foundation that is still a reference today. Yet, the relationality and the subjective aspects of social ranking implied by this latter approach make it a challenging concept to operationalize in empirical studies and has sometimes led sociologists to ignore or not explicitly acknowledge it, but also favoured the development of conflicting methodological tools.

This chapter revisits Weber's foundational distinction between class and status and explores its relevance in light of contemporary research that utilizes this theoretical dimension of social stratification. The discussion begins by examining Weber's canonical distinction and emphasizing the significance of status in everyday life, followed by an exploration of the operationalization of this conceptual tool. Subsequently, two motivations for studying social status are highlighted: understanding the formation of categorical inequalities and addressing issues of injustice. The chapter further underscores two crucial characteristics of social status worthy of scrutiny: status inconsistencies resulting from geographical and social mobility, and variations in status processes across different social categories. The conclusion suggests that

[1] I thank Jules Naudet, Marie Plessz and Olivier Roueff for giving me valuable feedback on this chapter.

mixed data collection studies are particularly well-suited for empirically examining status processes.

2. Defining, conceptualizing and operationalizing status groups

2.1. On the Weberian canonical definition of Stand

Max Weber's conceptualization of the distinction between class, status groups and power stems from an unachieved text, posthumously first published in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* in 1921-1922. The original date of writing is unknown but probably dates back to the early years of the 1910s. The text was supposed to be part of a gathering of texts on communities (*Gemeinschaften*), in which he was planning to develop a theory to connect all the major forms of communities in relation to each other (Kauffmann 2019). In English, the most common translation was offered by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills in the 1940s (Waters and Waters 2010). A more recent translation, from which this chapter builds on hereafter, has been made available by participants to a seminar at Zeppelin university, where they translated the title of the text as "The distribution of power within the community: Classes, Stände, Parties" (Weber 2010).

This latest translation notably keeps the German word "Stand" ("Stände" in the plural) instead of "status group" as in the most widely known translation. The translators justify this choice because the term "Status" also exists in German but Weber chose not to use it. Instead, "Stand" has a medieval resonance (Waters and Waters 2010) evoking the French term "état" and refers to the Western tripartition between the nobility, the clergy and the "third state." While the classical Marxist reading historically opposes societies marked by class oppositions and pre-capitalist societies characterized by status group oppositions (Kauffmann 2019), Weber moves away from this historical dialectic and proposes instead to analyse how status dynamics can intersect with class oppositions in capitalist societies (without neglecting the historical "great shift from Stände to classes," 141).

In his text, the first part is devoted to defining "class", which he conceives of as specific form of community determined by the position of its members on the market: "The concept of class, however, is always organized around one common principle: it is the kind of chances in the market that determines the common conditions of the individual's fate. 'Class situation' in this sense ultimately is 'market situation.'" (139). Distinct class situations then correspond to different "life chances" (the probabilities an individual has to improve their quality of life) determined by the possession of market assets, in particular whether one lives off property or needs to sell labour power, and whether one takes advantage of scarce qualifications.

Weber then specifically defines "status groups" as such: "in contrast to 'class situation,' which is purely determined by the economy, we want to characterize the Stände situation as resulting from the typical integral part of life, in which the fate of men depends on a specific positive or negative social assessment of honor" (143). Importantly, class and status groups do not equate each other, and "both propertied and propertyless people can belong to the same 'Stand'" (143). Social honor is mainly expressed by the imposition of a specific lifestyle and the limitation of social relationships to the members of the same group.

Both class and status groups are in fact interrelated. On the one hand, the economic market is run by "objective" (i.e. market-derived) interests and ignores social honour. Yet, status groups

may be able to monopolize access to functions and goods, which may be ritual and symbolic but also economic and material. On the other hand, the prevailing social order may be threatened if a given class position manages to acquire the same honour claimed by the member of a high-status group. Weber acknowledges that the possession of market assets, i.e. of an advantaged market situation, may generate prestige. But if social destinies were organized by the market alone, they would derive solely from class position, primarily capital and qualifications. Status groups introduce a different logic to these objective characteristics, social prestige, that members of these groups claim (Weber uses the term "usurp") to benefit their social position (Plessz 2021: 63).

This synchronic relationship makes it possible to understand the tensions that exist between status groups and social classes, but makes it difficult to grasp how status groups arise and are maintained over time. One needs to turn again to the diachronic dialectic between status groups and class to make sense of the distinction: "Eras and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are normally the periods of technological and economic transformations; whereas every slowing down of an economic shifting process in a short time leads to the awakening of the *Stand* culture. As a result, the significance of social 'honor' is re-established" (148). In other words, status groups and class position vary over time and the former may help comfort the position of the latter.

2.2. Social distinction: social status in everyday life

Based on this distinction, more contemporary sociological theories have then stressed on the centrality of status to understand the salience of social identities and its routinization in everyday life.

Bourdieu's conceptual approach in *Distinction* (1979) allows us to grasp the link between status, cultural lifestyles and social distinction. The key Bourdieusian concept of "distinction" may be understood as a trivialized and incorporated (and therefore most often invisible) form of status controversy that occurs routinely in the social realm. In this approach, contempt, distaste or disgust are social emotions which reflect the display of forms of status. Each time someone makes a cultural judgment (whether consciously or unconsciously), he does much more than state his preferences, he also participates in spite of himself either in perpetuating the social order or in contesting it. Social status cannot therefore be solely understood as a characteristic of dominant groups, like Veblen's "conspicuous consumption" (1899). All cultural practices from everyone are part of a social order, to the extent that they are at the centre of cultural or moral judgments and are thus valued or despised by others. But judgements also matter at the narrower level of the social group, insofar as the feeling of belonging to a social group is linked to a recognition of the dominant statutory conventions within this group. Indeed, shared-upon cultural judgements among individuals reinforce the social closure of their social group.

To illustrate this point more concretely, in the cultural legitimacy model presented in *Distinction* (Bourdieu 1984), the upper classes value and are also prescriptors of a legitimate culture (which varies in time and space). It is also imposed on the whole of the social space, sometimes judged as a form of clumsy (according to the upper classes) "cultural goodwill" of the "petit-bourgeois" (petty bourgeoisie). Even if the popular classes do not adhere to it, it remains a standard of reference, whether it is marked by shame or a form of defensive rejection.

However, the publication of *Distinction* in France gave rise to a debate in the years that followed on the relative autonomy of the cultural practices of the working classes, and on their interpretation (Grignon and Passeron 1989). While in the cultural legitimacy model, popular cultural practices are qualified as “minor” because they do not fit into the canon of legitimate culture, they may well be valued by popular classes according to other symbolic criteria that are not those of the dominant classes.

The hypothesis of “cultural autonomy” thus envisages the existence of more or less established status scales that moderate the strength of the cultural legitimacy of the dominant classes, a point particularly put forward in cultural studies initiated by Richard Hoggart (1971, see Coulangeon 2017). Still, a recent research based on survey data suggests that individuals irrespective of their socioeconomic position hold similar perceptions of the status of cultural activities (Jæger et al. 2023). Robette and Roueff (2017) also argue that it is possible to identify a scale of cultural legitimacy that orders the distribution of tastes in the whole social space, including among the popular classes. But they also identify hints of the existence of relatively autonomous popular symbolic universes. Besides, the observation that the social space is multidimensional (characterized by a “chiasmatic” intersection between economic and cultural capital in *Distinction*) encourages us to accept that logics of cultural tastes and disgusts are organized around multiple and conflicting status scales, even though one dominant status scale—the legitimate culture of the upper classes—tends to supersede the others. More largely, ethnographic and interview-based research have highlighted in a number of ways how non-privileged groups also express status beliefs by putting forth their own criteria of worth. This goes through excluding the outsiders, such as with the residents of a suburb who despise newcomers (Elias and Scotson 1997), working-class women who acquire their respectability by imposing moral practices on themselves (Skeggs 1997), or white working-class men who assert their self-discipline and respectability by distinguishing themselves from the poor and racial minorities (Lamont 2000).

Further, the variety of “cultural repertoires,” from which individuals draw their values (Small et al. 2010), denote how conceptions of worth vary between social groups and national spaces. For instance, Lamont (1992) compares how higher professionals in France and in the US put forth attitudes that according to them distinguishes their class from the rest of society. High status signals in France are primarily based on cultural boundaries while they tend to rely on socioeconomic boundaries in the US. These differences stem from different national cultural traditions (inherited and autonomous from political, economic, and historical factors) which valorise more evidently material success in the US compared to France where the strongly stratified educational system fosters cultural boundaries.[2] Cultural repertoires may also differ among different social groups. For instance, higher educational mobility among children of Asian American immigrants is fostered by mobility schemas which valorise education as a mobility driver to reach higher social status positions and high social pressure supported by “success frames” to obtain high educational qualifications (Lee and Zhou 2014; Fishman 2020).

These cultural tools point to shared conventions and coordination between different actors (Boltanski and Thévenot 2008) that ultimately lead to hierarchies. Boltanski and Thévenot

[2] Coulangeon (2021) also highlights the varying rates of educational expansion in the US and France, which may help account for the observed differences (notably, educational expansion occurred much earlier in the US compared to France).

argue that behaviours and practices may be justified under competing sets of moral rules that correspond to "orders of worth." Shared agreed-upon conventions are necessary to avoid conflict but they also tend to fix hierarchies. But competing repertoires of justification may also reinforce the centrality of one single status marker, such as the vegetarian diet in Indian society which gets valued under religious, economic, political and moral repertoires (Ferry 2021). The coexistence of different values indeed stems from the diversification of social groups in a modernized society. Célestin Bouglé (1914; see also Messenger, 1926) identified this process as "polytelism," which can be translated as many-endedness, arguing that individuals have increasingly differentiated aims, notwithstanding that a certain degree of agreement for a common social order is still preserved.

The distinction between class and status, re-read from the Bourdieusian theoretical framework of social distinction, thus allows us to fully grasp the salience of status as a dimension of social stratification in the most ordinary events of social life.

2.3. The nature of the class and status distinction

Although the Weberian class and status distinction is ubiquitous to theorists of social stratification, Sørensen (2001) notes that the operationalization and measurement of social prestige is rather neglected in sociology.[3] In fact, this difficulty partly arises from how sociologists ontologically view this distinction, whether as *real*– i.e., status groups and class correspond to clearly distinguished groups in the social realm–or *nominal*–i.e., this distinction is an analytical one that should be thought of in terms of processes or mechanisms in the analysis.

2.3.1. Can caste be equated with Stand?

Proponents of the class-status distinction as a *real* one may be inspired by Weber's own analyses. Indeed, he suggests that "when the most extreme consequences of stratification are pressed, the *Stand* evolves into a closed 'caste'" (Weber 2010: 144), an assertion he draws from his own study of Indian society and religion (Weber 2015). It is then tempting to think that Indian society could be considered the epitome of a status-based society, where class situations play only a residual role in structuring inequalities.

This has some resonance with the seminal interest for Indian society which stems from the view that it would present a paradigmatic case of a traditional or "primitive" society according to the Durkheimians, notably Célestin Bouglé (1993). In this view, caste would make India a durably unequal society, whereas modern societies would be characterized by social forms reflecting egalitarian values (Vogt and Besnard 1979). This view was extended by Louis Dumont in *Homo Hierarchicus* (1974). He ultimately viewed the Indian society as being structured by a caste system that reflects a hierarchical society with unbridgeable positions, as opposed to modern Western societies characterized by stratification and relative positions operating in a background of egalitarian values. The exceptionality of the Indian society is also at the core of *Status and Sacredness* (Milner 1994). Milner indeed goes to the point of justifying his interest

[3] That is if we put aside measures of occupational prestige or socioeconomic status *à la* Blau and Duncan (1967) or Ganzeboom et al. (1992), about which Sørensen (2001) recalls that they tend to measure "welfare" rather than prestige related to occupational positions. Besides, pointing that the scales are rated about the same by everyone at all time in many different countries, he argues that the indices do not capture the relationality of status groups.

for Indian social stratification to build up a theory of status relationships drawing from Weber, since India would feature a society where “status power” is extremely salient as compared to the other two dimensions of social stratification.

There is no doubt that caste reflects forms of social prestige. Relying on a criterion of social closure, caste is definitely a social group marked by strong connubiality. Caste is also marked by forms of non-commensality. It is indeed part of a set of social contact avoidance practices called “untouchability” that are related to status assertions (Deliège 2003) and remain prevalent in the Indian subcontinent (Borooah 2017).

Yet, equating caste with status as the scholarship on India has been tempted to do ultimately implies conceptualizing caste as a set of fixed and hierarchically ordered categories according to a ritual principle of purity as criticized by Lardinois (1995). This framework considers in an unsatisfying manner some of the key elements of the Weberian status-class distinction. First, it views caste as ahistorical, therefore building an image of a traditional society as a paradigmatic framework (Lardinois 1995). In doing so, it ignores the “classification struggles” around caste categories (Lardinois 1985). Caste boundaries are indeed neither fixed nor always significant in the social realm, as the historiography of caste suggests (Bayly 2001). Second, this framework views social prestige as based solely on religion and consequently adopts a philological perspective of the study of the Indian society – as founded on Hindu sacred texts – without examining the subjective meanings that are attached to status, ultimately relying on the cognitive structure of Brahmin culture (Lardinois 2013). But social prestige may also stem from other sources, as observed with the “middle class” tag claimed by upper class members (Fernandes 2006). Third, this conceptualization of caste tends to disqualify class mechanisms in the analysis of social stratification. It overlooks dynamics of inequality and social closure related to class positions, in particular the way in which status resources help secure and monopolize material resources (Ferry 2022). Fourth, it ignores how caste also sustains through class and power mechanisms, on the economic market and in the political realm (Mosse 2018; Mosse 2019; Jodhka and Naudet forthcoming).

Thus, when Weber refers to caste as an extreme form of the Stand, one may understand this equivalence as an ideal typical form of caste (a social group characterized by extreme social closure ensuring its reproduction over generations and embedded in a hierarchy in which lower-ranked are discriminated against) rather than the social reality of caste (and all the more not to be found in the Indian contemporary one in which notably the idea of a fixed social hierarchy has less empirical ground). With this ideal typical definition of caste in mind, the equivalence then suggests that some categories of the social world may ultimately be fundamentally based on caste-like status mechanisms (e.g. burakumin people in Japan, Taïeb, 2020).[4] Yet, given the contextual embeddedness of caste as a South Asian category, referring to the context-neutral

[4] Weber also draws a parallel between “pariah” (he gives the example of Jews) and Indian untouchable castes but he is cautious to remind that Jews cultivate their own sense of honor while caste is accompanied by a “vertical social gradation” that acknowledges consent of the higher honor of upper castes accepted by lower castes (Weber 2010: 145). In doing so, he distinguishes caste from ethnic groups (which imply mutual rejection and disdain). This resonates with American academic debates dating back from the 1940s where some scholars advocated for the use of the term “caste” to qualify the American racial system (Myrdal and Bok 1996 [1944]), which was later criticized (Cox 1959). This controversial comparison was revived in recent years by the publication of *Caste: The Origins of our discontents* (Wilkerson 2020) that was critically received by both race and caste scholars alike (notably for not sufficiently engaging with the contextual realities of caste and race, e.g. Desai, 2021).

concept of status groups (or Stand) in the Weberian sense may be preferred to avoid conflating different categories.

2.3.2. Status as an explananda variable?

Further, a neo-weberian approach studying European societies has also aimed at drawing a *real* distinction between class and status by disentangling occupation between its market position and its status situation (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe 2010; Goldthorpe 2012). In their quantitative work, Chan and Goldthorpe posit class and status as two distinct independent variables. Class gathers occupations into categories according to their market position (employment status and qualifications) and helps understand economic security and prospects, while status is a continuous variable derived from a scale of differential associations between individuals in the same occupation, and is then more directly correlated to lifestyles when both variables are modelled together in an econometric regression framework.

This approach is rather seducing for the quantitative sociologist: the conceptual distinction between class and status has a direct operationalized translation. Yet, as argued by Flemmen et al. (2019),[5] Chan and Goldthorpe only draw from one characteristic of the Stand ("restrictions on the social 'intercourse' with other Stände," 143) to explain another fundamental key element of it (lifestyles). They assume that differential association solely derives from concerns for equality and inferiority, while differential association also reflects other stratification mechanisms (such as labour market position and spatial segregation in general). In other words, their status variable may not (only) capture social prestige.[6] More problematic (all the more so perhaps for the non-European sociologist), this operationalization ultimately does not allow the study of social prestige for categories other than occupations such as race, ethnicity, caste, but also gender (Hanquinet 2019), and the authors assume that occupational positions only are the basis of logics of deference in contemporary European societies.

Contrary to these *real* operationalizations, Weber's distinction may be read as an analytical *nominal* distinction, i.e. both class and status processes structure categories of the social world. This view is consistent with Bourdieu's reinterpretation of Weber:

> "Everything seems to indicate that Weber opposes class and status group as two types of *real* unities which would come together more or less frequently according to the type of society…; [however,] to give Weberian analyses all of their force and impact, it is necessary to see them instead as *nominal* unities… which are always the result of a choice to accent the economic aspect or the symbolic aspect – aspects which always coexist in the same reality." (Bourdieu, 1966, quoted by Flemmen et al. 2019: 11)

Ultimately, status operationalizations relate to the class operationalization chosen to study the social world. While Chan and Goldthorpe's conceptualization of social stratification aims to

---

[5] The operationalization of status has been the subject of a special issue of *The British Journal of Sociology* in 2019 (Volume 70, issue 3).

[6] Flemmen et al. (2019: 6) write: "Paradoxically, Chan and Goldthorpe seek to reinstate the distinction between class and status by appropriating a scale of differential association that was actually designed to achieve the opposite aim of *fusing* material and symbolic forms of inequality."

disentangle “net” effects related to labor market position—with the now widely used Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero scheme (Evans 1992)—from those related to the Stand, Bourdieu’s class perspective sees class as a multidimensional category. Class classifications inspired by the latter approach then aim at summarizing together social and economic positions. The French “Professions et Catégories Socioprofessionnelles” nomenclature or the “European Socioeconomic Groups” categories then appear efficient to compile social divisions in a whole range of different fields of economic and social life. They in fact illustrate that economic and social divisions are mutually reinforcing. The measurement of social classes using these statistical classifications thus shows the visible and stabilized face of Weberian economic and statutory processes (Plessz 2021). These “official” and “scholarly” divisions of the occupational space also correspond in part to the logics of classification mobilized by the individuals in their use of “ordinary categorizations” (Boltanski and Thévenot 1983; Penissat et al. 2016). The way individuals hierarchize and group social positions confirms that “social classes” encompass status processes that can be understood through the study of subjective classification processes.

The operationalization of the conceptual distinction between class and status is divided into two perspectives. The first perspective aims to assign status ranks to social categories or at least treat it as a measurable variable distinct from class. Meanwhile, the second perspective views status as one of the processes leading to the crystallization of clearly identifiable boundaries within social categories.

3. Why does status matter?

In contemporary sociology, the distinction between class and status is often used by distinguishing material and non-material (or symbolic) inequalities. The motivation for using the Weberian analytical distinction is dual. On the one hand, as sketched out in Weber’s original text, the references to this stratification framework helps understand how non-material inequalities help (re)produce material inequalities. On the other hand, in part stemming from philosophical perspectives on social justice, a more recent trend claiming a Weberian ascendance suggests the importance of status inequality, in the form of recognition gaps.

3.1. Status to understand the formation and stabilization of inequality

The first motivation to shed light on status as a different stratification dimension from class – or power, as Weber points at the end of his essay – is that material inequality are unstable, as they give rise to struggles between resource holders and disadvantaged individuals. But categorical differences between people contribute to stabilize them (Tilly 1998). This consolidation is achieved through “status cultural beliefs” about the dominant people who come to correspond to the “types” of people who are also ranked higher (Ridgeway 2014).

For instance, neo-bourdieusian sociologists (Flemmen et al. 2019) illustrate how Bourdieu’s understanding of the central role of class in social stratification is only achieved through status processes. Students of the bourgeoisie are for instance advantaged in the school system through their mastering and familiarity of a “legitimate” culture in the eyes of their teachers (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). This form of “embodied cultural capital” plays out as a form of “symbolic capital:” the cultural lifestyle of a specific social milieu contributes to school success but ultimately the academic success of privileged children then passes off as “natural abilities,” therefore legitimizing educational inequality. Indeed, more largely, symbolic capital concerns reputation, or the public recognition and legitimation of differences in economic, cultural or

social capital of different social actors (Bourdieu 2013).[7] Further, analysing coherent social differences in cultural practices across different cultural fields (e.g. food, music, cinema), Bourdieu's "space of lifestyles" (Bourdieu 1984) can be read as a space of "status situations" (Scott, 2007, quoted in Flemmen et al., 2019). Indeed, "the honor of the *Stand* is predominantly expressed by the imposition of a specific lifestyle" (Weber 2010: 143). By pursuing a particular lifestyle, people are involved in the same networks of interaction and strengthen the differences in life experiences and life chances. In 1960s France, Bourdieu argues that status situation is highly correlated with their class position. The non-incorporation of cultural dispositions of the dominant classes is also at the core of the explanation of inequalities of access and wages into higher professional and managerial employment in the UK (Friedman and Laurison 2019). While heirs display great ease with the legitimate culture, which manifests in a great variety of behaviors (manners of speaking, dressing, etc), upwardly mobile individuals are confronted to a "class ceiling" and pay the price of their more popular origins (which then manifests in a form of "cultural goodwill") to "get in" and "get on" in the upper classes.

In this macro-level view, the chain of formation and transformation of a lifestyle reflecting a status group position then securing a class position may appear incomplete. Ridgeway's intervention and conceptualization of the relationship between micro-level and macro-level processes in the formation of inequality sharpens the conceptualization (2014). She suggests that micro-level processes through judgements and behaviours have large macro-level consequences: shared beliefs about the social categories that are ranked as more esteemed compared to others in a given social relational context consolidates macro-level material inequality. Indeed, the more esteemed come to be the ones with more resources and power and these beliefs are importantly shared both by the advantaged and disadvantaged ones in a setting, hence legitimizing the social order.

These shared beliefs are also a source of material inequality because individuals belonging to the more esteemed groups come to be advantaged in social settings beyond their own control of resources: "Once such gender status beliefs develop [that men are "better" in a society where they have acquired resource and power advantages], they advantage men because they are *men* and not because they are richer or more powerful" (Ridgeway 2014: 4). Overall, due to the cultural lag between the persistence of gender stereotypes and reducing material inequality between men and women (at least in Western societies), these micro-level interindividual interactions perpetuate gender inequality (Ridgeway 2011). These cognitive schemas also contribute to the economic and spatial segregation of poor, ethnic minorities and immigrants in the United States (Massey 2007). The study of status beliefs leads to focus on social differences between people and in that sense they also share strong commonalities with "symbolic boundaries" (Lamont and Molnár 2002), which examine how people cognitively and discursively express conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices and time and space.

Overall, the Weberian distinction between class and status then allows to understand how inequalities based on group belonging (e.g. class, gender, ethnicity) are created and sustain durable inequalities in the social realm.

---

[7] In specific "fields" of the social space, symbolic capital may also be objectified by certain awards or titles which characterize a symbolic reputation among these agents, for instance among top CEOs and their participation in non-business boards (Naudet et al. 2018).

3.2. Status as a dimension of inequality to be addressed: recognition gaps

The second motivation stems from the philosophical domain and draws from reflections on social justice from Nancy Fraser (2000, see also Fraser et al. 2003). Her starting point is the observation that collective identity in the public realm no longer rests solely on the class interests at the basis of political mobilizations. Social injustices have as much to do with logics of exploitation as with cultural domination. She illustrates her argument with examples from feminist, homosexual or ethnic minority movements. She seeks to articulate a social justice model that rests on two complementary conceptions—redistribution and recognition—, associated and entangled with *socio-economic injustice* (exploitation, marginalization or economic exclusion) and *symbolic injustice* (cultural domination by imposition of social models).

In doing so, she aims at moving away from the "identity model," which proposes that to "belong to a group that is devalued by the dominant culture is to be misrecognized, to suffer a distortion in one's relation to one's self" (Fraser 2000: 109). Members of misrecognized groups seek to affirm "new self-representations of their own making" (110). She argues that culturalist proponents of identity politics tend to displace redistributive claims—by ignoring them or simply considering that they inherit from misrecognition—and reify identity—by ignoring the multiplicity of identifications.

In her alternative approach, while considering symbolic injustice, she suggests to treat it as a matter of social status instead of cultural identity. In this neo-weberian conception of social justice, she sees misrecognition as "social subordination—in the sense of being prevented from participating as a peer in social life" (Fraser 2000: 113). In her conception, misrecognition comes from institutionalized processes that prevent status equality, for instance the institutionalization in law of heterosexual but not homosexual marriage, that hence constitutes heterosexual union as normal and homosexual union as perverse. The status model of social justice then tends to find remedies to misrecognition stemming from certain institutionalized arrangements and maldistribution of economic resources.

Coming back to the sociological field, Lamont (2018) has called for a framework to study what she terms as "recognition gaps," i.e. disparities in worth and cultural membership between groups (similarly to "achievement gaps" in educational attainment), and how stigmatized individuals respond to them by "destigmatization," i.e. how "low-status groups gain recognition and worth in society" (420). She contends that these processes have received little attention by sociologists who tend to focus on material redistribution. Yet, the ascent of neoliberalism, understood as the "intensified extension of the principle of market mechanisms and fundamentalism to all aspects of society" (424), emphasizes the ascendency of criteria of worth associated with the neoliberal self (drawing from socioeconomic success, competitiveness and self-reliance). Groups that do not meet the criteria of self-worth—e.g. the poor, the unemployed, the immigrants—tend to get more stigmatized while the successful upper-middle and upper classes become unachievable aspirations. Neoliberalism acts as a cultural script that emphasize sharp social boundaries against outsiders. She then insists that just like material maldistribution, recognition gaps alter individual (e.g. health, poverty, social isolation) and collective well-being (e.g. health inequality, welfare schemes).

Drawing from studies of the “Successful Societies Program” (Hall and Lamont 2009), Lamont finally argues that institutional frameworks can bridge recognition gaps, by fostering cultural membership of all members of a society. She calls sociologists—based on their empirical expertise especially in the sociology of culture—to act as experts for policymakers to create and sustain cultural narratives about “being” rather than “having,” that “broaden cultural membership” and help destigmatize outsiders (Lamont 2019).

4. Key characteristics of social status to empirically investigate

Having clarified the contemporary conceptualizations of social status, the focus shifts to two important characteristics of this social stratification dimension that should be considered when examining status processes.

4.1. Status inconsistencies, mobility and reference groups

Considering different scales of status also means that they can coexist and not be totally correlated together. Lenski (1954, 1956, 1967) notably studied how different institutionalized hierarchical status positions such as occupational class, educational attainment, race and religious groups, intersect together. He proposed to name situations in which individual positions are consistently high or low on these different hierarchies as “status crystallization.” On the contrary, “status inconsistencies” rise from high standing on certain status positions combined with low standing on others. He drew our attention to this point as he hypothesized that individuals in “status crystallized” positions hold different values and practices compared to “status inconsistent” people. From an interactional perspective, Hughes (1945) also showed that status positions are linked to interaction codes in social relations. Situations of status inconsistency then lead to “contradictions and dilemmas” that are not easily solved by the individuals involved in the interaction.

In particular, status inconsistent individuals would be more prone to social change and tend to adhere more frequently to liberal or left to centre political parties (Lenski 1967). But this in-between situation may also favour the adherence to right-wing populism among white (by and large, a high-status position in the Global North) working-class (low-status) people who feel dispossessed by globalization, deindustrialization and unemployment—processes which would help explain the election of Trump in the US or the vote in favour of the Brexit in the UK. Indeed, empirical studies hint that issues of material distribution and symbolic recognition intersect and spill over in the political realm (Dodd et al. 2017).

Status inconsistency indeed more generally denotes the “tension” with which individuals have to negotiate when experiencing conflicting status positions. Theses tensions particularly arise when individuals experience a form of mobility between positions and are still tied in a way or another to their previous position.

Studying individuals experiencing steep upward mobility, Naudet (2018) recalls that this tension is both sociological–entailing contradictory socialisation–and moral–raising the question of allegiance to one’s dominated group. He shows that one’s experience is shaped by the available national cultural frames one has to make sense of one’s trajectory. For instance, American and French racial “others” do not have the same experience of upward social mobility. While Black Americans denote a strong allegiance to their racial minority as they have to “reach back,” descendants of African migrants are more affected by the universal republican ideology even though a “minority culture of mobility in the making” growingly shapes their identity negotiations (Naudet and Shahrokni 2019).

Migration is another site of “status inconsistency.” Immigrants may experience a process of minorization in the dominant ethno-racial hierarchy in the country of arrival. Along with other factors such the non-transferability of skills from the country of departure, immigrants are then likely to experience social downgrading in the country of arrival (Potochnick and Hall 2021). Those who ranked socioeconomically higher in their country of origin than in the country of arrival are then more likely to see themselves as worse off in the country of destination compared to other immigrants, denoting “transnational status inconsistency” (Engzell and Ichou 2020). But the privileged properties in the country of origin may transfer to the next generation, descendants of immigrants then showing a sense of status from these previously-held positions, and also denoting a stronger investment in the educational institutions with an aim of social mobility (Ichou 2018).

Mobility here sheds light on the reference point or the “reference group” that individuals refer to when locating themselves in a hierarchy (Merton and Rossi 1968). Indeed, individuals’ subjective social status depends on social comparisons to a point of reference which may be more salient than the objective experienced conditions of living, a point first elucidated by Stouffer in *The American Soldier* (Stouffer et al. 1949) and mostly referred to in social psychology (e.g. Haught-Wojton et al. 2015). The salience of reference points in social settings is also illustrated by the importance of internalizing modest goals for individuals coming from lower-status groups, which then justifies evaluating one’s social situation more positively when achieving comparable social situations with people from the majority group. For instance, Bouchet (2022) shows that the experience of disability shapes the scale according to which individuals evaluate their own social success. Having encountered obstacles early in their school trajectory, individuals with disabilities have often internalized modest goals, and compare themselves with individuals with disabilities rather than with the majority population. The surrounding local social contexts may also be salient in defining one’s position in a social order and thus adhering to high-status markers: in India, lower Hindu castes all the more adhere to vegetarianism, an upper-caste marker, that upper caste Brahmins are socioeconomically dominant in their region of residence (Ferry 2021).

Status inconsistencies then invite us to unpack the mobility trajectories and the diversity of social environments experienced by individuals to situate their reference points and to understand their various derived values and practices.

4.2. Similarities and contrasts of status processes across categories

Subordination processes are not restricted to one type of category and studying social status means looking at a stratification mechanism that operates on categories as diverse as gender, race, ethnicity, caste, class, religion to name a few. As such it is one mechanism that complements the four processes identified by Tilly (1998) that (re)produce categorical inequalities: exploitation, opportunity hoarding, emulation and adaptation. The salience of status processes across different categorical domains does not mean that they operate equivalently in these different settings. Indeed, there are “different differences” (Brubaker and Fernández 2019) between these categories and the study of status processes across different categories helps understand how they operate in different ways. In other words, studying status is an opportunity to compare different forms of categorical inequalities. Ridgeway (2014) suggests that both structural and cultural factors help understand how status beliefs work in different ways.

In terms of structural factors, *residential segregation* or *intimate interdependence* affect the likelihood of routine cross-category interactions. For instance, household and family interactions are cross-categorical (heterosexual), so that status processes are "especially important for the daily production of gender inequality (Ridgeway 2011).

Status beliefs are also more salient if they are perceived to be *relevant to the "goals of the setting"* (Ridgeway, 2014: 8), i.e. implicitly constructing difference and superiority such as at an elite school or in a club. For instance, women belonging to Aggarwal castes (a high-status business caste) in New Delhi undertake social work together that strengthen caste cohesion and ensure "status maintenance" (Ponniah 2017), notably by forging marital matches.

To these points, one can add that demographically, it is possible that the *number of perceived and acknowledged categories by the social actors* in a hierarchy consequently affects the persistence of status beliefs. Notwithstanding the fact that in everyday life perceived subcategories are often more fine-grained than the ones measured and studied by sociologists (Monk 2022), caste is especially remarkable by its pattern of "gradual inequality" (Ambedkar, 2016, notably quoted in Herrenschmidt 1996). This aspect illustrates that categorical inequalities in the Indian context are characterized by more granular differences than racial or ethnic categories, as it is marked by "the obsession of the small difference" (Jaffrelot 2005: 36-38) since "privileges are graded" because "even the low is a privileged class as compared with the lower" (Ambedkar 1979, quoted in Herrenschmidt 1996).

The extent of the *association between social categories and market resources and positions* also structures the variability of status beliefs across time, then depending on economic hazard, while more economically resilient categorical domains may more easily perpetuate forms of status beliefs. In this view, class is obviously more subject to intergenerational and time hazard. An instance of the devaluation of a class category may be related to urbanization and the modernization of agriculture which leads to the extinction of small peasantry. Bourdieu showed in the French region of Béarn in the 1960s how these economic changes have precipitated a crisis for male peasants who tended to remain bachelor. Tied to their land by inheritance, they remained behind while rural women had moved to cities (Bourdieu 2008). This extreme case of status loss associated to the devaluation of the agricultural world may be also present to some extent in contemporary India, where in addition to the imbalanced sex ratio, marriage has become a concern for young males in rural and agricultural settings (Tilche and Simpson 2018).

In terms of cultural factors, Ridgeway (2014: 9) recalls that class is perceived in everyday life as an achieved rather than an "immutable essence" like sex or racial categories. These differences in the *degree of subjective essentialization* affects the nature of boundaries to mark status beliefs, which tend to be more variable depending on context for class and to rely more on cultural boundaries, which continually adapts and changes. Importantly, cultural distinction is not necessarily conspicuous: Sherman's affluent respondents work hard to downplay their economic privileges by asserting a "normal" lifestyle, as a way to legitimate their own economic position (2018).

This last point raises the important question of the *legitimacy of the assertion of status beliefs* (which depends on the cultural frame in a given setting). Categorical status beliefs may well perpetuate despite the inequality or stigmatization attached to the domain of this category being delegitimized (e.g. race or caste). This point helps understand why there is "racism without racists" in the US (Bonilla-Silva 2018) or caste inequality despite caste discrimination

(untouchability) being illegal in India (Deshpande 2015). For instance, the ethnographic study of professional workplaces or elite universities in India reveals the importance of "caste privilege" within these environments (Subramanian 2019), where caste cultural markers are commonplace (e.g., the separation of canteens and utensils between vegetarian and non-vegetarian eaters in universities, Benbabaali 2008) though they are discursively described as "casteless." Besides, high-caste professional workers also tend to disapprove affirmative action measures in the name of merit. In so doing, they discursively affirm their worth by claiming themselves as meritorious and relegate inherited caste privilege as a thing of the past and the institution of caste as being only perpetuated by lower-castes, while objectively benefiting from their caste position to achieve upper class position (Ferry 2022). The widespread uses of the "meritocratic rhetoric" as a principle of justice (Allouch 2021) indeed tend to discursively downplay ascribed privilege, even if it remains highly efficient in the production of inequality.

The study of status beliefs across different social categories hence promises to foster our understanding of the various ways categorical inequality (re)produce.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has drawn from Weber's classical distinction between class and status to highlight the salience of status processes in the study of social stratification. Though the conceptual distinction is widely acknowledged by stratification scholars, operationalizations tend to diverge on how to concretely consider status: as a measurable ranked position or a process resulting in the crystallization of social categories. In all cases, status matters both as a way to understand the formation and reproduction of categorical inequalities and as a stratification dimension to understand recognition gaps and thus to broaden our sense of social justice. As such, status is a dimension of social stratification that is salient in the most ordinary events of social life. Finally, the sociological literature helps identifying two broad characteristics of social status to bear in mind that may be at the core of empirical research questions. First, the subjective dimension of status recalls that ranking processes draw from comparisons with a reference group so that social or geographical mobility are particularly prone to highlight status inconsistencies. Second, though status processes are found across different social categories such as social class, race, gender, caste, there are also important variations. The study of these variations helps understanding the formation of categorical inequalities across different domains. These two characteristics call for further empirical scrutiny.

Though status processes have now come to be acknowledged as salient stratification mechanisms, concrete sociological investigations are not necessarily straightforward. Mixed data collection studies which combine two or more kinds of data (Small 2011) are particularly well suited to grasp status processes. Indeed, status processes are a bridge between micro-level and macro-level processes in the formation of inequality (Ridgeway 2014), but these two scales of observation are hardly grasped only by conducting ethnographic observation or interviews on the one hand or quantitative surveys on the other hand. Rather, both help grasp the two faces of the same coin. Besides, status processes are subjective classifications that have objective consequences in terms of inequality and social justice. As such, quantitative surveys say nothing about how social subjects classify other people but more qualitatively-based data may be limited in identifying how the actions and attitudes of subjects are embedded in broader inequality patterns. Combining different data sources hence helps better identifying status processes and understanding inequality and social justice—an ambitious research program, to say the least.

References

Allouch, Annabelle. 2021. *Mérite*. Collection Le Mot Est Faible. Paris: Anamosa.
Ambedkar, Babasahed. 1979. *Dr. Babasahed Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*. 13 volumes vols. Bombay: Government of Maharashtra, Education Department.
Ambedkar, B.R. 2016. *Annihilation of Caste. The Annotated Critical Edication*. New Delhi (Inde): Navayana.
Bayly, Susan. 2001. *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Benbabaali, Dalal. 2008. Questioning the Role of the Indian Administrative Service in National Integration. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*.
Blau, Peter Michael, and Otis Dudley Duncan. 1967. *The American occupational structure*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
Boltanski, Luc, and Laurent Thévenot. 1983. Finding one's way in social space: a study based on games. *Social Science Information* 22: 631–680. https://doi.org/10.1177/053901883022004003.
Boltanski, Luc, and Laurent Thévenot. 2008. *De la justification: les économies de la grandeur*. Nachdr. NRF essais. Paris: Gallimard.
Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2018. *Racism without racists: color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America*. Fifth edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
Borooah, Vani Kant. 2017. Caste and Regional Influences on the Practice of 'Untouchability' in India: The Practice of 'Untouchability' in India. *Development and Change* 48: 746–774.
Bouchet, Célia. 2022. Handicap et destinées sociales : une enquête par méthodes mixtes. Paris, Institut d'études politiques.
Bouglé, Célestin Charles Alfred. 1914. Remarques sur le polytélisme. *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 22. Presses Universitaires de France: 595–611.
Bouglé, Célestin Charles Alfred. 1993. *Essais sur le régime des castes*. Paris: Quadrige/PUF.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 1966. Condition de classe et position de classe. *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie* 7. Cambridge University Press: 201–223.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 2008. *The Bachelors' Ball: The Crisis of Peasant Society in Béarn*. Translated by Richard Nice. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 2013. Symbolic capital and social classes. Translated by Loïc Wacquant. *Journal of Classical Sociology* 13. SAGE Publications: 292–302. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468795X12468736.
Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean-Claude Passeron. 1990. *Reproduction in education, society and culture*. Theory, Culture & Society. London: Sage.
Brubaker, Rogers, and Matías Fernández. 2019. Cross-domain comparison and the politics of difference. *The British Journal of Sociology* 70: 1135–1158.
Chan, Tak Wing, and John H. Goldthorpe. 2004. Is There a Status Order in Contemporary British Society? Evidence from the Occupational Structure of Friendship. *European Sociological Review* 20: 383–401. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jch033.
Chan, Tak Wing, and John H. Goldthorpe. 2010. Social status and cultural consumption. In *Social Status and Cultural Consumption*, ed. Tak Wing Chan, 1–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511712036.001.
Chan, Tak Wing, and John H. Goldthorpe. 2007. Social Status and Newspaper Readership. *American Journal of Sociology* 112: 1095–1134. https://doi.org/10.1086/508792.

Coulangeon, Philippe. 2017. The Missed Encounter of Le Savant et le Populaire and the Distinction Studies. *Biens symboliques / Symbolic goods [Online]* 1.

Coulangeon, Philippe. 2021. *Culture de masse et société de classes: le goût de l'altérité*. 1re éd. Paris: PUF.

Cox, Oliver C. (Oliver Cromwell). 1959. *Caste, class, & race; a study in social dynamics*. New York, Monthly Review Press.

Deliège, Robert. 2003. Is There Still Untouchability in India?

Desai, Sonalde. 2021. Isabel Wilkerson Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents Random House, 2020. 496 p. $32.00. *Population and Development Review* 47: 267–271. https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12394.

Deshpande, Satish. 2015. Caste and Castelessness. *Economic and Political Weekly* 48: 7–8.

Dodd, Nigel, Michèle Lamont, and Mike Savage. 2017. Introduction to BJS special issue. *The British Journal of Sociology* 68: S3–S10. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12326.

Dumont, Louis. 1974. *Homo hierarchicus: the caste system and its implications*. The Nature of Human Society Series. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Elias, Norbert, and John-L. Scotson. 1997. *Logiques de l'exclusion. Enquête sociologique au coeur des problèmes d'une communauté*. Paris: Fayard.

Engzell, Per, and Mathieu Ichou. 2020. Status Loss: The Burden of Positively Selected Immigrants. *International Migration Review* 54. SAGE Publications Inc: 471–495. https://doi.org/10.1177/0197918319850756.

Evans, Geoffrey. 1992. Testing the Validity of the Goldthorpe Class Schema. *European Sociological Review* 8: 211–232.

Fernandes, Leela. 2006. *India's new middle class: democratic politics in an era of economic reform*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ferry, Mathieu. 2021. What goes around meat eating, comes around: Vegetarianism as a status marker in contemporary India. PhD Dissertation, Paris: Sciences Po.

Ferry, Mathieu. 2022. Where Does Ascribed Privilege Get You in? Structural and Net Effects of Caste and Religious Belonging in India. *Sociology*. SAGE Publications Ltd: 00380385221083890. https://doi.org/10.1177/00380385221083890.

Fishman, Samuel H. 2020. Educational Mobility among the Children of Asian American Immigrants. *American Journal of Sociology* 126. The University of Chicago Press: 260–317. https://doi.org/10.1086/711231.

Flemmen, Magne, Vegard Jarness, and Lennart Rosenlund. 2019. Class and status: on the misconstrual of the conceptual distinction and a neo-Bourdieusian alternative. *The British Journal of Sociology* 70: 816–866.

Fraser, Nancy. 2000. Rethinking Recognition. *New Left Review*: 107–120.

Fraser, Nancy, Axel Honneth, and Professor Joel Golb. 2003. *Redistribution Or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. Verso.

Friedman, Sam, and Daniel Laurison. 2019. *The class ceiling: why it pays to be privileged*. Bristol, UK ; Chicago, IL: Policy Press.

Ganzeboom, Harry B. G., Paul M. De Graaf, and Donald J. Treiman. 1992. A standard international socio-economic index of occupational status. *Social Science Research* 21: 1–56.

Goldthorpe, John H. 2012. Back to Class and Status: Or Why a Sociological View of Social Inequality Should Be Reasserted. *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*. https://doi.org/10.5477/cis/reis.137.201.

Grignon, Claude, and Jean-Claude Passeron. 1989. *Le savant et le populaire. Misérabilisme et populisme en sociologie et en littérature*. Hautes Etudes. Paris: Gallimard-Le Seuil.

Hall, Peter A., and Michele Lamont. 2009. *Successful Societies: How Institutions and Culture Affect Health*. Cambridge University Press.

Hanquinet, Laurie. 2019. Culture matters: comments on Chan's and Flemmen et al.'s contributions to the field of cultural participation. *The British Journal of Sociology* 70: 898–905. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12642.

Haught-Wojton, Heather, Jason Rose, Andrew Geers, and Jill Brown. 2015. Subjective Social Status and Well-Being: The Role of Referent Abstraction. *The Journal of social psychology* 155. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2015.1015476.

Herrenschmidt, Olivier. 1996. « L'inégalité graduée » ou la pire des inégalités. L'analyse de la société hindoue par Ambedkar. *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 37: 3–22.

Hoggart, Richard. 1971. *The uses of literacy. Aspects of working class life, with special references to publications and entertainments*. Reprinted. London: Chatto, Windus.

Hughes, Everett Cherrington. 1945. Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status. *American Journal of Sociology* 50. University of Chicago Press: 353–359. JSTOR.

Ichou, Mathieu. 2018. *Les enfants d'immigrés à l'école: inégalités scolaires du primaire à l'enseignement supérieur*. 1re édition. Éducation et Société. Paris: Puf.

Jæger, Mads Meier, Rikke Haudrum Rasmussen, and Anders Holm. 2023. What cultural hierarchy? Cultural tastes, status and inequality. *The British Journal of Sociology* 74: 402–418. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.13012.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2005. *Dr. Ambedkar and untouchability: fighting the Indian caste system*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Jodhka, Surinder S., and Jules Naudet. forthcoming. Introduction. Studying Caste: Conceptual Currents and Emergent Perspectives. In *Hanbook on Caste*, ed. Surinder S. Jodhka and Jules Naudet. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Kauffmann, Élisabeth. 2019. Préface. Communautés, identités et différences. In *Les communautés*, tran. Catherine Colliot-Thélène and Élisabeth Kauffmann. Politique et Sociétés. Paris: La Découverte.

Lamont, Michèle. 1992. *Money, morals, and manners: the culture of the French and American upper-middle class*. Morality and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, Michèle. 2000. *The dignity of working men: morality and the boundaries of race, class, and immigration*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lamont, Michèle. 2018. Addressing Recognition Gaps: Destigmatization and the Reduction of Inequality. *American Sociological Review* 83: 419–444. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122418773775.

Lamont, Michèle. 2019. From 'having' to 'being': self-worth and the current crisis of American society. *The British Journal of Sociology* 70: 660–707. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12667.

Lamont, Michèle, and Virág Molnár. 2002. The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 167–195.

Lardinois, Roland. 1985. Les Luttes de Classement en Inde. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 59: 78–84.

Lardinois, Roland. 1995. Louis Dumont et la science indigène. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 106: 11–26.

Lardinois, Roland. 2013. *Scholars and Prophets*. 2013 edition. New Delhi: Social Science Press.

Lee, Jennifer, and Min Zhou. 2014. The Success Frame and Achievement Paradox: The Costs and Consequences for Asian Americans. *Race and Social Problems* 6: 38–55. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12552-014-9112-7.

Lenski, Gerhard E. 1954. Status Crystallization: A Non-Vertical Dimension of Social Status. *American Sociological Review* 19: 405–413. JSTOR.

Lenski, Gerhard E. 1956. Social Participation and Status Crystallization. *American Sociological Review* 21: 458.

Lenski, Gerhard E. 1967. Status Inconsistency and the Vote: A Four Nation Test. *American Sociological Review* 32: 298–301.

Massey, Douglas S. 2007. *Categorically unequal: the American stratification system*. A Russell Sage Foundation Centennial Volume. New York: Russell Sage foundation.

Merton, Robert K., and Alice S. Rossi. 1968. Contributions to the Theory of Reference Group Behavior. In *Social Theory and Social Structure*, ed. Robert K. Merton, 279–334. New York: The Free Press.

Messenger, Ruth. 1926. Célestin Bouglé. *Social Forces* 5: 8–18.

Milner, Murray, Jr. 1994. *Status and Sacredness: A General Theory of Status Relations and an Analysis of Indian Culture*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Monk, Ellis P. 2022. Inequality without Groups: Contemporary Theories of Categories, Intersectional Typicality, and the Disaggregation of Difference. *Sociological Theory* 40. SAGE Publications Inc: 3–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/07352751221076863.

Mosse, David. 2018. Caste and development: Contemporary perspectives on a structure of discrimination and advantage. *World Development* 110: 422–436.

Mosse, David. 2019. The Modernity of Caste and the Market Economy. *Modern Asian Studies*.

Myrdal, Gunnar, and Sissela Bok. 1996. *An American dilemma: the Negro problem and modern democracy*. Black and African-American Studies. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Naudet, Jules. 2018. *Stepping into the elite: trajectories of social achievement in India, France, and the United States*. Translated by Renuka George. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press.

Naudet, Jules, Adrien Allorant, and Mathieu Ferry. 2018. Heirs, corporate aristocrats and 'Meritocrats': the social space of top CEOs and Chairmen in India. *Socio-Economic Review* 16: 307–339.

Naudet, Jules, and Shirin Shahrokni. 2019. The Class Identity Negotiations of Upwardly Mobile Individuals Among Whites and the Racial Other: A USA–France Comparison. In *Elites and People: Challenges to Democracy*, ed. Fredrik Engelstad, Trygve Gulbrandsen, Marte Mangset, and Mari Teigen, 34:137–158. Comparative Social Research. Emerald Publishing Limited.

Penissat, Etienne, Cécile Brousse, Jérôme Deauvieau, Julien Chevillard, Emmanuelle Barozet, and Oscar Mac-Clure. 2016. From Statistical Categorizations to Ordinary Categorizations of Social Space: History and Legacy of an Original Study Based on a Card Game. *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 41: 135–154. JSTOR.

Plessz, Marie. 2021. La Dynamique sociale des pratiques : stratification sociale, changement social et consommation alimentaire. Thesis, Ecole des hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales (EHESS).

Ponniah, Ujithra. 2017. Reproducing Elite Lives: Women in Aggarwal Family Businesses. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*.

Potochnick, Stephanie, and Matthew Hall. 2021. US Occupational Mobility of Children of Immigrants Based on Parents' Origin-Country Occupation. *Demography* 58. Duke University Press: 219–245.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2011. *Framed by Gender*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199755776.001.0001.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2014. Why Status Matters for Inequality. *American Sociological Review* 79: 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122413515997.

Robette, Nicolas, and Olivier Roueff. 2017. The contemporary space of cultural tastes. *Sociologie* 8: 369–394.
Sherman, Rachel. 2018. 'A very expensive ordinary life': consumption, symbolic boundaries and moral legitimacy among New York elites. *Socio-Economic Review* 16: 411–433. https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwy011.
Skeggs, Beverley. 1997. *Formations of class and gender: becoming respectable*. Theory, Culture & Society. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE.
Small, Mario Luis. 2011. How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study: Recent Trends in a Rapidly Growing Literature. *Annual Review of Sociology* 37: 57–86.
Small, Mario Luis, David J. Harding, and Michèle Lamont. 2010. Reconsidering Culture and Poverty. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 629: 6–27.
Sørensen, Aage B. 2001. The Basic Concepts of Stratification Research: Class, Status, and Power. In *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*, Routledge. D. B. Grusky.
Sorokin, Pitirim. 1927. *Social mobility*. New York: Harper and Bros.
Stouffer, S. A., E. A. Sachman, L. C. Devinney, S. A. Star, and R. M. Williams. 1949. *The American soldier: Adjustment during army life. (Studies in social psychology in World War II)*. Princeton University Press.
Subramanian, Ajantha. 2019. *The caste of merit: engineering education in India*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
Taïeb, Caroline. 2020. Discrimination Against Japan's Burakumin Community. *Books & ideas*. Books & ideas.
Tilche, Alice, and Edward Simpson. 2018. Marriage and the crisis of peasant society in Gujarat, India. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 45. Routledge: 1518–1538. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2018.1477759.
Tilly, Charles. 1998. *Durable inequality*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Veblen, Thorstein. 1899. *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study in the Evolution of Institutions*. United States: Macmillan.
Vogt, W., and Philippe Besnard. 1979. Un durkheimien ambivalent : Célestin Bouglé, 1870-1940. *Revue française de sociologie* 20: 123–139.
Waters, Tony, and Dagmar Waters. 2010. The new Zeppelin University translation of Weber's 'Class, Status, Party.' *Journal of Classical Sociology* 10. SAGE Publications: 153–158. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468795X10361517.
Weber, Max. 2010. The distribution of power within the community: Classes, Stände, Parties. Translated by Dagmar Waters, Tony Waters, Elisabeth Hahnke, Maren Lippke, Eva Ludwig-Glück, Daniel Mai, Nina Ritzi-Messner, Christina Veldhoen, and Lucas Fassnacht. *Journal of Classical Sociology* 10: 137–152.
Weber, Max. 2015. *Hindouisme et bouddhisme*. Paris: Flammarion.
Wilkerson, Isabel. 2020. *Caste: the origins of our discontents*. First edition. New York: Random House.