The last three decades have been significant for philosophy, science and politics in different ways. The different debates spread over this period, involving different schools of thought, raised fundamental questions about reason, knowledge, scientific method, experience etc. Each of these debates has had a specific set of issues, whose very nature was part of the debate, that called forth responses seeking to go beyond traditional understanding of the central problems under consideration. But in doing so, each of these debates pointed to a truth, whose implications are not yet fully clear, viz, there is no transcendental ground / vantage point / privileged position from where knowledge claims could be made. Of course, this truth is not entirely new. It had been noted by those who foresaw the implications of the collapse of the idea of the cosmic order in the modern era. What had kept this truth concealed was the enormous success science enjoyed over the last three centuries and the dominance of associated philosophies which were held captive by a picture of science that legitimized scientific knowledge/reason as paradigmatic. Critical rationalism, the last of such philosophies, which was discussed in the previous chapter and which came under severe scrutiny in the so-called Popper -
Kuhn debate, problematized the idea of scientific reason as method. Consequently, what came into focus was science as a practice that is community-bound and governed by norms and values, which require interpretation in order to judge what is rational, progressive, empirical etc.

The explanation - understanding debate (known as Erklärung-verstehen) in social sciences, revived by Peter Winch's *The idea of Social Science* sought to expose, in a way different from the post-positivists' developments in philosophy of science, the false claim of scientific reason to universality. Arguing from a Wittgensteinian perspective, winch had tried to show that while rationality is a universal category in that every culture/form of life must have some sense of it, the form and importance of rationality is a function of the context. This is particularly true of the social context, constituted as it is by language, that has varying functions. Moreover, the internality of the relationship between the concepts and the world, language and reality, shows that the idea of reason or knowledge in a scientific sense is restrictive. Before we directly deal with the controversy between Gadamer and Habermas, it is necessary to make clear what is the latter's contention. According to Habermas, social sciences have not only empirical-analytical dimension but also a hermeneutic dimension that centers around the practical interest of mutual understanding and an emancipatory dimension that construes freedom from unnecessary constraints as the goal.
of critique. The last dimension necessitates a construal of social sciences that demands going beyond the idiom of hermeneutics – a point that is the bone of contention between Habermas and Gadamer. Habermas visualizes the last dimension in relation to psychoanalysis. Obviously, his understanding of psychoanalysis is, in a sense, fundamentally different from that of Gadamer's, for whom psychoanalysis is essentially a hermeneutical practice. The debate between Habermas and Gadamer which began with the publication of Gadamer's *Truth and Method* in 1961 has a striking affinity with the other two debates mentioned above, namely, Popper – Kuhn and explanation – understanding controversies; it too questions sciences' claim to universality. Though it is not the central theme, it is supplementary to the main issue at stake which is the very idea of understanding – an idea which, according to Gadamer, is fundamental to human beings, preceded and presupposed by all forms of knowledge. The underlying Heideggerian thesis is that human existence embodies in its ontic constitution, as part of its being, a pro-ontological understanding of the self and of the world in which it finds itself. [Gadamer, 1979 p.131]. This thesis confers a distinctiveness to human beings, in opposition to nature, and derivatively, to human sciences, in contrast to natural sciences. Thus, it appropriates the category of 'understanding' exclusively for the sciences of man. In the words of Heidegger. "with the term 'understanding' we have in mind a fundamental existentlale, which is neither a definite species of cognition, distinguished,
let us say, from explaining and conceiving nor cognition at all in the sense of grasping something thematically". [Cited in KurtMueller-Vollmer,'Introduction', 1985,p.32.]. Because human beings, in contrast, to other beings, possess an ontological priority with respect to the question of Being, the investigation and analysis of human existence and all that comes under the concept of social phenomena involves, Heidegger maintains, interpretation. The Heideggerian notion of understanding is not merely an epistemological concept; it is an existential one in the sense that it is closely related to the temporality of human existence. Human beings live in a horizon of past, present and future, in which understanding plays the mode of grasping the possibilities and potentialities of life, disclosed to them, toward a projected future calling for the realization of this possibility or fulfillment.[ Richard Bernstein, 1983, p.p.139-44].

The thesis of existential hermeneutics is different from the hermeneutics of the 19th century exemplified in the works of Dilthey and others in that the latter worked out a notion of understanding in conscious opposition to a node of cognition that supposedly characterizes natural sciences. The latter, like the traditional philosophies of science, was held captive by an image of science as/governed by the interest of 'objectively understanding' things as it were. From a Heideggerian point of view, this notion of objectivity is misconceived. For, it takes
no note of the close relationship between existence and understanding that always makes the latter possible and never allows an escape from the temporality of the former. It may be mentioned in the passing that though Heidegger unambiguously debunks the traditional construal of objectivity in relation to a meta-theory of social sciences, his view regarding such a conception vis-à-vis natural sciences is quite ambiguous. This equivocal position of early Heidegger is organically related to his former view of natural sciences, which is essentially theory-centered - a view which was replaced by him later by praxis-centered construal of natural sciences. [Joseph Rouse, 1987, chapter III].

The notion of objectivity guaranteed by a disinterested perspective has been one of the unquestioned assumptions of Cartesian epistemology. The latter was stuck to a model of subject-object relationship in which the subject stands against the object. In Descartes, for instance, it is pure reflection in which the self comes to know itself transparently. This Cartesian prejudice takes different forms: pure experience, ideal language, pure communicative community etc. The 19th century German hermeneuticians, who questioned the universality of natural scientific method, were nevertheless influenced by the idea of objectivity, which they explicated in terms of the concept of inner experience and the concept of empathy - a notion of objectivity Gadamer calls 'eunuch-like'.[1976, p.28]
The various debates which we mentioned above highlight in different ways the recovery of the hermeneutical dimension of experience called understanding. Central to that dimension is the idea that understanding neither requires of the subject to stand over the object, as scientifically inspired philosophers advocate, nor implies that the object of understanding stands over or against the subject, which he must grasp without prejudice, as Romantically inspired methodologists like Dilthey and others proclaim. Gadamer, taking his cue from aesthetic experience, invokes the notion of play that involves an element of internal buoyancy, a to-and-fro movement that results in understanding. The phenomenon of understanding cannot be accounted for in terms of individual subjects, object and their attitudes alone. It presupposes a setting which requires engagement on the part of the individual subjects. This engagement is guided by a pre-understanding of the situation that not only sets the course of the 'play' but is also shaped or transformed in the playing. This is illustrated by Gadamer in explicating what happens in a dialogue: "when one enters into dialogue with another person and then is carried along further by the dialogue, it is no longer the will of the individual person, holding itself back or exposing itself, that is determinative... the law of the subject-matter (die Sache) is at issue in the dialogue and elicits statements and counter-statements and in the end plays them into each other" (Gadamer, 1976, p.66]. Thus conceived, understanding as play is not a kind of activity, but a
fundamental mode of being in that it, "absorbs the player into itself and thus takes from him the burden of the initiative which constitutes the actual strain of existence'. [1975, p.94]. Understanding¹ is not an achievement of the player or players, but a result of a 'happening' that cannot be guaranteed by any prudent application of method. From a hermeneutical point of view, philosophy of science's preoccupation with method indicates, at best, a concern with a kind of understanding, exemplified in the sciences, which requires a methodic distantiation and abstraction. But even this understanding is not free of the hermeneutic dimension of all understanding such as engagement with the relevant tradition, subsequent appropriation and a dialogic process in which scientists engage and through which it is achieved. The notion of understanding that is developed under the influence of scientific experience presupposes the relationship between subject and object that is taken to be naturally given. Hence, it gives the illusion that the task of understanding is better achieved by methodic reflection. The question whether there is an opposition between methodic understanding, that informs scientific experience and understanding as 'play' that informs experience of art will be discussed later. However, the hermeneutical answer to this question depends upon how successful Heidegger and Gadamer are in their attempt to develop a hermeneutics that explicates 'understanding' and 'truth' at a deeper level than that of epistemology, namely, that of ontology.
Before we examine Gadamer's claims for philosophical hermeneutics and Habermas' profound reservations about them, let us take a critical look at Cartesian epistemology and its variants, to identify the shared background of these two thinkers. The epistemological approach to 'understanding' suffers from the limitations of being dependent on terms such as reflection, experience etc., at the individual level, for founding its project, when the terms themselves come mediated by ideas, society and language in general. Mediation as a fact can be ignored only if one makes assumptions about the subject-object relationship, the structure of the world, the nature of experience, etc. For instance, Descartes could strive for certitude about knowledge only by taking the immediate consciousness of the individual ego as the locus of reflection. The argument that consciousness for its self identity requires 'the other' which extends beyond the individual ego exposes Descartes' assumption. Similarly, Kant could answer the question 'How is science possible?', only by positing a priori categories that structure experience, which on further reflection stands ungrounded.

A critique of the epistemological enterprise, popularly known as the immanent critique, in terms of what it claim against what is the case, brings to foreground a number of problems

This point was discussed in Chapter I in/connection with Hegel's critique of Kant.
associated with it. Of them the first is the problem of objectivism, i.e., the problem of showing that knowledge could be founded on a fundamental principle or idea, or that its certitude could be guaranteed by a given method. Either way, the problem is one of avoiding error. But according to the epistemological enterprise if one could start from something that is unquestionable, for instance, one's own experience, error could be avoided and certitude could be guaranteed. But as Hegel put it, the fear of falling into error is the fear of facing the truth [Garbis Kortian, 1980, p.29]. If one starts from one's own experience, reflection etc., one is sure to miss the phenomenon of mediation. Hegel's critique of Kant, Wittgenstein's critique of ideal language programme and Habermas' and Gadamer's critiques of objectivist epistemology have highlighted this fact in different ways.

Secondly, these critiques show, one way or another, the implausibility of epistemology as a foundational enterprise. But the most decisive argument in recent times has come from a focus on language and its relation to the world or reality. For, one of the things assumed by those who argue for the privacy of epistemology or its equivalent is a certain conception of the nature of language and its relation to reality. According to the most commonly accepted understanding of language the essence of language consists in its capacity to represent reality: the relationship between language and reality is construed in terms
of correspondence between concept and object, theory and phenomenon, narrative and event etc. Admittedly, this relation between language and reality goes well with the subject - object metaphysics which was mentioned earlier. In fact, they come as part of the package offered by the epistemological approach.

Thirdly, even though language does have a representative function (otherwise one would not be able to make distinctions like fact / fiction, truth/ falsity (in the empirical sense) illusion / reality etc) the relationship is not one of simple correspondence as it has been implicit in Russell's logical atomism, Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning, the ideal language of Carnap etc. As is well known, later philosophers of language have shown that the idea of propositional truth cannot be explained in a straight forward sense in terms of statement and state of affairs. The reason is that a statement purported to be true or stating a fact or stating a real possibility needs to be made intelligible in a context before It is evaluated. What makes the relationship between the language and what it represents complicated is that there is an internal relationship between what is said or meant and what is the case. Or as winch, a staunch Wittgenstenian, has showed that language and reality are the two sides of the same coin. [Winch, 1958. p.123].

Later Wittgenstein's 'theory' of language signifies what is popularly knows as the 'linguistic turn' in philosophy. Actually,
the linguistic turn, in the sense of analysis of language as a key to philosophical problems was initiated by Russell, early Wittgenstein, Carnap etc., who upheld a view of language criticized above. But the 'turn' assumed significance around 1950s when it was directed towards ordinary language, which had lost its primacy when the scientific approach to 'every thing' had taken hold. The failure of the ideal language programme inspired by the supposedly "unequivocal" language of science, has restored ordinary language to its original place, resulting in the realization that there cannot be a more reliable meta-language than ordinary language.[Habermas, 1971,p.p.168-69]. Thus, natural language as a universal language has recaptured the centre of philosophy and became the locus of understanding.

Though Wittgenstein can be credited with for contributing much to the rehabilitation of ordinary language and its centrality to the idea of understanding he failed to make a number of distinctions through which he could have avoided the aporias in his critique. First of all, he does not make a distinction between a kind of understanding that is required for the ongoing of everyday life and understanding in the reflective sense familiar to philosophy. The former is intuitive, unproblematic and functions largely in the background which gives stability and regularity to everyday life-praxis. The latter, on the contrary, is called for only when there is an interruption in communication and activity.[Habermas, 1971.p.203]
Secondly, the kind of understanding which every day life-praxis requires is acquired through a process of acculturation or learning a form of life. This is not differentiated by Wittgenstein from a kind of understanding which an adult learner, who is already in the possession of a language and rooted in a culture, seeks to acquire what is alien to him. In other words, Wittgenstein does not make a distinction between learning a native language and learning a foreign language. Note in this connection the examples Wittgenstein discusses in *Philosophical Investigations* as to how children learn languages. However, such a distinction is essential to clarify what is involved in understanding an alien culture.

Thirdly, because he conceives of understanding as rule-following and understanding a language as the mastery of rules he does not realize that understanding is an hermeneutic exercise which means interpretation and application. This means that the grammar of language game or life-form does not exist as 'given' as Wittgenstein says, but constantly gets interpreted and the rules applied anew. Consequently the inter-subjective consensus is ever under the threat of being broken and is susceptible to revisions.

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Both Wittgenstein and his disciple, Winch, criticizing a naive objectivist version of understanding have relied on a restricted notion of language, which does not throw light on a number of questions: How can life forms undergo change or survive radical ruptures? How can radically different life forms understand each other? From the fact there are no general rules of understanding practices and life forms, since there is an internal connection between them and language, does some kind of relativism follow?

Philosophical hermeneutics developed by Gadamer as an account of understanding claims to be in a better position than Wittgenstein-inspired and hermeneutically oriented philosophy of science in that it goes to the very root of the phenomenon of understanding i.e., to the ontological condition of human existence, thereby situating itself outside the restricted choice between objectivism and relativism. Gadamer and Habermas have developed their views in a philosophical climate characterized by the linguistic turn - a turn away from the choice of objectivism and relativism. Criticizing the derivation of the idea of understanding from a false picture of science, they point to the historicity and culture-specificity of all understanding. We had noted this point in the other two debates wherein 'understanding' was tied to paradigm (Kuhn) and form of life (Winch). In the Habermas - Gadamer debate this point comes out more forcefully. They construe understanding as an essentially linguistic. It is
this linguistic character that enables understanding to go beyond any kind of particularism. The diversity of human life, understood in terms of time, place and culture, is united in language, which points to something beyond itself. Therefore, for Habermas and Gadamer, a critique of objectivism need not imply a relativistic thesis. For Gadamer, "the variety of languages presents with a problem... but this problem is simply how every language, despite its difference from other languages, is able to say everything it wants." [1976, p.16]. At an inter-cultural level, understanding is a productive achievement, a result of encounter between different languages or situations. Gadamer captures this process with the idea of fusion of horizons. "If we place ourselves in the situation of someone else, for example, then we shall understand him, that is, we shall become aware of the otherness, the indissoluble individuality of the other person, by placing ourselves in his position." [Gadamer, 1975,p.p.271-73.] It is a matter of acquiring a common framework in which both identity and difference are intelligibly related.

Habermas endorsing Gadamer on this point, goes further and says, "the pluralism of life-worlds and the language-games is only a distant echo of the world-views and cultures that Dilthey projected onto a hypothetical plane of simultaneity"[1988, p.154]. What is meant by historicity of understanding is not just situatedness or changing character of our knowledge, but the emphatic character of the historical influence of the past over
the present that cannot be shaken off in the name of objectivity. What is more, any understanding of the past or the 'other' is possible only to the extent one recognizes the past already in the present. The fusion of horizons does not mean that horizons exist independently as 'theirs' and 'ours', but is projected and integrated in the process of understanding that moves in a circular fashion.

The effectivity of history or effective historical consciousness points out something crucial about human understanding itself: that we, as human beings, are ever bound by the prejudices of our tradition, which both enables as well as limits our understanding. The limits can be overcome by opening ourselves to that we seek to understand. This involves the act of play, referred to earlier. Genuine understanding is a fusion of horizons of the subject and the object in which coming to know the other is knowing oneself. Gadamer uses the notion of effective historical consciousness against the false pretension of science's claim to universality. According to him, 'the element of historical influence is operative in all understanding of tradition, even where the methodology of the modern historical sciences have been largely adopted..." [1975,p.xxi]. He believes that the methodologically alienating fashion in which science approaches its object needs to be corrected by the pre-understanding which one has before scientific experience. But Habermas finds it difficult to accept the "either or' choice
between truth and method or methodic understanding and hermeneutic experience. He does not think much of Gadamer's attempt to remove the humanities from the sphere of science. For, "the sciences of action would not be able to avoid joining empirical-analytical method and hermeneutic ones" [1938, p.167]. While Habermas approves Gadamer's criticism of the absolutism of general methodology of sciences he wonders how hermeneutics can relieve itself of "the business of methodology as such; this claim... will be effective either in the sciences or not at all" [1988, p.167].

In order to fully understand Habermas' criticism of Gadamer, it is necessary to clarify how the latter relates understanding to tradition and draws certain radical conclusions. According to Gadamer, "understanding is not to be thought of so much as an action of one's subjectivity, but of placing oneself within a process of tradition in which past and present are constantly fused" [1975, p.258]. The role of foresight is not just to provide us with presuppositions, but to guide us to explicit understanding of what we know in a primordial sense. Therefore, the meaning of what we seek in traceable to our presuppositions. Interpretation is an act of explicating what is implicit in our understanding. Conceived this way, every understanding is in some sense confirmation of our prejudices, which has its roots in the tradition we seek to understand.
Habermas' objection against Gadamer is directed at his attempt to anchor understanding at an ontological level. According to Habermas, Gadamer does not "recognize the power of reflection that unfolds in verstehen." [1988, p.168]. He agrees with Gadamer that hermeneutic understanding involves a reflective moment in which we are conscious of our prejudices guiding us to seek what we find and, therefore understanding is, in a sense, making explicit what is implicit in the understanding prior to reflection. But reflection does not always terminate in the fusion of horizons in the sense that our prejudices may not always get confirmed. For Habermas, reflection has a radical element that threatens the foundations of the tradition as well as the life-praxis.

This point has a practical import for Habermas who wants to show that understanding is not completed by referring to the prior consensus manifested in the influence of tradition, but by anticipating it as a possibility through a critical enterprise. "From the fact that understanding is structurally constituted by a tradition that further develops through appropriation, it does not follow that the medium of tradition is not profoundly altered by scientific reflection" [Habermas, 1990a p.236]. The alteration consists in the weakening of the consensus and calling forth a reflection which takes the fora of critique.

To be fair to Gadamer, there is a radical strain in his
view, which comes out clearly in his reply to Habermas and later writings. When he is arguing for the positive role of tradition and its authority and how effective history works, it seems that he is endorsing all that tradition and history stands for. It seems there is a lack of critical sense in his hermeneutics. Statements like a "history precedes me and my reflection" can be (mis) understood to be dogmatically implying an attitude of uncritical acceptance towards that which "tradition presents de facto" [Habermas, 1990a, p.286]. Similarly, when he opposes truth to method or hermeneutics to science / method, it seems he is privileging tradition over reason. But Gadamer has clarified that tradition is not something that stands over and against the knower. It is not something that speaks from above. Nor is it something to be thrown off as a shackle. Tradition is transmitted or interpreted by those who let themselves be addressed by it. As Gadamer succinctly puts it, "Even the most genuine and solid tradition does not persist by nature because of the inertia of what once existed. It needs to be affirmed, embraced and cultivated. It is, essentially, preservation such as is active in all historical change. But preservation is an act of reason, though an inconspicuous one." [Gadamer, 1975, p.250]. In other words, the preservation of tradition is an act of reason since it is a freely chosen act.

Similarly, the notion of authority has been popularly misunderstood—a misunderstanding which Gadamer traces to the
Enlightenment prejudice. Against this, he say, authority is based on the recognition of superior knowledge. Authority has nothing to do with blind obedience. [1975, p.248], its legitimacy is derived from the acknowledgement that tradition has a point of truth. As Ricoeur paraphrases Gadamer, "that which has authority is tradition", [Cited in Ricoeur, 1990a.. p.306].

So, Gadamer finds the opposition between tradition and reason, interpretation and critique as a false one, which Habermas succumbs to under the influence of Enlightenment's false consciousness. As far as he is concerned, there cannot be any reflection that can make our structure of understanding completely transparent. The finitude of our existence and the linguisticality of understanding demands from us a recognition of the universality of hermeneutic consciousness that cannot be sublated by any reflection, including Habermas' critical reflection. As Ricoeur puts it, "the critical instance can only be a moment subordinated to the consciousness of finitude and dependence upon the figures of pre-understanding which always precede and envelop it." [Ricoeur, 1990a, p.316].

Habermas finds Gadamer's hermeneutics better placed than Wittgenstein's conception of plurality of language games in that the former recognizes language as encompassing all specific language games and thus avoids a kind of relativism that ensues from Wittgenstein's thesis. He admits that it is useful to
conceive language as a kind of Beta-institution on which all social institutions are dependent. But since language as "a tradition depends on social processes, such as labour and domination that are not reducible to normative relationships" [1990a p.239], it is neither to be absolutized nor to be idealized.

But Gadamer clears up the allegation that he is advocating a kind of idealism [Gadamer, 1976, P.15]. He wonders how a reference system understood as labour and domination can fall outside the purview of linguistic mediation [1976, P.31], or how any reflection on language can be other than a hermeneutic experience. He asks, rhetorically, where does reflection operate from, if hermeneutic approach restricts itself or changes into critique of ideology as Habermas demands? Gadamer says further that even though Habermas is "a hermeneutically reflective sociologist" very unlike technicians of social structure, his argument for critical social science with emancipatory interest, that wants to put hermeneutics at the service of social sciences, betrays the objectivistic or transcendental aspirations. Habermas' turn to psychoanalysis, he says, belles his hope of founding critical social science on independent grounds.

Here, we come to some of the central issues that have been controversial enough to keep the debate alive: the significance of psychoanalytic interpretation; its relationship to
Hermeneutics, as Gadamer understands, is an exercise in search of meaning and interpretation of something that is unclear or misunderstood. It depends on the Idea of pre-understanding embedded in the context of tradition and praxis. The hermeneutic exercise takes the form of a dialogue which presupposes a prior consensus resulting in the production of a common framework that enriches the prior understanding and consolidates the consensual base of what we already possess. However, let us first consider what an interpretation in psychoanalysis involves. Psychoanalysis too is an exercise in search of meaning and interpretation of something which is, at least, **prima facie** alien and hence, unintelligible. Meaning in this context, is a problem in the sense that it belongs to the privatized world of the patient. Dialogue or communication in the ordinary sense is not helpful owing to the lack of prior consensus over the terms of understanding. Hermeneutic reflection in which one can "deem/freely what in one's own understanding may be Justified" [Gadamer, 1976, p. 38] is not available as a choice to the patient, since he does not recognize the motives of his own actions. Motives take the fora of causes and actions symptomatic behaviour. In what is called the analytic situation, the task of
the analyst consists in reconstructing the original experience, usually traumatic, with the help of patient's account of it. The task is made difficult by the fact that it is dependent on the patient's recapitulation with all its gaps and possibilities of misleading suggestions. It is constrained by the phenomenon of resistance, which is, in large part, unconscious.

    The task of recovering the lost meaning or what Habermas terms as restoring distorted communication and helping the patient in his self-formative process involves a circularity: the power of the resistance can be broken only to the extent the patient recognizes his alienated past, [Habermas, 1971, p.266], but the recognition depends on the diminution of resistances. Briefly, the task consists of two things: 1) The investigation and the acquisition of right interpretations, and, 2) The struggle against resistances.

    The peculiarity of psychoanalysis is that its subject-matter has a dual character constituted by energetic and symbolic (ideational) features. The difficulty lies in accounting for both what exists and what it means to the patient i.e., an ontology and hermeneutics. Freud himself offered material in his works for both the approaches, the causal and the textual. And he has been castigated by his critics for over-emphasizing one over the other. Those who are hermeneutically influenced see the idea of analysis as one of achieving insight, "becoming conscious of
one's distorted past."[Habermas, 1971, p.256]. This means language and communication play a very important role. Desires, wishes, dreams etc., are understood like a language. Psychoanalysis deals at the level of instinctual representatives and not at the level of instincts. That Freud was aware of the importance of interpretation to understand the unconscious is evident in his remark about dreams: "the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the Mind" [Cited in Paul Ricoeur, 1977, P.400].

On the other hand, desires and wishes have the character of force for the patient. Separated from their representatives, they make their presence felt as effects. Even though psychoanalysis does not confront these forces directly, it has to come to terms with them, if it is to be called a practice. "Talking cure" is not just a matter of the analyst talking his way through.

However, the hermeneutical construal of psychoanalysis, which is grounded in the textual approach of Freud does not sound wholly adequate. This is clearly evident in the struggle against resistances. Psychic resistance is different from the resistance a text offers in that the former works systematically and behind the back of the individual (patient). Therefore, the goal of psychoanalysis i.e., of enabling self-knowledge for the patient, depends for its realization on weakening the power of the resistance - an arduous task that is not achieved through
sheer "talking power". [Ricoeur, 1977, P.410]. As Freud says, "Informing the patient of what he does not know because he has repressed it is one of the necessary preliminaries to the treatment. For informing the patient of his unconscious regularly results in an intensification of the conflicts in him and an exacerbation of his troubles" [Cited in, Ricoeur, 1977, p.412]. In other words telling what the patient does not know results in the accentuation of the conflict - a task necessary for overcoming the resistances. The second part of Freud's statement indicates what is peculiar to the psychoanalytic practice: "working through" ('Durcharbaiter') the barrier of repression in a situation of transference. That is to say, 'talking through' is only a means of 'working through.'

In what is called the transference situation the technique of psychoanalytic practice comes into full light. Simply put, the goal of psychoanalysis is to bring the traumatic situation or the original experience within the analytic framework with the effect of seeing the past as a past [Ricoeur, 1977, P.415]. But this requires harnessing the force of resistance to its own dissolution. The task of enabling the patient to remember is momentarily subordinated to the technique of playing upon the patient's pleasure and unpleasure [Ricoeur, 1977, P.416].

Both Gadamer and Habermas oppose a scientistic account of psychoanalysis. For Gadamer, psychoanalysis falls very much
within, "the larger perimeter of hermeneutics". For, in psychoanalysis, "hermeneutics and the circle of language that is closed in dialogue are central" [Gadamer, 1976, P.41]. Habermas, on his part, is critical of the attempt of Freud to reformulate psychoanalytic assumptions in the categorial framework of strict empirical science. He supports the other attempt of Freud in developing an analysis on the level of inter-subjectivity in ordinary language between doctor and patient, which incorporates the crucial aspect of self-reflection [Habermas, 1971, p.251]. The subject matter of psychoanalysis is basically & distorted text manifesting itself as compulsion, lies and even neurosis. Instinct theory, while necessary, is not to be confused with the type that applies to animal behaviour. Causality is to be understood not as of nature but of fate, because it prevails through the symbolic means of the mind [Habermas, 1971, p.256].

Despite this common ground between Habermas and Gadamer, the former claims that psychoanalysis undermines the universality of hermeneutics. Is Habermas justified in calling psychoanalysis a distinctly emancipatory science in contrast to historico-hermeneutic sciences? For Habermas, psychoanalysis is different from historical or anthropological studies and therefore. hermeneutical in three significant senses: 1) It assumes a framework which is different from that of hermeneutical studies in that it provides the logic of interpretation in psychoanalytic dialogue; 2) It presupposes a general interpretation which
serves as a narrative foil for the reconstruction of individual life histories and 3) it involves application of this schema to life histories [McCarthy, 1978, P.202].

Let us elaborate: 1) The framework of the psychoanalytic of interpretation involves assumptions about language, behaviour and interruptions in self-formative processes. According to Habermas, these assumptions explicate the possibility of psychoanalytic knowledge. What makes psychoanalysis different from natural and cultural sciences is that the methodology of the former cannot be separated from material content at the level of self-reflection. That is to say, to comprehend the transference situation as the condition of possible knowledge means at the same time comprehending a pathological situation.

2) The assumptions provide a methodological framework in which general interpretations can be developed which deal with the development of the early childhood of the patient, his learning mechanisms and defense mechanisms. These general assumptions deal with interaction patterns of the child which form its personality structure. The general-interpretations are generalized histories of the patients in a narrative form. They form the empirical core of psychoanalysis which means that they are subject to corroboration and refutation like empirical theories in other disciplines. "In contrast to the hermeneutic anticipation of the philologist, a general interpretation is
"fixed" and like a general theory, must prove itself through predictions deduced from it" [McCarthy, 1978, P.203].

3) But the difference between general interpretation of the psychoanalytic nature and general theories of other disciplines is that the validity of the former depends upon the object's (patient's) recognition and application of an interpretation to himself. As Habermas puts it, "the empirical accuracy of general interpretations depends not on controlled observation and subsequent communication among investigators but rather on the accomplishment of self-reflection and subsequent communication between the investigator and his object." [1971, P.259]. The question of validity of a certain interpretation is not easy to decide. A simple 'yes' or 'no' does not resolve the question. While 'yes' or 'no' could be compatible with the correctness of interpretation, it does not suffice to decide the validity of the interpretation. A simple answer could be an expression of resistance which is an indication of the incomplete self-formative process.

Habermas' interpretation of psychoanalysis as an instance of critical emancipatory science has been questioned from different quarters. One line of argument goes that he has left out the significance of instinct theory which forms an important part of the orthodox Freudian position and that his turn to language has
resulted in diminishing the importance of materialist presuppositions required for a satisfactory explanation of psychic phenomenon. [Joel Whitebook, 1985, p.p. 153-160]. The selective utilization of Freudian thesis in the name of a preconceived purpose of restoring meaning or emancipation is achieved by Habermas, according to this line of argument, only by glossing over many of Freud's observations and the clinical experience of others. For instance, Habermas understands unconscious essentially as opposed to the conscious and as as a repository of lost meanings, while Freud did not see the unconscious merely as the place where lost meanings dwell, but a place from where instincts or instinctual drives operate. Seen this way, the unconscious is not a result of repression, as Habermas' interpretation would imply [Habermas, 1971, P.271], but a part of "inner nature" that could be complementary to the conscious. [Russell Keats, 1981, p.p.94-132].

Secondly, to conceive the subject-natter of psychoanalysis purely in terms of distorted text and the task of the analyst as restoring meaning is to lapse into linguistic idealism of which Habermas is, elsewhere, critical [Habermas, 1988, p.p.173-74]. Such a textual approach to psychoanalysis directly goes against the clinical experience. A purely textual approach may result in reading meaning into the patient's pathological behaviour, which may have purely physiological reasons. In such a circumstance to persist in pursuit of meaning is to give up the task of curing
the patient of his illness by psychoanalysis. The situation of transference, central to clinical experience, is "regarded by practicing psychoanalyst as supplying the additional energy to overcome the power of resistance and showing special paths along which to direct the energy " [P Ricoeur, 1977, P.413]. In other words, even if one agrees with Habermas that the validity of an interpretation does not depend on what the patient has to say, but how it helps his self-formative process in the long run, it is doubtful whether, as Habermas thinks, the success of a therapy can rest solely on self-reflection i.e., communication with oneself.

However, Habermas, in his reply to these criticisms, has expressed his wariness about a mechanical model of psychoanalytic explanation that conceives the Instincts in terms of drives or energy. For, according to him, what are lost in a reifying theory of drives is both the linguistic structure of and autonomy of inner nature. [Habermas, 1985b, P.213]. For him, there is no way of getting to the reality of psyche in an alinguistic way. Psychoanalysis, he thinks, is depth-hermeneutic and cannot be made compatible with a physicalistic approach. For methodological reasons Habermas prefers a communication theoretic model. [Habermas,1985b, p.213]. Considering the poor record of experimental approach, he prefers to account for the subject-matter of psychoanalysis in terms of interaction concepts rather than physical or biological concepts. He makes it clear
that he is a materialist without reductionistic pretensions.

This rather lengthy discussion on the nature of psychoanalysis was undertaken to bring out its importance for critical theory. For, Habermas claims that the Methodology of psychoanalysis offers a clue to the method of critical social science, the goal being "the construction of a general interpretative framework in the form of a systematically or a theoretically generalized history which can be applied to a historically oriented analysis of present society with practical intent" [McCarthy, 1978, p.205]. This claim has invited two important criticisms: 1) The goal of psychoanalysis and critical theory as such i.e., of emancipation requires a reflection, "that goes behind the conscious superficial interpretation, breaks through the masked self-understanding and sees through the repressive function of social taboos." [Gadamer, 1976, p.41]. This can take place only against a background of consensus that is taken for granted as true and authentic. Therefore, Gadamer's conclusion is that psychoanalysis does not undermine the claim to universality of hermeneutics, as Habermas believes. On the contrary, it confirms it. Furthermore, the limited claim of psychoanalysis to the psychoanalyst himself and the need for a hermeneutical clarification of the self-understanding of

3 The reduction of psychoanalyst to a game partner who is "seen through" is well brought in the play Equuuss by p.Schaffer. The play illustrates Gadamer's point that psychoanalysis cannot claim the status of an independent science. -
metapsychology go to show that the project of putting psychoanalysis and consequently, critique of ideology i.e., critical social science into a category of science different from that of historico-hermeneutic sciences is highly questionable, if not misconceived [Paul Ricoeur, 1981, P.85]

2) To what extent is the psychoanalytic model appropriate for a critical social science conceived as critique of ideology considering the fact that there is an asymmetry between theory and practice, between unmasking ideological distortion and realizing the practical task of transforming conflict-situation into a consensus situation? As Hegel says, "The revolutionary struggle is by no means a psychoanalytic treatment on a large scale" [Cited in McCarthy, 1978, p.207].

It is true that the kind of self-reflection which a critique of ideology and psychoanalysis demand is markedly different from hermeneutic or phenomenological reflection. The former refers to a "dialectic that takes the historical traces of suppressed dialogue and reconstructs what has been suppressed [Habermas, 1971, P.315]. The self-reflection in the case of critique of ideology brings to consciousness those determinants of a self-formative process which ideologically determine a contemporary praxis and world view?" [Habermas, 1971, p,228]. In the case of psychoanalysis, reflection, "reveals the genetically
important phases of life-history to a memory that was previously blocked and brings to consciousness the person's self-formative process" [Habermas, 1971, p.228]. But, it is questionable to assign psychoanalysis and critique of ideology to a category altogether different from cognitive-instrumental and historico-hermeneutic sciences. This is a problem related to Habermas' classification of sciences and corresponding interests which we referred to in the second chapter. Habermas' mistake lies in locating the classification of inquiry with constitutive interests at an anthropological level, Gadamer rightly questions the primordiality of emancipatory science. And, as Ricoeur points out, the talk of ideological distortion and emancipation makes sense only against the background of a consensus, which may not be 'given' as Gadamer thinks, but anticipated, as Habermas stresses. But since ideological distortion and emancipation arise in communicative experience, they can only be criticized or 'seen through' in the name of a consensus not anticipated emptily in the manner of a regulative ideal a la Habermas; they must be exemplified in the existing traditions or interpretation of works received from the past [P Ricoeur. 1990a, p.327]. In short, a rigid classification of interests or goals or setting an opposition between hermeneutics and critique of ideology, as does Habermas, is to confuse the issue of understanding rather than clarifying it.

The above discussion has brought out certain serious
problems that beset Habermas' position in the controversy with Gadamer, especially, in connection with psychoanalysis to which he takes recourse. However, this does not lean that Gadamer's position is without its shortcomings. No doubt, Gadamer is right in arguing for the universality of hermeneutics in the sense that all understanding is situated in language, and interpretation as well as criticism is bound to some tradition or the other. However, he fails to address himself to a number of issues that Habermas has raised. He explicitly rejects the charge of relativism but does not show how conflicting claims to validity could be resolved. Moreover, what Habermas calls ideological difference is more than a matter of misunderstanding, as Gadamer seems to think. The fact that the basis of difference is linguistically constituted and culturally interpreted does not mean that a dialogue would resolve ideological differences. The case of psychoanalysis and the critique of Ideology, notwithstanding the disanalogies, instantiate a different kind of orientation towards the interpretand. Even if psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology are hermeneutical as Gadamer insists, they exemplify a different kind of hermeneutics i.e., of suspicion, whose guiding interest is not just truth but authenticity that incorporates the ideals of autonomy and responsibility, in contrast to the hermeneutics of faith, which is what Gadamer construes hermeneutics to be, that serves the
Habermas has clarified that 'the interest in emancipation can only develop to the degree to which repressive force, in the form of normative exercise of power, presents itself permanently in the structures of distorted communication - that is to the extent that domination is institutionalized "[Habermas, 1973, p.22]. That modern society is not without its share of repression is obvious in the high level of institutionalization of power an issue brought to foreground by Michel Foucault. It is another matter that the hermeneutics of suspicion today is carried to the extent of being skeptical of meaning itself. The discourse of hermeneutics in terms of restoration of meaning or reminiscence of being and the discourse about self is seen by Foucault as techniques of signification and techniques of domination [M. Foucault, 1993, P.203]. What is overlooked, among other things, in Foucault's approach is the normative dimension of understanding. What is wrong with his approach is that it is one-sided like Gadamarian hermeneutics, though in an obverse sense. Since Nietzsche, the relationship between Knowledge and Power as been taken seriously. In a certain version of what is roughly called the 'postmodern' thought the relationship between the two is drawn so closely that one is almost reduced to the

4 The distinction between hermeneutics of suspicion and hermeneutics of faith is borrowed from Ricoeur. [See, his Freud and philosophy, 1977, p. 32]
other. Knowledge is seen as a function of power. Foucault as if caricaturing Habermas' thesis of the relationship between knowledge and human interests sees the cognitive-instrumental, historico-hermeneutical and emancipatory interests as three major types of techniques at work in modern society: 1) The techniques to produce, manipulate or "transform correspond to cognitive-instrumental interest of empirical-analytical sciences that objectify or externalize nature. 2) The techniques which permit one to use sign systems correspond to the interest of historico-hermeneutical sciences that seek to bring about unconstrained agreement among human beings and, 3) The techniques which permit one to determine the conduct of individuals to impose certain wills on them and to submit them to certain ends corresponds to the interest of emancipatory science that aim at autonomy and responsibility [M Foucault, 1993, P.203].

As mentioned earlier, Foucault, takes the negative hermeneutics i.e., hermeneutics of suspicion to the extent that 'power' is seen as omnipresent. And what is more, it is subject less and independent of all normative considerations. As Habermas puts it, "Foucault abruptly reverses power's truth-dependency into the power-dependency of truth' [Habermas, 1987b, P.274] Without going into the differences between Habermas and Foucault on power - an issue in itself - let us conclude the discussion on the Habermas - Gadamer debate with observations on why
hermeneutics of faith. that is, hermeneutics understood as reminiscent of meaning or recovery of the ruptured relationship with the past must make room for a 'critique' in the Habermasian sense, that is, in communicative-theoretic terms.

To be sure, critique has varied connotations in . . . history as well as in Habermas' writings. And Habermas has not always used them unambiguously. In fact critics like McCarthy have pointed out the conflation of meanings of 'critique' in Habermas' usage: critical self-reflection and transcendental reflection; the former understood as "reflection on specific determinants in the formative processes of particular subjects and the latter as reflection on the self formative process of the species as a whole". [McCarthy, 1978, p. 99]. In his response to criticisms he clarifies that critique is reflection on something particular with practical consequences, transcendental reflection can be understood as reconstruction of the universal conditions of speech and action. [Habermas, 1973, p. 226]. The differences between the two kinds of reflection can be summed up as follows: 1. Critical reflection deals with a particular subject, individual or group, with regard to the determinants of its identity. Reconstruction, in contrast, deals with anonymous system of rules which any subject can follow in principle with required competence. 2. Since, critical reflection deals with the formation and importantly deformation of subject's identity it is inherently linked to emancipation from those determinants of
deformity. Since reconstruction, on the other hand, deals with sentences, actions, competences it is related to the idea of making explicit what is implicit. [Paul Connerton, 1980, p.p. 25-26]

In the light of the above explication of 'critique', it is possible to understand what is that Habermas is arguing for. While Gadamer seems to be arguing that 'critique' as a Moment is subsumable under thinking as such, Habermas sees 'critique' as a determinative reflection that/in making sense of what is contingent, unnecessary, dispensable, releases the potential for its transformation. The difference of opinion over 'critique' is not so much a matter of meaning as of emphasis. While Gadamer wants to say that all reflection, including critical, is limited by a larger consciousness or social understanding by which social community continues to exist, [1985a, p.291], Habermas says "we have good reason to suspect that the background consensus of established traditions and language games can be a consciousness forged of compulsion, a result of pseudo-communication, not only in the pathologically isolated cases of disturbed familial systems, but in entire social systems as well" [1985a, p.317]. Hence, a critique in the latter sense is pressed against Gadamer's hermeneutics.

In the twentieth century, especially after world war II, modern western society has been perceived as becoming
increasingly complex in the sense, on the one hand, it has acquired, owing to the structural changes in capitalist expansion, systemic character that has given rise to functionalist theories and on the other, it lacks a common ground or vantage point from which social phenomenon could be adequately understood. There is an acute feeling that any attempt to relate or mediate myriad points of view, interests and orientations is futile, if not, ideologically suspect. But paradoxically, the current western thought has not given up on philosophy or social theory altogether. In the absence of substantive reason, the demise of philosophy as the 'centre' of discourse and the rise of plurality of discourses, which Weber called the new polytheism, philosophy can only function as critique to ensure that particular interests are not brought to bear unnoticed on the theoretical perspectives of social scientific understanding. To be sure, 'theorizing' in the speculative or foundationalistic sense has been brought to question for good reasons, some of which we have discussed in this chapter. But with the multiplication of perspectives and an increasing sense of 'us' and *them* a need is felt for 'theory' in the larger sense that can fill the vacuum created by the disappearance of philosophy in the traditional sense on the one hand, and, the questioning of science as the paradigm of knowledge, on the other. Thus the grand narrative is making a come back in various theoretical guises. [Quinton Skinner, 1985]. Among then, the hermeneutics of Gadamer is one. And as we noted, it rightfully questions the
consignment of truth to modern science. But its critique of modern science in emphasizing the dialogic node in bringing together various specializations and sectoral finalities in contact with common awareness fails to grasp the significance of empirical-analytical method of sciences and discounts the cognitive value and the learning processes the latter has made possible.

Habermas would contend that while science cannot claim privileged access to truth, it should be given its due as a mode of inquiry appropriate to the study of desacralized world. In accordance with the self-understanding of the modern world, the study of natural world and the material substratum of the social world can be carried out only in an objectivistic fashion, as the empirical-analytic sciences have done. But, because those sciences are a specialized discourse and can be at odds with the commonsensical understanding of everyday life, it is necessary to account for the achievements and limitations of scientific orientation at a broader theoretical level. For Habermas, a critique of science from within philosophy of science or from without, such as hermeneutics cannot strip off the cognitive potential of sciences by relativizing it to tradition or language. But this is what, according to Habermas. Gadamer's

5 Habermas contends that the post-empiricist philosophy of science which lays stress on paradigms and their incommensurability do not pose a threat to his conception of science and its cognitive significance [Habermas, 1986, p.164].
It is clear that Gadamer does not think much of modern scientific knowledge owing to its character of distantiation and objectification. This is clearly evident in the fact that he concedes, rather reluctantly, science its cognitive claims. Habermas, on the contrary, upholds the knowledge provided by sciences as distinctly modern achievement. Gadamer sees in science a reflection of a devalued self-understanding of man i.e., 'externalizable' and 'subjugable'. Modern science, for him, could have arisen only in a 'rationalized' (in the pejorative sense) world that is devoid of meaning or significance. In his critique of objectivism there is an implicit critique of the modern world as replacing phronesis (ethical knowledge in the classical sense) for techne (technical knowledge). Here it is interesting to note Habermas' affinity with Gadamer's critique of objectivism and the technocratic character of modern western society. Both of them share a reading of modern society as dominated by technocratic rationality. While Gadamer highlights the feature through his appropriation of Aristotle's distinction between practical and technical knowledge, Habermas draws attention to the same feature through his analysis of the nexus between technocrats, politicians and administrators - a nexus that deprives the public of political enlightenment and self-deteramation - a point discussed in the next chapter. But the difference is that Habermas questions the false
universalistic claims of science and technology without debunking them as a whole,

From Habermas' point of view there need be no opposition between method, on the one hand, and experience and truth on the other - an opposition implied by Gadamer's hermeneutics [Bernstein, 1983, p.151]. Utilizing the method of empirical-analytical sciences Habermas makes a case for a kind of knowledge of a given human 'object' that could supplement or be supplemented by an experience of truth that Gadamer's hermeneutics points to. Gadamer's hermeneutics resting on a kind of 'humanism' seems to privilege the tradition embodied in language over and against the latter's capacity to develop heterogeneously. It appears that whenever Gadamer appeals to 'common', what is 'ours' or 'the ground of being', he is troubled by the heteromorphous character of language-games. Such an appeal appears to be a concealed plea for social theory in the larger sense. But Habermas argues, social theory cannot ignore the non-hermeneutic modes of thinking, whether in the form of ideology-critique, (Marxism), archaeology of knowledge (Foucault), structural-functionalist theory (Parsons and Luhmann) etc. For such ignoring would undermine the importance of both objective science as well as the sphere of modern society that needs to be preserved as one of the achievements of the modernity project. Gadamer comes close the those whom Habermas calls 'old conservatives' who are averse to cultural modernism.
"They", Habermas writes "observe the decline of substantive reason, the differentiation of sciences, Morality and art, the modern world and its merely procedural rationality, with sadness and recommended a withdrawal into a position anterior to modernity" [Habermas, 1983a, p.14]. Gadamer, like the old conservatives, seems to crave for a de-differentiated reality.

For Habermas, a plea for de-differentiation would mean regression, a betrayal of the incomplete project of modernity. The project of modernity for him consists in relinking the autonomous and elite areas of art, science and morality to the everyday life-praxis. This requires not giving up on cultural modernity, but steering the societal modernisation in a different direction from the one taken by present day western society. In order to realize this change in direction, "the life-world has to become able to develop institutions out of itself, which sets limits to the internal dynamics and imperatives of an almost autonomous economic system and its administrative complements" [Habermas, 1983a, p.13]. To be sure, this is a practical task that requires the participation of all those affected. With the institutionalization of communicative action, where linguistic understanding is indispensable (i.e., cannot be substituted by the steering media of money and power) communicative rationality helps mediating the esoteric discourses of sciences, morality and aesthetics to the praxis of life-world. This has the advantage of avoiding a recourse to substantive reason in the metaphysical
sense, on the one hand, and a shrunken fora of instrumental or purposive reason.

Habermas' critical theory, following the linguistic turn, incorporates the hermeneutic insight that the critique of ideology, whatever form it takes, cannot operate from outside language, as it were. It distances itself from the critique offered by earlier critical theory and the various post-modernist critiques of reason and subject by stressing the linguisticality of reality and the communicative dimension of language. It allows one to do without the notion of 'subject' and 'reason' familiar to the paradigm of philosophy of subject. With the turn to an inter-subjective framework, the subject is transformed into a participant of concrete fora of life. To be sure, the participant part takes the everyday life praxis only via the resources available to her/him from the side of culture. The formation of her/his personality and social identity depend very much on her/his role as a participant in the various social practices. But being a participant implies that social action and its consequences are dependent on her/his interpretative accomplishments. That is, participants do not merely reproduce/the life-world that enables them to speak and act as they do; they actively revise and underline the authority of the tradition and contribute to the on-going of life-worldly practices.
With the rationalization of the life-world both socialization and individuation take place in the same proportion. In both the processes, the role of critique is central. Critical testing and fallibilist consciousness. "even enhance the continuity of a tradition that has stripped away its quasi-natural state of being. They stake comprehensible why abstract, universalistic procedures for discursive will-formation even strengthen solidarity in life-contexts that are no longer legitimated by tradition."[1987b p.347]., One of the major criticisms against Habermas’ interest in action-theory oriented towards clarifying the normative considerations of critical social science is that it holds out no hope for the possibility of revolutionary praxis, even though Habermas claims Marx as this past master. The charge is that his interest is very academic in its orientation and has not really shown how the theory-practice problematic can be resolved. But Habermas has tried to clarify that given the fact that there is no identifiable class that can possibly be the bearers of revolutionary praxis, there occurs a crisis within the Marxian framework of critical theory. Critical theory does not have a historical addressee that could support the idea of radical transformation through its critique of bourgeois ideology. Added to this is the fact that the development of capitalism has acquired a certain complexity that contributes to the theory-practice problematic. This, according to Habermas, has some important consequences for critical theory: firstly, any talk of revolutionary praxis in more than a
metaphorical sense has to acknowledge the incalculability of interventions into deep-seated structures of highly complex society and the rise of catastrophic alternatives that follows revolutionary transformations [Habermas, 1982, p.223]. Secondly, Marxism must take seriously the problems associated with its theoretical generalizations. On the one hand it must scale down the philosophical questions into problems to be dealt with scientifically, and, on the other, it must renounce the philosophical concept of science that Hegel made popular (1982, p.223]. Like any other science, the empirical import of Marxism requires to be validated. In other words, it has to be fallibilistic.

It is evident in our critical exposition of Habermas-Gadamer debate the balance is tilted in favour of Habermas. Though a detailed critique of Habermas will be undertaken in the last chapter it is necessary to make here itself some critical remarks about Habermas' position as it has been developed in his debate with Gadamer.

First of all Habermas has not been able to show that critical social science is independent of hermeneutics as he initially wanted to. As a matter of fact, he has admitted that no theorization can be free of the hermeneutic dimension. Be writes. "critique, too, remains bound to the traditional context which it reflects" [1985a, p.317]. Therefore, it is misleading to pose his
differences with Gadamer as one of "hermeneutics or critique of ideology". This false disjunction not only conceals the amount of influence hermeneutics has had on his critical theory. It also, as Bernstein, points out, prevents one from seeing the fundamental affinities with Gadamer's position.

Secondly, granted that his analysis of modern society as dominated by functionalist reason and as having little space for communicative interaction is more useful than that of Gadamer in the sense that it provides a clue to the practical task of establishing communicative infrastructure, whereas Gadamer merely points to what is lacking in contemporary society by drawing our attention to what existed in ancient Greek society, Habermas has nothing more to offer as a solution than communicative action oriented to consensus. That is, his solution seems to consist of endless communication between participants of diverse spheres or domains. The question is, "Can communicative interaction resolve problems that are strongly rooted in labour and domination?" This question is all the more significant in the light of the fact that Habermas himself is not so optimistic about the possibility of setting limits to the systemic imperatives through communicative processes (Habermas, 1975,p.138p; also 1983a p.13).

Thirdly, even though Habermas has made a good case for

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'theory' which needs to steer clear of both positivism and as well as metaphysical speculation and is significant particularly at a time when 'theory' is being debunked by postmodernists like Lyotard, one might ask "Does not a theoretical interest in what is called communicative rationality itself indicate a misplaced and outdated hope in Universalism – a notion that is abstract and empty?". Is it not a speculative exercise in the sense that it has no bearing on contemporary social reality?" Or, as a hermeneutically inclined critic may ask, "Given the fact that ideas including reason, do not fall from heaven but culturally handed down what is the status of rationality in & procedural sense?" [Anthony Giddens, 1985, p 115].

And lastly, given the emphasis on action-oriented to consensus in Habermas’ working out of the normative foundations of critical theory, it seems 'critique' in the sense of oppositional thinking, radical questioning of Enlightenment, gives way to 'critique' in the sense of differentiation, reconstruction and evaluation of Modernity in its own terras. As we shall argue in the last chapter, critique in latter sense implies being less critical about modernity project and thus prevents critical theory from seeing through the prejudices of the self-understanding of modernity.

However, we must note here that in his response to criticisms, Habermas says that his attempt to reconstruct
formal-pragmatics of speech and reason is not empty or abstract, but is generated from the "normative contents of the universal and ineluctable presupposition of a non-circumventable practice of everyday process of understanding." [Habermas. 1991,p.p.243-44]. His theory of communicative action, he claims, is an explicit articulation of the intuition that reason even though situated and develops through traditions transcends the context of its origins. As Habermas writes, "it is not a matter of this or that preference, 'our' or 'their' notion of rational life, rather we are concerned here with reconstructing a voice of reason, which we cannot avoid using whether we want to or not when speaking in everyday communicative practice" [1991,p.p.243-44].

In the last chapter we shall have an occasion to discuss the inherent tensions in Habermas' thought between the hermeneutic influence, on the one hand, and the rationalist 'prejudice' on the other. We shall argue that if Habermas has to do justice to the universal character of reason – a character that secures, to use Habermas's own words, "unity of reason in the diversity of its voices", [Habermas, 1992, p.115] then he must soften his emphatic interpretation of modernity, which is at odds with the professed hermeneutic turn his critical theory has taken.