INTRODUCTION
The project, which has shaped into this dissertation, was formulated soon after I had completed a dissertation on 'Dialectics and Historical Materialism' for a Master's degree. In that dissertation an attempt was made to critically examine the claims of the Orthodox Marxist social theory regarding its validity and scientific status. While working on it there grew a sense of awareness that it is not necessary for social theory to be constructed and/or evaluated in terms of the paradigms that govern physical theory. It was also realised that some of the problems taken up in that dissertation demanded a more comprehensive and critical look at the nature, description and explanation of human actions before one could meaningfully consider the question of the validity of general social theories which claim an understanding of the human situation.

The plan of this short dissertation has developed, grown and undergone several changes over the period since I started working on the project. This has happened for various reasons. An awareness of the inadequacies of the arguments for the position that I would take usually required a reconsideration of the perspective in which
the problems were being discussed. And this would often result in a shift of emphasis and a rearrangement of the plan all over again. It would be presumptuous to claim that the situation in which I find myself now is any better than what it was at different stages of this project. However, even if I do not have any definite answers to the problems under discussion, I believe I am comparatively more clear about the direction in which one may move for an understanding of the problems involved in explanation of human actions.

It would not be irrelevant, I believe, to mention here that I came under strong influences of the ideas of Marx, Sartre and Wittgenstein at different periods during my undergraduate and graduate years. Therefore, it should not seem strange if this dissertation reflects the tensions and strains of influences so diverse and conflicting in character influences which were formed at an age when there is a greater tendency to be fascinated and infatuated with novel ideas rather than critically examine them in terms of their presuppositions and implications. In the context of the present dissertation it was quite difficult to reconcile these strains and tensions as it was not so easy to locate the areas of convergence and divergence among these thinkers for the problems of explanation of human actions cluster around such a large number of issues in
areas so diverse as philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, philosophy of science, ethics, and social, political and legal theory. The prominent among these issues are free-will determinism question, Mind-Body relationship, Knowledge of Other Minds, Personhood and personal-identity, Agency and responsibility, self-Deception and weakness of the will, causal and teleological explanations, normative structure of social science theory etc. Though all these problems are intimately and intricately related to one another yet it would have been too ambitious, almost impossible, either to discuss all of these problems with the same degree of circumspection or even to bring them all within the purview of the present study. However, an attempt has been made to come to terms with some of these problems in so far as they are relevant to the issues under discussion. I must also confess that some of the chapters of this dissertation, it so happened, were originally written as independent papers for different seminars and these papers determined, to a considerable degree, the final shape of this dissertation. Though I have considerably revised these papers to relate them with one another while tidying them up for inclusion as chapters, I am afraid, they seem to threaten their independence at...
places which, I hope, does not loosen the link between them.

During my studies for this project, I came across several distinct strands of writings which discussed the problems mentioned above at different levels. One of these strands consisted of the writings of social scientists of different persuasions who attempted an examination of the presuppositions and implications of the methods and theories underlying social science enquiries. A consideration of the techniques, methodology and concepts being used by majority of social scientists suggest that in most of the social science theories certain fundamental conceptions about human needs and purposes constitute an essential element in the explanations the theories provide, for the presuppositions of the theory specify the decisions and premises of the actors which, together with the descriptions of their situations, provide the rationale for the actions which bring about the overall pattern of social behaviour - conflict, interaction, violence, social change, social stability - whatever the theorists desire to explain. There seems to be a dichotomy between the theories which emphasise social action and those which emphasise social structure. The action-theorists suspect that structure-theories present
men's actions as mere quasi-phenomena of structure of
norms and values, and thus social structures are given
the appearance of Hobbesian leviathans. On the other
hand, in the eyes of the structure-theorists, action-theories
construct an extremely individualistic account of society
which is usually a thinly disguised psychological account
which ignores the significance of the social realm.¹

Unfortunately it cannot be said that most theories
in social science are based on clear, well articulated
images of man. On the contrary, the fundamental conceptions
of human rationality, purpose, sociality etc. tend to be
left vague and inarticulate, and all too often they are

¹Within sociology there has been a tendency
to reduce the unity of social reality, the totality,
to a dualism. This has taken the form either of the
creation of distinctions between supposed 'macro' and
'micro' levels of reality or between 'subjective' and
objective aspects of reality, the latter (objective)
tending to take precedence over the former (subjective)
aspect. In fact the failure to recognise man's nature
as a conscious and active being, and the corresponding
neglect of his ability as an objective natural being
with living needs, constantly engaged in the dialectical
construction of social reality, has characterised
sociological thought from Comte to the present. Sociologists
have either treated man purely as an object of investigation
(e.g. positivism) or alternatively have focused entirely
upon subjectivity, thereby reducing reality to a purely
human product.⁴

⁴Smart, Barry, *Sociology, Phenomenology And
Marxian Analysis*, p. 163.
It is true that this situation has developed out of a distrust of 'a priorism' or 'rationalism'. But such vagueness only obstructs the development of a systematic empirical theory, for not specifying one's basic assumptions encourages reliance on the correlation of the available data, interpreted with ad-hoc reasonings which supply a plausible basis for the observed relationships. What is emphasised is the sophistication and continual improvement in the techniques of statistical analysis of observed behaviour and discovery of causal laws and generalisations with explanatory and predictive value. There is a general tendency to establish a natural science of society and of human behaviour which would match the precision of the explanatory scope of natural sciences and possess the same type of logical structure and aspire to their condition and status.

The roots of this tendency, which has been more dominant in the Anglo-Saxon world, can be traced back to a particular view of mind and the nature of

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2"Methodology exercises its perverse influence by disguising itself as theory. The point of theory, sociologists are fond of repeating, is to order the data and open possibilities for liaison with new data."

Louch, A.J., Explanation and Human Action, p. 11.
language in the philosophical ideas that have informed the continuing debate on the nature of relationship between science of man and science of nature in the western intellectual history. The puzzles, paradoxes and confusions that are pointed out by rival theorists in philosophy and social sciences cannot be adequately dealt with unless one recognizes the dualist metaphysics (having its origins in Descartes, in modern philosophy,) and a particular view of science (going back to Galileo, Kepler, Newton and other founders of modern science) which are the sources for most of the controversies in philosophy of social science.

A dualistic metaphysical position according to which there are only two basic categories of the existence, namely, mental and physical entities and events, and that there is a contingent relationship between the two is usually attributed to Descartes. He maintained that

3And then, examining attentively the which I was, I saw that I could conceive that I had no body, and that there was no world nor place where I might be; but yet that I could not for all that conceive that I was not. On the contrary, I saw from the very fact that I thought of doubting the truth of other things, it very evidently and certainly followed that I was; on the other hand if I had only ceased from thinking, even if all the rest of what I had ever imagined had really existed, I should have no reason for thinking that I had existed. From that I knew that I was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is to think, and that for its existence there is no need of any place,
it is logically possible to think of something mental (e.g. the mind) without implying that this mental entity has anything to do with something physical (e.g. the living human body). This view gave rise to a host of questions regarding the criteria by which mental could be distinguished from the physical on the one hand, the nature of the relationship between the two on the other. The criteria that were proposed for drawing a distinction between the mental and the physical, from time to time, generated several dichotomies, e.g. conscious vs. non-conscious, inner vs. outer, subjective vs. objective, private vs. public, unextended vs. extended, and qualitative vs. quantitative, which create intractable problems in action-theory. We shall have to reckon with most of these in this dissertation.

It could be relevant to mention here that in speaking of the separateness of mind and body, Descartes was not speaking of an actual separation but of a possible separation i.e. of the possibility of a disembodied mind.

nor does it depend on any material thing; so that this 'me', that is to say, the soul by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from body, and is even more easy to know than is the latter; and even if body were not, the soul would not cease to be what it is."

The Cartesian doctrine of the possibility of a disembodied mind gives rise to several difficult problems of epistemology which the scientific tradition tried to avoid by rejecting the dualistic thesis and by applying the methods and principles of the physical sciences to the study of man. But this evasion of dualism was achieved only through a demolition of the conceptual framework used in daily life for describing and understanding human actions. This was necessitated by a particular view of language which was held by St. Augustine and has been accepted in its different

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4 "If disembodied mind is a possibility, although not a fact, then how are we to conceive of the actual relationship of body and mind? Is it to be understood purely in causal terms? Or possibly as a mere correlation? Could the actual correspondences between our mental contents and our bodily behavior have been entirely different? If so, how do I know that the same correlations, or causal connections, that hold in my case, hold true for other persons? What are the connections between speech and language, on the one hand, and mental contents, on the other? How do we succeed in conveying to one another our thoughts and experiences? Or do we? How can words refer to the various items of mental content? How can it be brought about that different people mean the same things by the words "thinking", "fear", and "hunger"? Do we know that they do? How do we know it? The Cartesian doctrine of separateness gives rise to these severely difficult problems of epistemology."  


5 "When my elders named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they
formulations by most of the philosophers in the western tradition till recently. According to this view there is an isomorphism between the constellation of words in our language and the constellation of objects in the world. Words are names of objects and acquire meaning by virtue of their reference to the objects they name. The meaning of a word, according to this view of language, is a kind of object, and depending upon the presence or lack of an object of this kind a word is meaningful or meaningless. Combined with the cartesian dualism, and the belief that mental events are inner, subjective and private, this theory of language implies that concepts such as sorrow, pain, anger and the like, are meaningful by virtue of their reference to something inner and private which is not accessible to direct observation by a person other than who is experiencing sorrow, pain or anger etc. Thus, another person cannot know for certain what I think, feel or sense. No one can ever verify his inferences regarding my mental states conclusively, i.e. directly. The other can observe

meant to point it out. Their intention was shown by their bodily movements, as it were the natural language of all peoples.... Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified." St. Augustine, Confessions, 1, 6, quoted in Kenny, Anthony, Wittgenstein, pp. 153-154.
only my physical behaviour which is external, objective and public. Such a conclusion, (which rests upon a fallacious theories of meaning and mind) led most of the behavioural scientists to accept a positivistic view of enquiry according to which the distinction between essence and phenomenon should be dropped as scientists are entitled to record only that which can be directly observed by them and that any formulation involving the use of general terms cannot have any real referent, other than individual concrete objects. The acceptance of these assumptions insinuates that concepts and categories which enable us to describe and explain the physical world will also enable us to describe and explain what human beings are and what they do.

The impact of the Cartesian view of mind, on the one hand, and Positivism, on the other, has been so strong in the behavioural sciences that either the experiential realm has been denied existence altogether or it is declared as totally subjective and private so that it is not directly accessible to anyone other than the person concerned and that there is no way to verify such experience claims. Consequently, the experiential aspects of human beings have been ignored altogether. But to ignore the experiential capacities of human beings is to see them as less than capable of meaningful.
actions (or projects) and is to depersonalise or
dehumanise them, and to arbitrarily reduce praxis to
process. Most of the studies in human sciences present
human beings less than what they really are (or could
be) to the extent that they assimilate human choices
and decisions to a special realm of material or natural
processes specifically via the reduction of human qualities
to the order of things or animals. 6

Behaviorism, in psychology, is an approach to
the study of human actions which either leaves out or
denies the areas where praxis operates — perception,
understanding, reasoning and thinking, purposes and
communication of meaning. 7 Much of the behaviorist's

6 "The science of persons is the study of human
beings that begins from a relationship with the other
as person and proceeds to an account of the other still
as a person.... The other as person is seen by me as
responsible, as capable of choice, in short, as a self-
determining agent. Seen as an organism, all that goes on in
that organism can be conceptualised at any level of
complexity: atomic, molecular, cellular, systematic or
organismic.... In man seen as organism, therefore, there
is no place for his desires, fears, hopes or despair as
such." 


7 "Behaviorism begins with the assumption that
the world is made of only one kind of stuff — dealt with
most successfully by physics. Organisms are parts of
that world and their processes are, therefore, physical
processes.... Behaviorism assumes that ideas, motives,
and feelings have no part in determining conduct, and,
therefore, no part in explaining it. As a behaviorist,
antagonism to mind could be explained as the result of a misunderstanding of the nature of the concepts that are employed in discourse about the mental realm. It would not be wrong to say that the nature of the concepts referring to the mental was misconstrued at the time when the behaviorist project was launched. The main argument of behaviorism is that we can never make reliable and repeatable observations of another person's (a behaviorist would prefer to use the term organism) experiences and since science can deal only with what is observable, experience can have no place in science of human behaviour. The behaviorist may be right in rejecting introspection as a method of understanding human actions but it is wrong in denying experiences any place whatever in scientific discourse. Acceptance of the total privacy of experience would make science itself impossible because the observations made by scientists are part of their experience and if it is impossible to share experience the very enterprise of science would crumble.8

I question the nature of such events and their role in prediction and control of behaviour."


8 "It can be shown that a completely behaviorist programme for the study of human nature is internally inconsistent and impossible to carry out. The reason for saying this is the very reason advanced by the behaviorists for taking up their position, namely that
has rightly pointed out that behaviorism is another form of solipsism for it rests upon the idea that my experiential world is completely isolated, closed and inaccessible to any one other than myself. Behaviorism not only denies that ideas, motives and emotions have any part in determining or understanding conduct but also maintains that human beings have no freedom of action.

Science is a co-operative enterprise. In what way do scientists co-operate? They do it by exchanging testimony, that is by informing one another of what they have seen, heard, or otherwise experienced. The publicity of a phenomenon is of no use to science unless this publicity can be known-unless, that is, scientist A can be assured that his own observations of a given phenomenon are confirmed by the observations of scientist B. But this involves him in incorporating into his scientific data B’s testimony as to what B saw, heard, or felt. Before I can confidently assert as an objective scientific fact that this piece of blue litmus paper turned red I must find out that it first looked blue and now looks red to see; and this is to incorporate information about your awareness into the foundations of my investigation. A pure behaviorism must collapse into solipsism, admitting no experiences except those of the behaviorist himself; and with this collapse the difference between public and private vanishes.”

Whiteley, G.H., Mind in Action, an Essay in Philosophical Psychology, p. 17.

9 “A psychology which wants to be exact and objective, like the “behaviorism” of Watson, is really only solipsism as a working hypothesis.”

Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, p. 261.

10 We cannot distinguish between voluntary and involuntary behaviour on the basis of control or lack of control, since we assume that no behaviour is free. If we have no reason to distinguish between being able to do something and doing something, such expressions as
The world for a behaviorist is divided into "independent variables" (environmental contingencies) and "dependent variables" (behavioral responses). But how these variables are to be individuated and identified? Is an environmental contingency to be defined independently of the response it elicits or reinforces - in physical terms rather than in terms of behavior or sensory processes? Do environmental contingencies exist in environment or only at receptors? When is an environmental or behavioral pattern to be considered a single stimulus or a response or a reinforcer and when a number of separate stimuli or responses or reinforcers? How do we specify the structure of an environmental contingency or a behavioral response? It is interesting to observe that even Skinner concedes the necessity of bringing in the "frame of reference provided by the organism" for identifying the movement of an organism as a behavior of a certain sort. It is not difficult to see that all behavior cannot

"not being able to do something" or "not being able to help doing something" must be interpreted in some other way, when all relevant variables have been arranged, an organism will or will not respond. If it does not, it cannot. If it can, it will."

Skinner, B.F., SCIENCE AND HUMAN BEHAVIOUR, pp. 111-12. Against Skinner's views, it may be argued that there are good reasons to distinguish between "being able to do something" and "doing something" for though it is true that "doing something" presupposes the ability to do something", "being able to do something" does not imply "doing something".
be identified without taking into consideration the perspective of the agent.

As against the behaviorist approach in psychology, the concept of action that has prevailed in sociological literature, following Weber, holds that action is to be distinguished from 'mere' behaviour by the presence of a 'mental' element. According to this view, the definitive feature of action, and locus of its meaning, is consciousness of some sort of subjective experience in the mind of the actor. The task of the sociologists is to interpret action by reference to the subjective meaning that the agent attaches to it. Through the use of the term attach, Weber makes it appear as if we are dealing with two discrete

11"In action is included all human behaviour in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it."

Weber, Max. Theory of Economic and Social Organizations, p. 68.

Weber also speaks of 'a complex of subjective meaning' (p. 96), 'psychic elements' (p. 101) and meaning in the minds of individual persons' (p. 102) as the definitive features of action.

Like Weber, Parsons also defined action in terms of the subjective state of the actor. He distinguished sociology from physical sciences in terms of the mental aspect of intentional action: "unlike that of the physical sciences, the phenomena studied have a scientifically relevant subjective aspect. That is, while the social scientist is not concerned with studying the content of his own mind, he is very much concerned with that of the minds of the other persons whose actions he studies."

Parsons, The Structure of Social Actions, p. 46.
kind of 'things' - 'behaviour' and 'subjective meaning'.

The use of the term 'attach' already presupposes the break between behaviour and meaning of the behaviour. It may be pointed out that, there is an important ambiguity in Weber's position for he did not discuss in detail what he meant by 'subjective meaning'. But it is not difficult to see that description of action in terms of behaviour plus a mental component is a consequence of Cartesian dualism and a fallacious theory of language. Though Weber did say that understanding of the meaning of an action is essential for sociological theorising, he insisted that interpretation at the level of meaning must be supplemented by a causally adequate explanation.

In order to provide a causal theory of social action, sociological theory usually takes recourse to the 'reduction of human agency to internalisation of values and fails to treat social life as actively constituted through the doings of its members and holds power as a secondary phenomenon'.

Weber and his followers have been rightly criticised for their failure to fully appreciate the social and contextual character of meaning as opposed to the individual and subjective view of meaning that

can be found scattered in the writings influenced by the neo-Kantian and phenomenological thought. It is quite ironical that despite their diverse disagreements on the methodology of social sciences, both the behaviorists and the phenomenologists share the view that action derives its meaning in terms of the subjective experience of the agent. The behaviorists, believing that these inner experiences cannot be scientifically observed, decided to do away with the inner states and confined themselves to the observable behaviour whereas the phenomenologists, for obvious reasons, have argued that this approach precludes a proper understanding of human behaviour. But both sides of the dispute tacitly agree that these problems are rooted in the subjective character of human consciousness. The only way to clarify the issues involved in the debate between the behaviorists and the phenomenologists lies in the rejection of their shared premise which is the hangover of the Cartesian heritage. The first step in this direction is to recognise that meaning is not the property of a private subjective experience and that actions can be properly understood only in terms of the actor's relationship with the social context in which they are performed. It is a truism that meaning requires a subject in so far as it is an individual who acts in accordance with his own perceptions, intentions and goal-orientations. But meaning is not
subjective in so far as it transcends individual behaviour
as intersubjectively accepted and conventional meaning.
Social reality is constituted by the fact that people
not only act but also intersubjectively understand each
other's actions. Someone who signals his hand out of the
car window to indicate his intention to turn in a particular
direction does so on the assumption that other drivers
understand the meaning of the gesture and will themselves
act on that understanding. The fact that the arm-signal
means what it does exists as a social fact independent of
any specific individual's understanding of it. The possibility
of understanding presupposes the fact that the actor and
the spectator have a common frame of reference and meaning
without which communication is not possible. This common
frame of meaning cannot be shown either as a physical or
as a mental object. The meaning cannot be a private
reserve for communicability is a pre-requisite for meaning;
and communication is impossible without meaning having a
public character which is available to the speaker and
the hearer, the writer and the reader, the actor and the
spectator.

In case it is possible to understand what the
other means when one is sharing one's thoughts and feelings
implies that statements about experiences are as significant,
if not more, as statements that can be made about overt behaviour. It is taken for granted that we know a good deal, in practice, if not in theory, about ourselves as persons. We do not, for instance, continuously mistake things for people, and do not expect objects to possess the abilities that belong to people. On the other hand, we do expect people to respond to us, to try to communicate, to perceive, to understand and so on. Normally, our attitudes towards machines, organisms and people are quite different, and, for all practical purposes, we face few difficulties in discriminating which is what. In our everyday relationships we do not continually confuse and baffle each other; it is only in theory that we find it difficult to spell out the differences clearly.

In view of the above one has to guard against those tendencies in social science which reduce or abbreviate human beings to objects or organisms in order to accommodate the observational or reductionist methods of natural science in the study of man. It has to be understood that sociology, history, psychology, neuro-biology, law and linguistics deal with different aspects of human activities and that each of these disciplines formulate its problems in terms of its specific interests and in view of the methodological tools that are available to it. Therefore,
the problems, the methods, and the eventual answers are related to and determined by the purposes of the enquiry within that specific field. It is not to be ignored that various 'scientific' approaches to the study of man and his life have fragmented the 'total human being' of everyday experience into as many pieces as there are disciplines. It is either a homo-sociological, or a homo-psychological, or a homo-economicus that we encounter in behavioural sciences rather than the man that we come across in everyday life. It is against this piecemeal theorising that a praxiological approach to action is warranted in the study of man. Against a process-view of actions which tends to over-emphasise behaviour's relation to an external (environmental) or/and internal (neurological) contexts and ignores the experiential, communicative, meaning-endowing aspects of human beings, by praxiological approach we mean a view that takes into account

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13 The reductionist would attempt to provide an explanation of an action or a gesture in terms of a complete and accurate description of what happened in the brain, when the movement was initiated the passage of an electric impulse along the neurones, the consequent contraction of muscles and so on. The behaviorist would attempt to provide an account in terms of contingencies of reinforcements that the organism has undergone in the past. But both these accounts would miss the symbolic significance that the gesture or the action has as a communication between two or more individuals.
the purposive, communicative, institutional, perceptual, cognitive and behavioural aspects of human activity and places it in its proper perspective.

Besides the theoretical writings of the social scientists which aim at a critical reappraisal of the enterprise of the human sciences which have been briefly discussed above, the other strand of writing that has made a concerted effort to investigate the problems mentioned earlier has come from philosophers of Action-theory. There are two distinct positions which have found repeated expression in the recent theory of action. According to one position which is held largely by followers of the Wittgenstein-Austin tradition in philosophy, it is maintained that actions are not causally explicable on the ground that the relationship between wants, intentions and purposes of the agent and the actions that are performed by them is not a contingent one for the former are conceptually related with the latter. The other position is held by Davidson, Goldman, MacIntyre and others who maintain that even if it is true that actions cannot be described independently of reference to the agent's intentions and reasons and vice-versa, yet the relationship between them is a causal one and a causal theory of action can be constructed. Whereas the first position holds that there is a logical gulf between events and actions which
cannot be bridged in any case, the second position maintains that actions are a subset of events and these are to be explained in the same manner as events are explained. However, it is not denied that special provisions may have to be made for including intentions, purposes and reasons in the explanatory model. Philosophers subscribing to either of these two positions need not necessarily agree on the free-will-determinism controversy or on the nature of mind. In fact, the recent action-theory is so complex and vast a subject that when one has disentangled the different strands one comes to realise that one is just at the beginning. There were, in such a situation, two alternative ways to fit together the pieces of conceptual puzzles to get a clear picture of the problem. One way was to review the available literature and to consider how far the concerted efforts of these great minds have taken

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14 "The post-wittgensteinian study of action, emotion and will through the concepts of ordinary speech has not been as illuminating as we might have hoped. Indeed the discussion has sometimes been sidetracked into what appears to be unprofitable issues, issues without any clear solution.

Perhaps this reflects the falseness of this hope, perhaps very little is to be expected from a study of this kind, many philosophers today would certainly support this conclusion. But it could be that much of the value of the analysis has been lost because it has been carried on within too narrow a scope, that the penchant for fine-spun detailed analysis so typical of anglo-saxon philosophy has served us badly here."

us towards the resolution or dissolution of these problems.\footnote{This approach has been adopted by Richard Bernstein in his Praxis and action and The deconstructing of social and political theory.}

The other was to explicate the concept of action within the context of related notions using the conceptual insights which have emerged as a consequence of groundwork analysis which has been done in order to develop systematic and comprehensive views within action-theory during the last few decades. I have chosen the later way at the risk of being eclectic for that was nearer to my inclinations and I believe, in terms of demands of critical scholarship, less ambitious.

An overview of the literature in action-theory published during the last few decades suggests that questions regarding the nature of relationship between thought and action, structure of actions, the role of intentions and beliefs in actions demand a closer examination before one takes up the consideration of the problems involved in the description and explanation of actions. It is to these and related issues that attention has been devoted in the first half of the dissertation. On the basis of analysis of action in first three chapters, it is argued that the description of an action requires an essential reference to a person for it is in terms of his
beliefs, values and intentions that action can be understood as distinct from events and mere behaviour. An attempt has also been made to show that the regularities that can be observed in human conduct are different from the regularities that obtain in nature for they are due to human capacities to engage in rule-following behaviour which can be inter-subjectively understood, interpreted and appraised.

The second half of the dissertation begins with a consideration of the nature of personhood and agency for actions are performed, described, explained and justified by persons in terms of their self-images and perceptions of their social roles and responsibility. The reflexive character of any definition of personhood suggests that it is possible for human beings to conform to or transcend any definition that is provided of them. In fact, Man alone is a self-defining being and, therefore, also a self-deceiving being. The different definitions of man that have been provided in terms of man qua soul, man qua animal and man qua machine are all attempts to define 'man as nothing but' and thus offer a reductionist analysis of the nature of man.

In the latter chapters, the concept of causal explanation is briefly presented and argued that anyone who wants to apply causal model of explanation to human actions must
either hold that reasons for actions are causes of actions or that 'explanation in terms of reasons' must be abandoned as and when causal explanations of actions become possible for the former are less adequate than the latter. The inappropriateness of the causal model of explanation to the understanding of human actions is shown by referring to the sort of paradigms that govern our understandings of our actions and the kind of questions that we raise about them. Observation and description qua performances can be identified as inappropriate or appropriate, felicitous successful or otherwise for these are also governed by our criteria of appropriateness or inappropriateness. In asking a 'why' question in the context of an action, one usually seeks a reason for an action (either justificatory or explanatory), therefore, what we hope to do with our understandings of actions that we get from our ordinary framework is not the same as that we are likely to get from a neurological or physiological or behavioural or structural-functional framework; it is inappropriate to think that explanations in terms of reasons can be abandoned for any of these types of explanations.