General Introduction

Introduction
British colonialism introduced a narrative break in Indian history in the sense that it created the condition for the possibility for the Indian nationalists to evolve a new political consciousness in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Within this narrative break Brahmabandhab Upadhyay (1861-1907), along with other nationalists, played an important role in forging a sense of collective cultural identity and in formulating rudimentary notions of nationhood. The preface to Char Adhyay, a political novel which explores the inner struggle of radical nationalists written by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), states that the inspiration for the novel was the life of Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, a Catholic theologian, and Vedantic scholar, editor, social worker and nationalist revolutionary, who had been an advocate of violence and terror as a political means to achieve India’s independence.\(^1\) Tagore, who was fascinated by the personality of Brahmabandhab, describes in the preface his last meeting with the radical nationalist:

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\text{In those days [swadeshi] of blinding madness, one day when I was sitting alone in a third floor room at Jorasanko, suddenly came Upadhyay. In our conversation we recapitulated some of the issues we had discussed earlier. After the chat he bid me goodbye and got up. He went up to the door, turned towards me and stood. Then said, ‘Rabibabu, I have fallen very low.’ After this he did not wait any longer. I clearly understood that it was only to say these heart-rending words that he had come in the first place. But by then he had been caught in the web of his actions, there was no means of escape... At the beginning of the novel this event needed to be recounted.}\(^2\)
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In the novel, through the character of the protagonist Indranath, a revolutionary leader, Tagore tries to capture not only the politics of identity based on radicalism in the first decades of the twentieth century, but also the inner turmoil of Brahmabandhab Upadhyay who had

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advocated violence as a political means towards the final phase of his life.\(^3\) Upadhyay’s concerns were centered on the loss of Self under colonialism and the efforts to recover that Self through radical means. Such loss and recovery are aptly summarized by Tagore in *Char Adhyay* through the protagonist Indranath, the prototype of Upadhyay: “It’s not the question whether the British are good or bad. Their rule is one of foreign exploitation, killing our very soul within us. I only show human intelligence by trying to get rid of this unnatural situation.”\(^4\) As the preface to *Char Adhyay* indicates, on the ideological level Tagore and Upadhyay had drifted apart.\(^5\) In *Char Adhyay* Tagore engages a critique of terrorism and violence when revolutionary terrorism was a symbol of courage, sacrifice and heroism. More to the point, the novel asserts that the good of human being cannot be achieved by the destructive methods.

As Tagore has rightly observed, Brahmabandhab Upadhyay had straddled multiple identities: as a Catholic theologian, Vedantic scholar, journalist, social worker and nationalist revolutionary. Perhaps one of the most significant identities assumed by Upadhyay, who has been called the ‘father of Indian Christian theology,’\(^6\) was what he termed as ‘Hindu-Catholic.’ His concept of Hindu-Catholic was an entirely new form of identity by which he sought to synthesize Hinduism and Christianity. In Upadhyay’s estimation, Christianity in general and Roman Catholicism in particular, besides being esoteric, was alien to the cultural ethos of the people of India. Upadhyay, a disciple of Keshub Chandra Sen and friend of Vivekananda, advocated indigenization of Christianity at the tail end of the nineteenth century. With this end in view, Upadhyay sought to vest Christianity with Indian ‘garb’ and restate Christian faith through Indian philosophical categories which aimed at making it more intelligible to the Hindu population. In his quest to restate Christianity in Indian context

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\(^3\) See the English translation of *Char Adhyay*, Rabindranath Tagore, *Four Chapters* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002).

\(^4\) Rabindranath Tagore, *Four Chapters*, 29.


Brahmabandhab propounded a new synthesis between Christianity and Hinduism with the hope of forging a new Christian identity.

This thesis focuses on Brahmabandhab Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic and the notion of identity contained in it. This introductory chapter consists of five sections: (1) Statement of the thesis (2) the objectives of the thesis (3) survey of literature (4) scope and limits of the study and (5) data, method, and the structure of the study.

1. Stating the Thesis
This section delineates the central thesis of the present study in terms of (1) statement of the problem and the questions involved in the study and (2) thesis statement.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Across the contemporary world there is considerable interest regarding the question of identity which seems to continue to exert immense power over nations, ethnic-linguistic groups, religious communities, and political ideologies. Among various configurations of identities, religious identity seems to hold considerable sway in contemporary world in general and in Indian context in particular. At a very fundamental level the question of identity refers to the most basic human experience of self-understanding or self-definition; it relates to the questions, ‘who we are’ and ‘where we belong.’ If, for some, the emphasis on identity is a threat to democracy and an incitement of potential conflict, for others, it is a struggle long overdue.7

Religion provides one of the significant mediations in identity formation. Sociologists and anthropologists, in spite of their skepticism regarding the ontological status of religion, consider one of the important functions of religion as providing a ‘web of meaning’ or an intelligible framework to interpret reality in a comprehensive manner.8 There is a long established tradition within sociology and anthropology which tends to see religion not only as an agent in socio-cultural cohesion but also as a significant mediation in forging identity.


k. ‘gious identity is deeply implicated in the meaning system which religious tradition seems to provide to its adherents. Religious identity helps them to locate themselves in the complex network of social relations.

However, we need to recognize some of the ambiguities and ambivalences involved in religious identity. Historically speaking, few things seem to have gripped human imagination so totally and invoked human passions as intensely as religious identity. On the one hand, religious imaginations have brought out the most sublime aspects of humanity. People have made supreme sacrifices for the sake of religion, often with their own lives. We see so many men and women renouncing the ‘world’ and choosing asceticism as in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. Religious motifs have produced some of the finest masterpieces of art, poems and literature in diverse religious traditions. On the other hand, we see in history misguided beliefs about religious identity leading human beings to commit some of the worst atrocities on fellow human beings. It was Blaise Pascal who said: ‘men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.’ The zeal and tenacity with which humans have defended and offended sacred spaces and religious identities need hardly any elaboration. India, with its long history of communal violence, is no stranger to the brutality perpetrated in the name of God and religion.

If religious identities can foster self-transcendence and bring out the sublime dimensions of humanity, it can also unleash the destructive forces contributing to human diminishment. The difference between these two aspects of religion stems from the way religious identities are constructed, interpreted and handed down to successive generations. Thus, the basic problem of religious identity consists in the question whether or not the construction of it rests on reasonable grounds. It is against this background of ambiguities and various possibilities involved in the construction of religious identity that this study seeks to explore Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic and the notion of identity contained within it. Upadhyay propounded this notion at a time when the Indian society in general and the Hindu society in particular were going through unprecedented transformations within the colonial matrix. Colonial modernity, with its hegemonic discourses and administrative measures, had effected, albeit inadvertently, significant changes in the way Hindu identity came to be interpreted in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the face of what they perceived as
the incursion of colonial modernity into their religion, nationalist leaders like Upadhyay sought to revive and strengthen the Hindu identity.

There are two sets of interrelated questions which guide our investigation. The first set of questions is related to the complex nature of identity. The second one pertains specifically to Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Christian identity and the historical background to it.

The first set of questions pertaining to identity may be formulated as follows: How are national, religious, racial and cultural identities formed and how are they transformed? What are the ideological underpinnings of identity construction? Are identities something that we inherit or are our identities a matter of choice? Is religious identity conceived exclusively or inclusively? Why are so many people so much attached to their religious and ethnic identities that they are willing to kill others and willing to be killed? Is the making of a national or religious identity a clear cut and well defined task that is accomplished once and for all? What are the ideological configurations behind identity constructions?

The second set of questions which guide us in the study of Upadhyay’s notion of Hindu-Catholic identity may be formulated as follows: Against the backdrop of Hindu-Catholic encounter and the nascent nationalism of his times, how does Upadhyay envisage and construct identity? How does he interpret Hindu identity? How does he envisage Christian identity? In what way has his Hindu-Catholicism broken a new ground in terms of theology? What are the social and political configurations of Upadhyay’s concept of identity? What are the implications of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism in terms of inculturation?

1.2 Thesis Statement
Historically, the quest for Indian Christian theology is intrinsically linked to the self-understanding of Western theology which saw itself as normative and universally valid. From the viewpoint of history of theology the emergence of Indian Christian theology has much to do with the attempt to make Christianity intelligible in Indian context. From the time of Roberto de Nobili⁹ it has been pointed out time and again by theologians and thinkers that

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⁹ Roberto De Nobili (1577-1656), who worked mainly in Tamil speaking areas, was one of the first ones to initiate the process of adapting Christianity to the cultural ethos of India. De Nobili, who has been called the 'First Oriental Scholar', realized that he could not possibly come close to people if he remained within the confines of Western Christianity. He put on the garb of a Sannyasi, and closely following the social customs
Hellenized Christian tenets, doctrines, dogmas and ways of life are extrinsic to Indian mind set and if Christianity is to have relevance, then it needs to be presented in a way that is culturally meaningful to Indians. It seems reasonable to suggest that the issue at the very core of making Christian message and Christian identity intelligible in India is one of cultural mediation.

In the context of nascent anti-colonial nationalism which was gathering momentum towards the end of nineteenth century, Upadhyay sought to create a new Christian identity through his concept of Hindu-Catholicism. The images, symbols, metaphors and representational idioms that circulate in Upadhyay’s textual matrix convey complex interpretations, not only of Christian identity but also of emergent Indian national identity. To put it differently, Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic is intertwined with that of national identity. This thesis focuses specifically on Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholicism and the notion of hyphenated identity contained in it. Though his notion of Hindu-Catholic identity breaks a new ground, it also seems to contain aspects which rest on questionable grounds. The central thesis of the study and the problematic can be stated in terms of two interrelated premises:

(1) While Brahmabandhab Upadhyay’s restatement of Christian faith in terms of Hindu-Catholicism reflects a significant change in Hindu-Christian encounter and in Christianity’s approach to non-Christian religious traditions, it represents at the same time hegemonic discourse about Indian identity which is deeply embedded in ethno-cultural nationalism, with a highly restrictive reading of Indian past inherited from the Orientalist-colonial representational idioms.

(2) A corollary to this thesis consists in the premise that the tacit notion of culture contained in theological framework of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism is a mirror image of Western classical theology which he sought to replace.

This study intends to clarify and substantiate the basic premises contained in this thesis statement and its corollary. The terms and references of this thesis statement will be spelled out in the following sections.

2. Thesis Objectives
This section focuses on the following topics: (1) the objectives of the study and (2) the presuppositions of the thesis.

of Brahmins, was able to obtain the assistance of pandits to learn Sanskrit, and the Hindu doctrines. De Nobili who came to be known as Tattvabhodakar or the ‘Preacher of Truth’ was one of the first Christians who made a serious attempt in translating Christianity into locally acceptable idioms.
2.1 Objectives of the Study
The objectives of this study, which follow from the basic premises of the thesis statement, may be formulated as follows. The first objective of this study consists in an investigation of Upadhyay’s postulation of a new Christian identity which represents a significant change of approach in the context of the Hindu-Christian encounter. Against the backdrop of polemical and antagonistic Hindu-Christian encounter within the context of nineteenth century colonial matrix, Upadhyay’s synthesis reflects a new approach to non-Christian religions. This approach, which is based on carefully enunciated social, philosophical, and theological foundations, suggests that if Christian faith is to have relevance in India, it needs to be based on Hindu thought patterns and categories. Moreover, this study also intends to make explicit Upadhyay’s theology of religions, which is implicit in his writings. The implicit theology of religions of Upadhyay breaks a new ground in Christian approach to non-Christian religious traditions. The significance of his theology of religions consists in the fact that it entails a new approach which may be termed as proto-inclusivism, a mid-way position between exclusivism and inclusivism.

The second objective pertains to the cultural dimensions involved in Brahmabandhab’s Hindu-Catholic identity. Upadhyay’s search for a meaningful self-understanding of Christianity was a fundamental quest for identity. This search focused on what it meant to be a Catholic within the socio-cultural matrix of India. Therefore, Upadhyay’s theological imagination is at once intrinsically bound up with cultural imagination. For Upadhyay, whose Hindu-Catholic synthesis is deeply embedded in the ethno-cultural nationalism of the late nineteenth century, the destiny of India was bound up with the destiny of Hindu civilization. These complex nationalist cultural assumptions were incorporated by Upadhyay into his restatement of Christianity.

The third objective consists in the analysis of Upadhyay’s concept of identity embedded in his Hindu-Catholicism. Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholic synthesis entails a highly restrictive and selective interpretation of not only India and its past but also of Indian identity. He was convinced that the present India is in a state of decline due to the result of past mixing of Aryans with non-Aryans who could not live up to the high standards of Aryan ideals and the process of Westernization. In his view the past glory of India can be retrieved only when the Hindu identity and Hindu social structures are strengthened. Constitutive element of this
restrictive reading was his projection of India and Hindus as fundamentally religious and spiritual. These complex interpretations of India and its past have a significant bearing on Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic identity. What had been severely compromised in this selective interpretation about identity is the fact of India’s cultural plurality and diversity which has immense implications.

The fourth objective, which is related to the third, consists in focusing on the multi-layered links between Upadhyay’s nationalism and the Orientalists’ constructions of Indian past. Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholic identity, which is a highly selective process, reflects presuppositions borrowed from the Orientalist-colonial representations of India and its past. Orientalists like William Jones, Charles Wilkins, Nathaniel Halhed, Jonathan Duncan, Colebrooke and Max Muller had engaged in the systematic investigation of India and its past mainly focusing on the classical Indian textual traditions. Within the Orientalist interpretation the Aryan race was given a central place within the framework of nineteenth century Aryan Race Theory. Some of the Orientalists like Max Muller propounded the notion that the Indian past reflected the glory of the Aryan race which has been degenerated due to the mixture with the non-Aryan races.

The fifth objective of this study consists in the investigation of the configurations of ideology which informs Upadhyay’s identity construction. His Hindu-Catholic synthesis with its cultural assumptions entails hegemonic discourse about identity. Integral to this hegemonic discourse were his efforts to equate Indian identity with Hindu identity. The hegemonic aspects of Upadhyay can be seen most clearly in his exclusive social vision. Here, hegemony denotes the efforts of the dominant classes to project their interests as the interests of all sections of society.

The sixth objective of the thesis consists in the investigation about the nature of Upadhyay’s theological discourse. The corollary to the central thesis consists in the suggestion that Brahmabandhab’s theology involves a paradox in terms of cultural presuppositions. The tacit notion of culture contained in Upadhyay’s restatement of Christianity is a mirror image of Western classical theology. Western theology, with its classicist presupposition understood itself as normative and claimed universal validity. The cultural assumptions of western theology operated within the classicist assumptions. Western theology presupposed that what
was valid in its original cultural setting was valid also in other parts. Western classicism was normative in the sense that it set up norms to judge and evaluate other cultures. If cultures did not measure up to these norms, they were considered uncivilized. This thesis suggests that Upadhyay, who was critical of ‘Europeanized’ theology, operates with the same classical assumptions of western theology which he wanted to replace.

2.2 Presuppositions of the Thesis

All inquiries begin from some presuppositions. This study contains some presuppositions which serve as the point of departure and these may be formulated as follows. The first presupposition consists in the premise that configurations of religious, national, ethnic and linguistic identities entail what may be termed as ‘constructions’ of identity. These constructions are not always straightforward constructions done overnight; rather they are crystallized through multiple narratives and mythographies. Important as they are, these identities, after all, are human constructions. This does not mean that they are unimportant; rather it points to the ephemeral and often ambiguous character of such constructions. Indeed, constructions of identities can involve liberative as well as oppressive features.

The second presupposition consists in the postulation that most constructions of religious, national, linguistic and ethnic identities tend to have ideological basis. In most cases this ideological base remains hidden within the discursive practices of a given group. Here, ideology is understood not necessarily as ‘false consciousnesses’ as in classical Marxism, but as the structure of discursive practices which serve to legitimate and naturalize the claims of a given group. The ideological basis of a given group usually tends to focus on the question of power in relation to other groups. It is by a critical analysis of the discursive practices and the presuppositions contained in it, that the ideological basis of a given individual or a group can be uncovered.

The third assumption consists in the premise that though religious identity forms an important aspect, it need not exhaust the total identity of persons or groups. This premise stands in contrast to those absolutist views, especially popular among the fundamentalist religious groups of various persuasions and the right-wing political-religious ideologies, which tend to project religious identity as the central feature in the life of a given group. The assumption contained in this thesis consists in the postulation that religious identity is one of the several
identities which a person or group might have. A corollary of this postulation consists in the premise that restrictive interpretations of religious identity (for that matter other forms of identities such as ethnic identities) can have disastrous consequences, as history amply testifies.

The fourth presupposition consists in the postulate that the present needs to be understood in relation to the past. The objective of history is not merely an analysis of the past for its own sake; rather, as historian Collingwood has pointed out, it is to show how the present has come into existence. This premise refers specifically to Indian context. Time and again, in post-independent era, right-wing political ideologies, by appealing to religious sentiments of people, have tried to alter the basic character of Indian society as multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic into a monolithic identity based on majority religion. In that very process, much blood has been shed and has led to polarization of various religious communities in India. These ideologies which function with an essentialized view of what it means to be an Indian, have also contributed to the communal construction of identities. Some of the early nationalists did contribute, albeit inadvertently, to such monolithic conceptions of Indian identity. The roots of such identity constructions go back to the nascent nationalism to which Upadhyay contributed significantly. As another well known historian Carr has pointed out, learning from history is never simply a one-way process. In order to learn about the present in the light of the past means also to learn about the past in the light of the present. The function of history is to promote a profounder understanding of both past and present through the interrelation between them. This study is located within the complex historical setting of identity politics of India.

3. Survey of Literature
This section focuses on the survey of literature from the viewpoint of (1) Existing studies on Upadhyay and (2) the new perspective of the thesis.

3.1 Existing Studies on Upadhyay
The existing studies on Upadhyay may be grouped into three categories: (1) Books with Upadhyay as the sole focus (2) articles about Upadhyay in books, journals and dictionaries

and (3) books which either mention Upadhyay in passing or give a restricted treatment to some aspects of his life and thought.

The first type, namely, books on Upadhyay as sole focus are somewhat limited. The earliest biographies of Upadhyay were written by his friend and close associate B. Animananda (Rewachand) entitled *Swami Upadhyay Brahmabandhav: A Story of His life, Part-I* (1908) and *Swami Upadhyay Brahmabandhav: A Study of His Religious Thought, Part-II* (1908). Animananda wrote another book, incorporating materials from the earlier two books, entitled *The Blade: Life and Work of Brahmabandhav Upadhyay* (1946). According to Lipner, Animananda’s *The Blade* remains the best biographical source on Upadhyay. Then comes another important study by Lipner entitled *Brahmabandhab Upadhyay: The Life and Thought of a Revolutionary* (1999) which gives detailed information on Upadhyay’s life and thought. Another important study by Timothy C. Tennent entitled *Building Christianity on Indian Foundations* focuses on the theological and philosophical foundations of Upadhyay’s thought.

The second group is comprised of articles on Upadhyay in books, Journals and dictionaries. Robin Boyd, M. M Thomas and Hans Staffner have allotted one chapter each in their respective books. These articles in books reflect early attempts to bring to forefront the contributions made by Upadhyay mainly from the perspective of theology and philosophy. An important study of Upadhyay’s Sanskrit hymns is done by G. Gispert-Sauch. There is an

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article which introduces the life and thought of Upadhyay by Lipner in the first volume of TWBUT. C. Fonseca’s two articles, namely, “A Prophet Disowned,” and “Upadhyay Brahmanbandhav: The Political Years,” give an overview of Upadhyay’s life, thought and his political involvement. Similarly, G. Gispert-Sauch, the editor of Upadhyay’s Collected Works, has highlighted the political contribution of Brahmanbandh. Amaladass and Young have included Upadhyay as an important contributor to what they term as ‘early Church Sanskrit’ devotional literature. K. P. Aleaz in his article written in 1979 focuses on Upadhyay’s theological and philosophical foundations. Apart from these, there are some dictionary articles which contain basic information about Upadhyay.

The third group is comprised of books which either mention Upadhyay in passing or give a restricted treatment on some aspects of his life and thought. For instance, Ashis Nandy, includes fifteen pages on Upadhyay “Brahmanbandh Upadhyay: Tagore’s Political Double,” in his book The Illegitimacy of Nationalism. In this comparative study Nandy locates Upadhyay’s life with a view of understanding Tagore’s political novels. Sumit Sarkar’s The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal mentions Upadhyay’s political involvement in the context of Bengal partition. Similarly, Prof. Mukherjee locates Upadhyay’s political role within the context of Swadeshi Movement. R.C. Majumdar in his book Struggle for Freedom

23 Haridas Mukherjee and Uma Mukherjee, India’s Fight for Freedom or the Swadeshi Movement, 1905-1906 (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1958).

### 3.2 New Perspectives of the Thesis

The above mentioned studies, important as they are, have not touched upon some of the significant aspects of Upadhyay’s thought. This thesis intends to focus on four key aspects which have not been investigated previously.

Firstly, existing studies on Upadhyay (Lipner, Tennent, Boyd, and Aleaz) have focused on Upadhyay’s contribution to Indian Christian theology. However, these studies have not investigated one significant aspect, namely the theology of religions, implicit in Brahmabandhab’s theological enterprise. By parity of reason, these earlier studies have not paid attention to the inclusive or *proto-inclusive* orientation contained in his approach to non-Christian religions. This thesis suggests that Upadhyay’s proto-inclusivism contained in his theology of religions is perhaps one of the most original contributions made by an Indian theologian at the end of the nineteenth century.

Secondly, several authors (Animananda, Sumit Sarkar, Lipner, and Fonseca) have given details of Upadhyay’s involvement in Swadeshi movement within the context of nationalism. However, they have not focused on the *ideological* template of cultural nationalism upon which Upadhyay operated. Historians have pointed out in recent studies the way the Indian nationalists at the tail-end of the nineteenth century incorporated interpretations of India and its past into their nationalist agenda; this interpretation about India and its past as glorious, pristine, and essentially spiritual was the product of the Orientalists-Colonial discourse. With

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significant modifications nationalists like Upadhyay had utilized the Orientalist hermeneutical templates. This particular nexus between Orientalist and nationalist interpretation about India had not been brought into focus in the previous studies about Upadhyay. So far there have not been any studies on the ideological basis of Upadhyay’s nationalism and its intrinsic relation to his Hindu-Catholic synthesis.

Thirdly, the existing studies (Animananda, Lipner, Aleaz, and Tennent) have detailed analysis of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholic synthesis. For instance, Lipner, Aleaz and Tennent have investigated in detail Upadhyay’s adoption of Sankara’s Advaita in the process of restating Christian faith but they have not inquired the *epistemic* basis of this synthesis. If Upadhyay’s synthesis predominantly borrows from classical Hindu texts and this textual domain itself operates within specific epistemic boundaries (with the exclusion of certain sections of society) we need to ask whether or not Upadhyay’s proposals contained in Hindu-Catholicism rests on reasonable epistemic grounds from the viewpoint of Catholicism or Christianity. This is one of the aspects highlighted in the present study.

Fourthly, this thesis proposes to highlight an aspect which has not received the attention it deserves in previous studies, namely, the classicist presuppositions of Upadhyay which form an important template in his theology. Most existing studies focus on the *content* of Upadhyay’s theology and philosophy but have not investigated the *cultural presuppositions* which form the very foundations of his theology itself. This study hopes to bring to the forefront the classicist presuppositions of Upadhyay’s theology.

4. Scope and Delimitations of the Thesis
This section focuses on (1) the scope or the range of the study and (2) the delimitations and boundaries of the study.

4.1 Scope of the Study
The scope or the range of this study comprises three interrelated aspects and these aspects can be termed as (a) contextual range (b) hermeneutical range and (c) critical range.

(a) *Contextual Range*: First, as it has been pointed out, the chief objective of this study consists in the investigation of Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic identity. However, this identity construction is located in multiple contexts of colonial India of the late nineteenth
century. And the scope of this thesis involves locating these contexts which may be described as follows: (i) the Hindu-Christian encounter of the nineteenth century (ii) the context of emergent nationalism (iii) the context of Hindu identity and (iv) the context of Christian identity. It is within these complex contexts of shifting terrains of identity that this study locates Brahmabandhab Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism.

(b) Hermeneutical Range: By hermeneutical range we mean Upadhyay’s interpretations of various aspects related to the question of identity and this forms the second aspect of the scope of this study. Central to Upadhyay’s quest for Hindu-Catholicism is the question of Hindu and Christian self-understanding in Indian cultural context. This would imply that any meaningful investigation of Upadhyay’s theology also needs to take into account his cultural hermeneutics.

(c) Critical Range: By critical range we mean assessment and evaluation of Upadhyay’s interpretation of Hindu-Catholicism and the concept of identity implied in it. In particular, this study intends to assess the ideological basis behind the interpretation of identity and evaluate its reasonableness.

4.2 Delimitations of the Study
The objective of this study consists in the investigation into Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic identity which determines the thematic boundary and the delimitation of the thesis. The benchmarks of this boundary comprise three aspects: (1) thematic delimitation and (2) analytical delimitation and (3) temporal delimitation.

(1) Thematic Delimitation: In the first place, the boundary of the thesis is marked by three significant templates in which Upadhyay locates his notion of identity and they are (a) his socio-political thought which reflects cultural nationalism (b) his interpretation of Hindu identity and (c) his interpretation of Christian identity. It is within these boundaries that he forms his notions of Hindu-Christian identity.

(2) Analytical Delimitation: Secondly, an important aspect of thematic delimitation is in terms of analytical perspectives. For instance, this study will not deal with all aspects of Upadhyay’s theology and philosophy and will limit itself to those aspects which have a
bearing on his interpretation of Hindu-Catholic identity. Similarly, though this study would refer to Upadhyay's use of Thomism and Sankara's Advaita, whether or not Upadhyay's interpretation of Thomism or that of Sankara is correct would be outside the boundaries of the thesis.

(3) Temporal Delimitation: This study focuses on Upadhyay's notion of identity within the matrix of colonialism. In order to understand the contexts of Upadhyay's life and thought it becomes necessary to go back to some of the colonial administrative policies of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which had a significant impact on Hinduism. The chief focus will be the developments taking place in the nineteenth century especially in the contexts of Hindu-Christian encounter and the emergent nationalism.

5. Data, Method and Structure of the Thesis
This section focuses on (1) the data involved in this thesis (2) the method of the study and (3) the structure of the thesis.

5.1 Data of Study: Primary Sources
The chief data of this study comprises the writings of Upadhyay (the primary sources) who had a considerable productive publishing career. These primary sources can be divided into two categories: (1) nearly 460 articles Upadhyay wrote in several journals which are available to us and (2) his published tracts, letters and handwritten papers.

Brahmabandhab started and edited the following journals in which he expressed his views: The Harmony (monthly, started in 1890); Sophia (monthly, 1894-99); Sophia (weekly, 1900); The Twentieth Century (monthly, 1901-2); Sandhya (1904-7); Svaraj (weekly, 1907); and Karali (bi-weekly). Apart from these journals, he also contributed to Bengali journals like Bangadarsan, edited one time by Rabindranath Tagore. His articles also have been published in the London Catholic Journal, The Tablet. Some of his articles written during the Swadeshi period seem to have been lost, especially those articles from the Bengali journals which he edited in the final months of his life. As J. Lipner points out, some of these articles were burnt in the wake of sedition charges brought against him by the British government.28 The English and Bengali articles and other literary items of Upadhyay have been edited, translated

and published by J. Lipner and G. Gispert-Sauch in two volumes entitled *The Writings of Brahmanbandhab Upadhyay*. The second group of primary source consists of tracts, autobiographical fragments, letter and correspondence some of which are available at the Goethals Indian Library Archives. These primary source materials are extremely valuable in the reconstruction of some of the events of Upadhyay's life.

5.2 Structure of the Thesis
As far as the structure is concerned, this thesis consists of seven chapters and a general conclusion. The outline of these chapters may be described as follows.

Chapter 1: Hindu-Christian Encounter and Identity Constructions in Colonial India: Historical Overview: This chapter, which forms the background to an understanding of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholic synthesis, focuses on Hindu-Christian encounter in colonial context. The first part focuses on the Orientalist-colonial interpretations of Hinduism which begins with the new cultural policies initiated by Warren Hastings. The second part deals with Evangelical Christian representations of Hinduism and various contestations contained in it. The third section focuses on the response of Hinduism to Christianity in the nineteenth century. The very Hindu identity was undergoing significant changes in the nineteenth century. The movement known as the Bengal Renaissance and the concomitant socio-religious reform had brought about considerable changes in the way Hinduism came to be interpreted. The response of Hindu intelligentsia to Christian representational idioms of Hindu tradition needs to be located within the broader context of these transformations.

Chapter 2: A Contextual Introduction to Upadhyay’s Life and Thought: The second chapter introduces the broad contexts of Upadhyay’s life and thought. The first part focuses on Bhavani’s (his original name) early life and formative influences. The second section delineates the socio-religious contexts of nineteenth century Bengal which influences in a significant way Brahmanbandhab’s interpretations of Hindu-Catholicism. The third part focuses on Bhavani’s search for identity. As a young man, Bhavani was in search of identity and ideal to which he hoped to commit himself unambiguously. This quest for identity and ideal eventually leads him to the Catholic faith. The fourth section describes the phase of Upadhyay’s religious activism in which we see his defense of his Catholic faith as well as a
critique of various religious traditions. The fifth part focuses on the nationalist phase of Upadhyay.

Chapter 3: National Identity as Cultural Identity: Upadhyay's Political Thought: The focus of the third chapter is on Upadhyay's political thought which permeates his reading of Indian identity, and, by extension, Hindu identity. The first section describes the evolution of Upadhyay's nationalist thought. The second section delineates Upadhyay's interpretation of national identity within the framework of cultural nationalism. The third section focuses on the conceptual and theoretical dimensions of the phenomenon of nationalism. The fourth part delineates the broader context of creation of identity involved in the early phase of Indian nationalism.

Chapter 4: Upadhyay's Interpretation of Hindu Identity: This chapter focuses Upadhyay's interpretation of Hindu identity which comprises four evolutionary stages. The first stage of this evolution is marked by Upadhyay's interpretation of what can be termed as the 'sanitized' Hinduism. During this period, while he sees positive aspects in it, Upadhyay is very critical of certain aspects of Hinduism such as polytheism, idol worship and certain aspects of Hindu philosophy. The second phase is marked by his quest for a synthesis between Hinduism and Christianity, which he terms as Hindu-Catholicism. In the third stage, he actively engages in laying the foundation of Hindu-Catholicism by adopting Sankara's Advaita as its basis. At this point in time his concerns about the state of Hindu identity become more and more articulate. In the fourth stage, which coincides with Upadhyay's active involvement with Swadeshi movement, he sees Hindu social structure and Hindu identity as paramount in the emerging national space.

Chapter 5: Upadhyay's Interpretation of Christian Identity: The focus of this chapter consists in Brahmabandhab's interpretation of Christianity and Christian identity in India which goes through four stages. In the first stage, which begins with his conversion to Catholicism, is marked by religious activism. As a Catholic apologist Upadhyay engages in a critique of various religious traditions and movements of his time such as Protestantism, Theosophy, Arya Samaj, Brahmoism, and aspects of traditional Hinduism. The second phase consists in Brahmabandhab's efforts to make Christianity intelligible in India and this stage is marked by his search for finding 'points of contacts' between Hinduism and Christianity.
During this period Upadhyay also established a Catholic Ashram at the Narmada river bank near Jabalpore. These efforts of Brahmabandhab did not receive the support from the Church hierarchy. During this period his writings came under ecclesiastical censure. In the third phase Upadhyay's engagement with Catholicism was characterized by a critical approach. In particular, he was concerned about the stagnant state of the Catholic Church which in his reading resulted from its inability to break away from the Western influences. In the fourth stage, after the ecclesiastical interdict and censure of his journals, Upadhyay stopped writing on theological matters. This final stage is characterized by his disillusionment with the state of the Catholic Church. At this point in time some of Upadhyay's actions and speeches seemed to have caused some confusion among his friends regarding his Catholic identity.

Chapter 6: Hindu-Catholicism: Upadhyay's Theological Restatement: The sixth chapter, which consists of five sections, delineates Upadhyay's restatement of Christian faith which is an important dimension of his Hindu-Catholicism. The first section focuses on Upadhyay's theological method which is termed as 'natural theology' or philosophical theology. The second section delineates his restatement of God reality within the framework of Hindu-Catholicism by utilizing classical Hindu categories. The third section focuses on Upadhyay's restatement of Christian Trinity as saccidananda. The fourth part delineates his restatement of human reality. The fifth section focuses on Upadhyay's interpretation pertaining to the reality of the 'world' in terms of the relationship between the Absolute and the created order. The focus of the final section consists in highlighting what may be considered the unique theological contribution of Upadhyay, namely, the theology of religions and the 'inclusivist' perspective contained therein. In this section the thesis suggests that Upadhyay may be considered one of the first Catholic theologians to delineate an 'inclusivist' position regarding Catholicism's relationship with non-Christian traditions, nearly half a century before the Second Vatican Council adopted it as its official stance.

Chapter 7: Upadhyay's Notion of Hindu-Catholic Identity: Critical Assessment: This chapter, which comprises four sections, is a critical appraisal of Upadhyay's concept of Hindu-Catholic identity. The first section looks at some of the important theoretical perspectives of identity. The second section focuses on Upadhyay's constructions of national identity. The third part consists in the appraisal of Brahmabandhab's interpretations of Hindu
identity. The fourth section is a critique of Upadhyay’s notion of identity from the Catholic perspective.

**General Conclusion:** In this final part, the thesis focuses on one of the paradoxical dimensions of Upadhyay’s efforts to make Christianity intelligible in India by using classical Hindu categories. Here, the thesis suggests that Upadhyay, who wanted to move away from the Western theological constructions, paradoxically ends up constructing a system, which shares the same cultural presuppositions. This chapter has two main sections. The first section delineates the cultural presuppositions of Western theology which has been termed as classicism. This section argues that Upadhyay’s cultural presuppositions of Hindu-Catholic identity and the theological restatement contained in it, is a mirror image of Western classicism. The second section of this chapter focuses on an alternative mode of apprehending cultural identity, namely, the empirical approach to cultural identity. Here, the study suggests that in a multicultural society like India, we need to approach culture and cultural identities through empirical approach if we want to make Christianity intelligible in concrete cultural contexts.

**5.3 Method of the Thesis**
The method followed in this thesis may be described as follows: From the viewpoint of method, first, this investigation tries to locate Upadhyay’s concerns regarding Christianity as well as Hinduism from the perspective of the Hindu-Christian encounter in the colonial context. The method followed here is macro analysis with a view of comprehending the broad historical context of Upadhyay’s Hindu-Catholicism (Chapter 1). Secondly, the study focuses on the factors and forces which influenced and shaped Upadhyay’s life and his thought. Here, the thesis follows diachronic method in the sense that various stages of Upadhyay’s life are seen in evolutionary development through time (chapter 2). Thirdly, Brahmabandhab’s interpretations of cultural nationalism, Hindu and Christian identities are studied and for this purpose micro analysis and diachronic method are used (chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6). The critical assessment of Upadhyay’s concept of Hindu-Catholic identity (chapter 7 and General conclusion) utilizes conceptual and theoretical perspectives of critical and social theories.