and the whites as the oppressors. Christ was always on the side of the oppressed. Hence the movement for the liberation of the Blacks was considered as the work of God Himself. The Black Christian theology which ran parallel to White Christianity gave the Blacks a new basis of identity, legitimizing their efforts towards self-determination and their efforts to gain honour and prestige. Black theology was the language of 'revolution' against White supremacy and provided a double-edged ideology for the Black movement.

Thus, certain sections of the Blacks and Backward Classes reinterpreted Christianity and Hinduism respectively. The new ideology provided the language of protest and aggression against the opposition groups. The Blacks and the Backward Classes are far removed from each other in terms of their society and culture. But in their attempts to organize protest movements they made use of the same ideology of reinterpreting the religions to which they belonged in order to gain self-respect, honour and esteem and to fight against the opposition reference groups.

Certain other sections of the Blacks and the Backward Classes worked out another type of response to 'oppression'. They abandoned the religions to which they belonged and embraced a different religion. A section of the Blacks gave up Christianity in utter frustration; identifying it with White domination, and embraced Islam. The leader of the Black Muslim movement, Elijah Muhammad, rejected Christianity as the Whiteman's religion and eschewed all that was White, including White surnames. Thus, the Black Muslim movement established a new identity for Black self-determination on the one hand, and served as a form of protest against the religion of the Whites on the other.

Under the leadership of Malcolm X, Black Muslim ideology was linked with African nationalism and Black civilization. The establishment of an African heritage served to establish a new identity, which was different from the Western civilization complex. The glorification of African symbolism by the Blacks meant rejection of the White civilization and an assertion that their civilization was more ancient than and superior to Western civilization. African heritage as a source of new identity was also emphasized by Marcus Garvey and Du Bois.

Marcus Garvey's movement may be seen as combining the two themes of protest ideology, namely, reinterpretation of Christianity and rejection of American society and culture, and adoption of the

African heritage.   It is necessary to point out that one theme in the
protest ideology can complement another as they are logically com-
patible with each other under the rubric of protest.   Whereas an ac-
quiescent ideology cannot be combined with a theme of protest
ideology as there is a logical opposition between the two. If, in any
particular case, a movement starts with an acquiescent ideology and
gives it up and develops a protest ideology, the two should be consi-
dered as separate movements and not as different phases of the same
movement, because the two identities are different in kind.

The principle of rejection was also followed by a section of the
Backward Classes led by Ambedkar, the leader of the Mahar move-
ment.   He abandoned Hinduism, which he identified with brah-
manical and upper caste domination, and embraced Buddhism
which was the symbol of egalitarianism.   Similarly, Ramaswamy
Naicker, the leader of the D.K. movement, abandoned all that was
Aryan religion, language and culture, and adopted the Dravidian re-
ligion, language and culture.   This new identity provided the basis
for establishing self-determination, respect and hohour on the one
hand, and for protesting against the domination of the upper castes
on the other.   Thus, both the Blacks and the Backward Classes
adopted the same principle of rejection of the religion and culture
of the oppressors in establishing new identities.   They adopted new
religions which were symbolic of freedom from oppression.

New identities are established not only on the basis of a religious-
cultural ideology but also on the basis of a secular one, with civil
rights and class-conflict themes.   The former, when viewed as an at-
tempt to claim equality of status through democratic means, is ex-
emplified by many backward classes movements fighting for basic
secular rights such as right of admission to schools, right of recruit-
ment to government jobs and right of adult suffrage.   For example,
these programmes were part of the SNDP and Mahar movements.
A point to be noted here is that the leaders of these movements
adopted both religious-cultural and civil rights ideology simultaneous-
ly in their efforts to attain equality of status with the dominant groups
on the ritual and the secular planes.

Among the Blacks, the adoption of a civil rights ideology as a
form of protest was used by the leaders of the civil rights move-
ments—Du Bois (NAACP) and Martin Luther King (SCLC).   While
Du Bois also made use of the cultural symbolism of pan-Africanism
and Negro identity to spearhead his legalistic programmes, Martin

Luther King used the Black Church as the basis of organizing non-violent civil struggles.   Thus they combined both religious-cultural and secular civil rights ideologies.

While the civil rights ideology operates within the framework of democracy, the class-conflict ideology is part of communism.   It drives a wedge between the deprived sections and the dominant groups. As members of the exploited class, the former wish to achieve liberation through class struggle.   The secular ideology of class conflict was adopted by the Black Power and Black Panther movements.   The ideological basis of both movements came from Frantz Fanon who considered racism not as an independent phenomenon but rather as being dependent upon hierarchical relations imposed by a group with a technical advantage over another.   Fanon (1971:31) extended Marx to consider the relations of production themselves as forming a superstructure of exploitation and which would disappear only through a struggle for political liberation (Zolberg, 1970:174).   Thus it was relations of production plus racism which provided the ideology for a section of the Blacks.   In this approach, the Blacks were doubly oppressed—they not only formed part of the proletariat but were victims of racial discrimination.   It gave them a new identity to fight against White colonialism and capitalism.

Among th: Backward Classes, the Dalit Panthers adopted the ideology of class conflict and anti-caste Hindu feeling. The new identity that emerged based on these two principles enabled the young urban Mahars to attack the upper caste Hindu capitalists.   Thus, a section of both the Blacks and the Backward Classes used the principle of class-conflict along with an ethnic element to establish new identities.   While the former belonged to the secular domain, the latter was part of the religious-cultural syndrome as we have seen earlier.   With this new identity they could attack the double-faced enemy, the white-capitalist and the caste Hindu-capitalist.

This shows that the two seemingly opposite principles—secular class conflict and religious-cultural—can be seen as transformations. The secular ideology can be recoded into the religious-cultural one and vice versa.   At a higher level of abstraction, the opposition is overcome through transformation.   The secular and the religious principles can be made to achieve the same end, namely, that of establishing a new identity for self-determination and for attacking the monopolies of first-class citizens over religious, economic, educational and political goods and services.

Notes

1. An explanation in this direction has been indicated with reference to the SNDP movement.
2. The general category of Backward Classes consists of three specific categories: scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and the other backward classes. The first two are scheduled in the Constitution and are entitled to economic, educational and political privileges (Moorthy, 1975). The third one, generally consisting of lower and middle level clean Hindu castes, are entitled only to economic and educational privileges based on economic criteria of backwardness. But there is considerable variation, in respect of groups receiving the benefits, from one state to another. For the purposes of this paper, scheduled tribes are left out. The scheduled castes form the main focus. The other backward classes are also referred to wherever they are relevant. While the scheduled castes constituted 14.6 per cent of the total population of India in 1971, the Blacks formed 11 per cent of the total American population in 1970.

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