General Conclusion

Introduction
The typology of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism represents a model of inculturation in the Indian context. It also represents a model for theologizing in the Indian context, since this model has been adopted by later theologians in India especially in the wake of the call for renewal given by the Second Vatican Council. But we can ask whether or not Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism as a model for inculturation and theologizing stands on reasonable grounds. A corollary to the thesis consists in the suggestion that Upadhyay’s theology operates with the same cultural presuppositions as of Western classical theology which he wanted to replace. In other words, the cultural presuppositions of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism seem to be a mirror image of western classical theology. The common denominator shared by Indian Christian theologians like Upadhyay and those of Western theology of his time (also colonial Orientalists) are the presuppositions about culture which has been termed as ‘classicism.’ Classicism has been defined as ‘the aesthetic and cultural perspective guided by admiration for what are perceived as classical qualities: order, maturity, harmony, balance, moderation.’ Further, the central models for works striving to achieve these qualities are the artistic, literary and architectural works of the classical period of Greece, Rome and India.

In this general conclusion, we shall first delineate the classical horizon which is embedded in a specific worldview. Then, in the second section, we shall describe a perspective which moves away from the classicist presuppositions and which is in a position to take cultural identities concretely, namely, the empirical approach to cultural identity.

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1 The pioneering efforts of Upadhyay were continued by a group of Jesuits known as the ‘Calcutta School.’ The members of this group (G. Dandoy, Bayart, and Pierre Johanns) were joined by Animananda, once time friend of Upadhyay. These scholars wanted to relate Christianity with the Hindu philosophical systems and with this end in view, they began a journal called *The Light from the East* in 1922. For details, see, Joseph Mattam, *Land of the Trinity* (Bangalore: TPI, 1975).
1. Cultural Identity: Classicist Perspectives

Here, classicist notion refers to that monolithic frame of reference of interpretation which tends to perceive, define and represent reality predominantly through an ethnocentric or normative framework. The classicist approach to reality embedded in western classical theology operates with some important assumptions about culture.

1.1 Culture: Classicist Assumptions

The western civilization and concomitantly, western theology had been deeply rooted in the Greek notions and ideals of culture. One of the central elements of the Greek idea of culture consisted in the ideal of ‘human perfection’ which was reflected in the concept of areté and paideia. In the Greek view, both the external and internal aspects of human beings are deliberately produced by a conscious process of selection and discipline. This process of education was confined to one small class within the state – the nobility or the aristocrats. For the Greeks culture was the process of deliberate guidance and formation of human character and an intrinsic element of Greek ideal of culture was rationality. If culture was conceived as a ‘privilege’ due to ‘noble birth,’ in Greek view, there could be no higher claim to such a privilege than that inherent in the nature of man as a rational being. The Greek cultural development, instead of ‘vulgarizing’ what was noble, sought to ennoble the human race by offering it a programme for a higher life, which was the life of reason. The central idea of paideia consisted in the perfection of Greek citizens through education and cultivation of character and this idea is reflected in Greek philosophy, epics and in Greek Tragedies of fifth to fourth century BCE. Here, the ideals of perfection, nobility and character came to be

Jaeger explains the meaning of areté: ‘The root of the word is the same as that of ἀρετος, the word which shows superlative ability and superiority; and ἀρετος was constantly used in the plural to denote the nobility. There is no complete equivalent for the word areté in modern English: its oldest meaning is a combination of proud and courtly morality with warlike valour. But the idea of areté is the quintessence of early Greek aristocratic education.’ Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Vol. 1, Archaic Greece, the Mind of Athens*, trans. Gilbert Highet (English translation first published in 1939. Second edition reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1973) 5.

In ancient Greece, originally the concept of paideia had applied only to the process of education. But during the time of Sophists its significance grew to include the objective side, the content of paideia – just as our word culture or the Latin cultura, having once meant the process of education, came to mean the state of being educated; and then the content of education, and finally, the whole intellectual and spiritual world revealed by education, into which any individual, according to his nationality or social position, is born. The historical process by which the world of culture is built up culminates when the ideal of culture is consciously formulated. It was used to describe all the artistic forms and the intellectual and aesthetic achievements of their race, in fact the whole content of their tradition. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Vol. 1, Archaic Greece, the Mind of Athens*, 303.


equated with culture. These ideals of perfection, which were seen as the highest and noblest achievements of cultural domain, were also limited to select groups.

An important aspect of the Greek ideal and concept of culture pertains to what may be termed as the 'construction of the barbarian.' The ancient Greeks found non-Greek speaking world unintelligible and termed this alien world as 'barbarians.' The Greeks used the term barbarian specifically for the Persians, their generic opponents. As Edith Hall has pointed out, 'Greeks writing about barbarians is usually an exercise in self-definition, for the barbarian is often portrayed as the opposite of the ideal Greek.' This identity politics is reflected in Aristotelian rhetoric as well as in numerous Greek Tragedies.

Thinkers of European Renaissance and Enlightenment borrowed these Greek ideals of culture as 'cultivation' of mind, human character and potential. According to this view, culture removes imperfections, roots and all, and prepares the mind for seed sowing. Here, culture came to be equated with ideals and perfections which humans ought to form themselves. Thus, the notion of culture itself came to be equated with 'high culture,' which denotes refinement, sublime aspects of human living, and perfection. Perhaps one of the well known

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6 As Walter Ong points out, the concept of the 'barbarian' developed out of a cultural relationship focused on linguistic behaviour. The original barbarian was the man who could not speak Greek. Etymologically, barbaros seems to be an onomatopoeic word, imitating the supposed sound of strange tongues – the Latin balbutiare, to stammer, appears to have similar roots. Walter Ong, The Barbarian Within (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968) 265.


8 Edith Hall, Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1989) 1. Edith Hall points out that the idea of the barbarian as the generic opponent to Greek civilization was the result of the rise of Persia and the subsequent sharpening of Hellenic self-consciousness. Ibid, 9.

9 In Aristotelian political discourse, the 'barbarians and the slaves are the same nature' and the barbarians have 'no class of natural rulers' and because of this reason he concludes that the Greeks should rule barbarians. Aristotle, Politics, Trans. H. Rackham (London; William Heinemann, 1972) 7.

10 Aristotelian discourse about the barbarian is not an isolated instance, but rather a reflection of an deep rooted ethnocentric Greek-consciousness evident by the fifth century BCE as attested by the portrayal of the barbarian in the Greek tragedies. By the fifth century, the Athenian theatre had about a thousand tragedies and about three hundred something is missing; half of these tragedies portrayed barbarian characters and referred to barbarian customs and their alleged inferiority. Edith Hall, Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy, 1.

11 As Jaeger points out, when the humanists of the Renaissance revived the spiritual heritage of classical antiquity, they adopted along with the classical cultural ideal the Greek conception of the nobility or dignity of man. Werner Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Vol. I, Archaic Greece, the Mind of Athens, trans. Gilbert Highet, note 6, p. 418.

12 K. Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997) 4.
portrayals of culture as the pursuit of refinement, perfection of human beings, and as the quest for noble aspirations, was propounded by Mathew Arnold (1822-1888) in his book *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). In this book Arnold described culture as having its origin in the ‘love of perfection.’ Here, he described culture as ‘a study of perfection.’\(^{13}\) He further describes culture as an ‘inward condition of the mind and spirit.’\(^{14}\) Like the classicist notion, Arnold’s notion of culture conceived it as the embodiment of the highest aspiration of humanity. The creators and custodians of these high ideals are the elite of society. Arnoldian concept of culture as ‘high culture’ gained currency in the nineteenth century.

Christian theology operated right up to the twentieth century within the framework of classicist assumptions about culture. One of the significant classicist assumptions about culture was the normative approach to culture. A normative understanding of culture takes one culture, usually a dominant culture, as the norm by which all other cultures are to be judged. In the normative view of culture, one culture is perceived as the standard, and yardstick. If other cultures do not measure up to the standards of this one particular culture, then those cultures are seen as uncivilized, barbaric, and illiterate. Christian missionaries wanted to share their cultural treasure embodied in Christianity with the Indians with a view of uplifting them or civilizing them. Within this perspective, Christian theology represented the pursuit towards perfection. According to Lonergan, ‘the classicist notion of culture was normative: at least *de jure* there was but one culture that was both universal and permanent; to its norms and ideals might aspire the uncultured, whether they were young or the people or the native or the barbarians.’\(^{15}\) Classical culture was a matter of acquiring and assimilating the tastes and skills, the ideals, virtues, that were pressed upon one in a good home and through a curriculum in the liberal arts.\(^{16}\)

The cultural assumptions of classicism had some important implications for the Christian self-understanding and for its approach to other cultures. Given the universal presuppositions

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\(^{15}\) B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Minnesota: The Seabury Press, 1979) p. xi. It is necessary to note that in Lonergan’s analysis, classical ideals represent a specific frame of reference which was or is operative in science, philosophy, theology, and anthropology.

entailed within the classicist frame, there wasn’t much room for historicity and historical consciousness. According to Lonergan, classicism is non-historical, for ‘it has no capacity to apprehend history, it has no historical sense – it does not know what it means by historical sense, namely, the apprehension of a mind at work in an entirely different way from one’s own.’

In the classicist frame, what was true about human beings in Rome, therefore, has to be true in India as well. As Lonergan points out the classicist believed that ‘he could encapsulate culture in the universal, the normative, the ideal, the immutable, that, while times would change, still the changes necessary would be minor, accidental, of no serious significance.’ The result of such classicist assumptions amounted to ignoring and almost denying facts. For instance, the fact of the existence of other cultures could not be taken into account; the fact that there are other ways of thinking could not be recognized; the fact that there are different ways of organizing life in different parts of the world could not be accommodated within the classicist frame of reference. For the classicist what really mattered was the ideal of one culture. Given the classicist assumptions with its propensity to universalize, there has been a failure to grasp the ‘concrete,’ the hallmark of modern method of inquiry. Lonergan explains the classicist way of apprehending reality:

Everything is just an instance of the universal, the ideal, the exemplar, the norm, the law, the model. The classicist has no apparatus for apprehending what it is to go beyond the universal law, ideal, exemplar, into the concrete. He does not apprehend the concrete, the particular, in its endless detail and variety and difference...If you know the universal, you know all that is of any importance, there is no use of getting down to the concrete.

Christian truths were expressed in and through particular cultural categories, but then this objectification was universalized and made normative for the entire Church. Within this frame, what was valid in Europe was valid in all parts of the world. Plurality of expression had very little room within the classicist frame of thought. Given the normative

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understanding of culture, the classicist understanding could not take into account the plurality of cultures. That Christian proclamation was carried out in uniform ways in the past was only a logical correspondence of the cultural presupposition of classicism. It engendered a misconception regarding the unity of faith; it equated uniformity of expression with the unity of faith. Classicism did not or rather, could not take into account differentiations of cultures but simply set up its own as the ideal and generously offered to instruct others in its own ways.

1.2 Upadhyay’s Cultural Assumptions

So far we described Western theology’s assumptions about culture which was normative and ahistorical. It is the same cultural assumptions that we see in Upadhyay’s approach to culture. If Western theology set up the Greco-Roman classical culture as model, Upadhyay adopted classical Indian/Aryan culture for his theological enterprise. For Brahmabandhhab this classical Indian culture represented the ‘high-culture’ which was a culture of refinement. He consistently wrote about this culture as the embodiment of Aryan ideals. As we have seen already, for Upadhyay, the philosophical achievements of this culture rose higher than that of the Western counterpart.

Upadhyay sets up the classical Indian culture as the norm to evaluate other cultures. It is precisely because of his normative understanding that Upadhyay constantly spoke about the ancient classical/Aryan culture as the embodiment of Indian wisdom and cultural achievements. This culture for Upadhyay represents the ‘Hindu genius.’ Within this perspective of Upadhyay, non-Aryan cultures such as of the Dravidians and the tribals represent primitive, barbaric and unrefined. As we had noted, for Brahmabandhhab, India’s decline was caused by the mixing of non-Aryans who could not ‘live up to the high ideals of

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21 The word usually used in designating ‘culture’ in several Indian languages is samskriti or sanskar which denotes refinement and cultivation.

22 Like the Ancient Greeks, the ancient Aryans in India found the non-Aryan world of meaning unintelligible and branded them as mlecchas. Mleccha in Sanskrit means the one who speaks indistinctly. It means a foreigner who cannot speak Sanskrit. See, Monier-Monier Williams, The Sanskrit-English Dictionary (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 2002) 837. This connotation of ‘indistinct speech’ connected to Mleccha is strikingly similar to the meaning attached to the term ‘barbarian.’ The term mleccha originally meant the one who is not familiar with Sanskrit speech or the one who spoke an alien language. The etymology of mleccha goes back to the Sanskrit root vdc which denotes speech. The pali word for mleccha is milakkha and Buddhist sources describe milakkha as referring to the non-Aryan people such as the Andhra, Tamil etc. see, Romila Thapar, Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1996) 138. Constructions of the barbarians and the mlecchas are part and parcel of dealing with ‘otherness’ and ‘difference.’
the Aryans.' In the essentialized and hegemonic discursive practices of Upadhyay the Indian cultural identity was equated with the Aryan cultural ethos.

Upadhyay who sought to de-Europeize Christianity in India adopts the same cultural perspectives of the European Christianity. It is in this sense that this thesis suggests that the cultural presupposition of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism is a mirror-image of Western classical theology. Right up to 1960s the Catholic Church used Latin in its liturgical domain which ordinary people did not understand. The assumption here rests on the conviction of the Church that Latin represents the noble and refined aspect of European culture. It did not matter whether people understood it or not; it is highly unlikely that majority of ordinary folks even in Europe understood Latin. What was applicable in Europe was also applicable everywhere. Upadhyay wrote Sanskrit hymns about trinity as part of making Christianity intelligible. The cultural presupposition of Upadhyay is a replica of the theology of Western Christianity.

2. Cultural Identity: Empirical Perspectives
If there are serious limitations in Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism and the notion of cultural identity, they are not immediately theological or philosophical. Rather these limitations pertain to a prior horizon, namely, the understanding and approach to culture. It is at this level the Self and the Other are interpreted by Brahmabandhab Upadhyay. Our identities involve cultural filters and it is important to ask what sort of cultural filter that we employ, consciously or unconsciously, in the creation of identities. More importantly perhaps, we need to ask whether our approach to cultural identities rest on reasonable grounds.

2.1 Empirical Approach to Cultural identity
This thesis suggests that the classicist notion, as exemplified both in the Western theological tradition and in Upadhyay’s theological endeavors, is unable to take into cognizance other cultures because it represents basically a non-anthropological and non-historical approach to culture. A question can be asked: if classicist assumptions lead to distorted or inadequate ways of approaching culture, is there an alternate way? This study suggests that only if we can move away from the classicist assumptions of culture can we approach culture and cultural identity in a meaningful way; simultaneously it requires a moving away from normative approach to an empirical approach to culture and cultural identity. By empirical approach is meant an approach which is characterized by the attention paid to concrete data
in a given type of investigation. In this section we shall focus on the meaning of empirical approach to cultural identity.

With the emergence of social sciences such as sociology and anthropology in the nineteenth century our understanding of culture has changed significantly. There is a big difference between anthropological and non-anthropological sense of culture. While the non-anthropological understanding of culture entails non-empirical or normative approach, an anthropological view is based on empirical approach to culture. If classicism gave centrality to a normative understanding of culture, the modern understanding of culture is fundamentally empirical. The mediation of meaning in these two horizons, namely, the classicist and modern, are considerably different. Here, we need to note the fact that the empirical approach to culture, which is relatively new, takes each culture on its own terms. This modern approach to culture tries to study each culture or aspects of a culture by empirical means and research methods. An empirical view takes each culture concretely; it tries to see what is there and not what should be there.

### 2.2 Significance of Empirical Approach

In the first place, an empirical approach takes cultures and cultural identities as meaning systems. In an empirical understanding, a given culture is conceived as a set of meanings and values that informs a way of life. From an empirical perspective, if we conceive culture as a meaning system, then there can be no such thing as a high culture or a low culture. Each culture has developed a meaning system, perhaps over centuries, which is meaningful to a given group of people. Further, there is an intrinsic intelligibility contained within the meaning system embodied in symbols, categories, thought patterns, which need not lend itself to be intelligible immediately to those outside the system. The empirical approach is keenly aware that cultures are created by human beings and they are subject to development and decay. Lonergan describes the notion of culture primarily, but not exclusively, through the mediation of meaning:

> A culture is simply a set of meanings and values that inform the way of life of a community. Cultures can decline rapidly, but they develop only slowly, for development is a matter of coming to understand new meanings and coming to accept higher values. Moreover, any notable culture has a long history; it has borrowed from other cultures; it has adapted what it borrowed into its new context; it has effected the development of its own patrimony. Cultures are many and varied; they all have their
good points and their deficiencies; and the ideal culture is far far rarer than the ideal man.\textsuperscript{23}

Secondly, an empirical approach is characterized by the complexities of contexts. The classicist postulation of culture in terms of 'high culture' is not context-bound entity which anthropologists and historians speak about. High culture "is not some particular way of taking things that one can set alongside of others, but a way of taking the whole of what has been commonly said and thought, a way of critically subjecting that whole to standards of excellence."\textsuperscript{24} In contrast to the notion of high culture, modern notion of culture recognizes cultural variations in its concreteness. Clearly, such a view involves a pluralistic notion of cultures. The difference between classicist and modern anthropological concepts of culture is one of epistemology; an anthropological approach to culture, from the epistemological viewpoint is empirical and contextual. Lonergan outlines such modern mediation of culture:

While classicist culture conceived itself normatively and abstractly, modern culture conceives itself empirically and concretely. It is the culture that recognizes cultural variation, difference, development, breakdown, that investigates each of the many cultures of mankind, that studies their histories, that seeks to understand what the classicist would tend to write off as strange or uncultivated or barbaric. Instead of thinking of man in terms of a nature common to all men... it attends to men in their concrete living.\textsuperscript{25}

Thirdly, an empirical approach to culture and cultural identity pays attention to the dynamics of history. The classicist approach, with its normative understanding of cultural identity, was not in a position to be attentive to historical factors. In contrast, an empirical approach investigates the historical contexts and dynamics which shapes and moulds culture and cultural identity. An understanding of historicity and cultural mediation becomes crucial in the empirical horizon.\textsuperscript{26} This approach pays attention to the data of history and proceeds to interpret historical factors accordingly.

\textsuperscript{23} B. Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology, A Second Collection," p. 232.

\textsuperscript{24} Kathryn Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology, 4.


\textsuperscript{26} Lonergan points out that ‘to grasp the empirical notion of culture leads to a grasp of what is meant by a person’s historicity.’ He delineates the meaning of historicity: “What counts in a person’s life is what he does and says and thinks. But all human doings, saying, thinking occurs within the context of a culture and consists in the main in using the culture. But cultures change; they wax and wane; meanings become refined or blunted; value judgments improve or deteriorate. In brief, cultures have histories. It is the culture as it is historically available that provided the matrix within which persons develop and that supplies the meanings and values that inform their lives. People cannot help being people of their age, and that mark of time upon them is their historicity”. B. Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology, A Second Collection," p. 233.
Fourthly, an empirical approach recognizes plurality of cultures and cultural identities. In the classicist approach culture is understood in the singular and that culture belonged to the elite, the refined who possess the high culture. In contrast "to an anthropological notion of culture, high culture is an evaluative and exclusivist concept: not all persons are cultured and those who are are better than those who are not." Further, "unlike the anthropological notion, high culture is not a term highlighting differences among those who display it. General processes of refinement and the basic nature of the results need not vary over time and space. Differences among the cultured are at most quantitative, matters of degree: one can be more or less cultured." Tanner describes the 'singular' nature of high culture: "The word culture when used in a high culture or evaluative sense is therefore found in the singular rather than the plural: there is a high culture to be shared in varying degrees by cultured persons, but no high cultures." This type of understanding of culture is not uncommon in Indian theological discourses when it speaks constantly about 'Indian culture' in the 'singular.' By this 'Indian culture' these theological discourses mean, very much like Upadhyay, the classical heritage embodied in Indian philosophy, art and literature. Although there is a tendency in Indian theological discourses to project culture as a key ingredient in theology especially after the Second Vatican Council, the understanding of culture in many of these contemporary discourses tend to fall back on the heritage of Indian high culture.

In contrast to the classicist concept of culture in the 'singular,' one of the central features of empirical approach to culture is the recognition of plurality of cultures. In this pluralistic perspective, all people have culture but they do not all have the same culture. The 'fact of culture' is common to all, but the particular pattern of culture differs among different groups. Thus, in contrast to the normative approach of the high culture in the singular the anthropologist speaks of cultures in the plural. This anthropological understanding has important implications in the way cultural identities are perceived in the sense that here cultures are relativized.

27 Kathryn Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology, 5.
28 Kathryn Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology, 5.
29 Italics in the original. Kathryn Tanner, Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology, 5.
Fifthly, empirical approach is extremely important if we are to analyze cultural constructions. The postulation here consists in the premise that most identity constructions may have ideological foundations which are hegemonic. The problem involved in the hegemonic discursive practices of identity politics as exemplified in Upadhyay’s writings consists in the issue of occlusion and exclusion of those who are at the cultural periphery which contributes and legitimizes marginalization. Here lies the crux of the problem of identity construction, namely, the complex constructions of identity in which Self-Other are implicated, also generates cultural fault-lines. Often investigation on the sources of marginalization focuses almost exclusively on economic factors without paying sufficient attention to the cultural factors involved in it. And as Amartya Sen points out, a good deal of contemporary economic theory proceeds as if people do not have any sense of identity with anyone other than themselves. In vast majority of cases, those who are culturally marginalized tend to be also economically and politically marginalized. It is from this perspective that we need to understand the effects and implications of hegemonic identity construction which excludes certain sections from the socio-cultural domain.

**Conclusion**

The central problem with Upadhyay’s notion of identity consists in its essentialized view of identity which fails to take the linguistic, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of India. The challenge facing multicultural societies like India consists precisely in facing the issue of diversity in terms of traditions, cultures and religions. One of the key issues in dealing with the question of identity in multicultural societies such as India is the binary opposition between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other.’ The existence of others is crucial in defining and locating one’s own place in the world. To put it differently, the Self-Other constructions occupy a central place in the creation of one’s own identity and that of others. The basic philosophical questions in this context are: how are we to understand and interpret the Other? How are we to deal with ‘difference?’ These questions assume considerable complexity in India, a country of diverse cultures, languages and religions.

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30 F. Franco describes the nexus between identity construction and exclusion: “The problem of cultural exclusion linked to the debates on identity has become decisive in plural societies. Cultural exclusion occurs, first, when a person or group is not allowed to participate in society in the way that others are allowed and encouraged to do; second, when society’s dominant group or majority denies recognition of a lifestyle that a group would choose, and this intolerance can include the insistence that members of the group must live exactly like others (the majority).” Fernando Franco, ed., *Globalization and Marginalization: Our Global Apostolic Response* (Rome: Social Justice Secretariat, 2006) 24.

The problem involved in the Self-Other symbiosis is the dialectics of 'difference.' Facing the reality of difference of the Other can evoke various types of responses. In the first type of response, the Other is seen merely as tabula rasa, a person with no self-hood, no story, no particularity and no history. Difference is then made over into sameness. In the second type, the Other is experienced as a threat. In the third type of response the Other is seen as so different that he or she is seen as some exotic being who does not have to be taken seriously. The challenge involved in the cross-cultural encounter consists in recognizing and respecting the Other as the Other which requires sensitivity to differences. Hegemonic discourses tend to obliterate real differences. The inclusion of the Other requires acceptance and respect for fundamental differences. The inclusive community is not a collective which forces its members to renounce their distinctiveness. The inclusion of the Other means rather that the boundaries of the community are open for all, also and most especially for those who are strangers to one another and want to remain strangers.32

The inclusivist approach requires multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is the expression of a determination not to let any claim to universality swallow up or iron out differences. It is the expression of a protest of local cultures against more powerful ones, against any sort of homogenization. Modern nation-states or large linguistic communities or world-religions contain numerous internal differences. Multiculturalism stands up for the claim of small segments, as against letting large constructs swallow up internal differences.33 Such framework demands recognition of differences. If we take these perspectives, the modern world will be seen as demanding a philosophy of multiculturalism in the right sense, a theory of intercultural understanding, and a concept of unity which tolerates differences.34

In a multicultural country like India the prospect of making Christianity intelligible entails a challenging task. Upadhyay contributed in a significant way towards the process of indigenizing Indian Catholicism through his own life and through his intellectual quest. He laid not only the foundations of a fundamental theology but also propounded a rudimentary form of 'inclusivism' in the field of theology of religions in India. He became a source of

inspiration for the subsequent generations of theologians who wanted to make Christian message intelligible in India. While acknowledging his contributions we need also to be aware of the questionable assumptions contained in the constructions of identity implicit in his attempts because it represents hegemonic discourse about national identity with a highly restrictive reading of Indian past inherited from the Orientalist-colonial representational idioms. Moreover, as history testifies abundantly, narrowly defined identities with a view of hegemony, usually breeds intolerance. Tagore, who had an expansive view of Indian identity, was critical of Upadhyay’s approach to identity. Brahmabandhab Upadhyay was a man of his times, trying to interpret Hindu-Catholic identity out of the exigencies of historical circumstances of nascent nationalism. However, the critique of Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholicism in no way diminishes the significance of his original contribution towards the Church in India.