Conclusion
Immanuel Kant posed a simple yet fundamental question – how genuine knowledge is possible? Since eighteen century to date all philosophers have grappled with it. My argument is that the Kantian Philosophy is characterized by a pattern in which the presupposition of the reason continually makes a complicated attempt to deduce the legitimacy of cognitive, moral and aesthetic claims and to realize these claims within the world. This argument has two implications. Firstly, pure reason in human beings is limited and the process of critique will establish its boundaries. Secondly, if metaphysics is to be placed on the same plane as science, it must follow the model of mathematics and physics where reason dictates the nature, not vice versa. In other words, according to Kant, reason is limited, but metaphysical science is still possible (in the sense that reason can be made aware of the nature of its limits). Thus, he draws distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves. But the nature of Kant's distinction between phenomena and noumena is never wholly clear, as it is forever beyond our grasp. However, the importance of the phenomena/ noumena distinction lies in the way in which it testifies to the dependence of critiques on both limitation and transcendence. The thing in itself confirms both the power and the weakness of pure reason. Therefore, the process of critique in the
realm of reason combines within itself pure, moral and aesthetic judgment. Throughout the critical philosophy of Kant, Critique has a dual task, both to deduce the legitimacy of the claims of reason and to apply those claims in the appropriate realm. Thus, Kant analyses the realm of practical reason which is beyond the reach of the understanding, and therefore essentially unknowable. In the treatment of practical reason, Critique echoes the distinction introduced in the realm of theoretical reason between divine intellection and limited human cognition. In this instance, the three ideas of the reason: existence of God, freedom of will and immortality of the soul, become the postulates of morality. The significance of these ideas is not theoretical but practical, in the sense that these ideas are regarded as the postulates or presuppositions of human conduct in the ethical realm. These ideas seek to influence the world directly. As Kant himself states, "It is man's duty to strive for, this perfection, but not to reach it (in this life)...."1 As it is clear from the above quotation, the moral laws can never fully exist in the phenomenal realm other than as an obligation and a striving, a ground that cannot be understood, only obeyed, and an end that can never be achieved.

The problem of how reason can know 'what it cannot know' was

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resolved by the reference to the distinctions between noumenal and phenomenal worlds. Therefore the *Critique of Practical Reason* becomes an endless quest to overcome the gulf between human and divine, on which it is itself premised. Yet, the categorical imperatives demand the bridging of this divide.

In the *Critique of Judgment* Kant explicitly addresses problems raised by his exploration of the realms. He clearly addresses problems raised by his exploration of the realms of the understanding and reason in the first two *Critiques*. He does this by focusing on the faculty of judgment, as a faculty with its own *a priori* principles to be deduced complementary to the categories of understanding and the idea of transcendental freedom or the moral law. Judgment in the first two *Critiques* is constituted as the problem for which the transcendental critic seeks a solution. However, neither the first nor the second *Critique* resolves the problem of how theoretical or moral judgments are possible without raising a host of further questions and invoking a series of distinctions and divisions which appear to disable judgment even as the conditions of its possibility are laid bare. The *Critique of Judgment*, therefore, is introduced as mediation between the powers of reason and the domains of theory and practice which
they legislate and govern. It is therefore, the critique of aesthetic judgment through which Kant aims to elucidate the principles peculiar to the faculty of judgment. In his critique of aesthetic judgment, Kant examines two kinds of judgment: judgment of the beautiful and the sublime. But his attempt to bridge the gap between nature and freedom through the judgment of beauty ends in failure since the gap experienced in such judgments is aesthetically closed. The beautiful stands as a symbol of morality, though it can not be identified with morality itself. The *Critique of Judgment* neither makes clear the possibility of such judgment nor the division between the faculties and their domains successfully mediated. Instead, the *Critique of Judgment* confirms the mysterious authority of reason and the ways in which it is limited both theoretically and practically.

In the case of each of the *Critiques*, of theoretical and practical reason and of judgment, the aim of the critique is to trace both the limits and the possibilities of the specific faculties in questions. The peculiarity of the first critique lies in the way in which critique necessarily pushes beyond the limits which it concerns to trace. Although theoretical cognition is bound to the world of appearances, nevertheless, it postulates and depends on
an intelligible realm outside the scope of its own legislation. Having pushed beyond its limits, pure theoretical reason gives itself sovereignty as practical reason, which it cannot comprehend. Thus, the attempt to inaugurate the critique of reason in its practical aspect is declared in advance to be impossible. The argument of the *Critique of Practical Reason* becomes little more than the confirmation of the legislation of an unknowable power of transcendental freedom in the moral law. *Critique* becomes vague in explaining how intelligible and sensible world can be made to meet without ever meeting, the identities of actual and possible worlds. The *Critique of Judgment* confirms both the unknowability and power of the supersensible and exhibits the struggle of the critique to mediate between nature and freedom – a mediation which is both required by reason and impossible to achieve, although its achievement can be hoped for. In essence, the critique emerges as inherently paradoxical.

The exercise of the *Critique* is necessarily an exercise of theoretical reason, an attempt to grasp the principles of knowledge, morality and judgment. Yet, as an exercise of theoretical reason, critique is dependent on practical reason, in the form of the ideas of reason that regulates cognition and cannot be
grasped by it, and the equally elusive ideas of reason towards which cognition is oriented. At the same time, critique as theoretical reason continually strives to move beyond the boundaries of cognition to the intelligible realm in which it is grounded but cannot do so. As theoretical reason is caught up in the tangles of its own incapacity, Kant is obliged to invoke as hypothetical identifications of nature and freedom or principles of hope derived from the possibility of aesthetic judgment in order to explain and legitimate the possibility of critique itself.

If one examines the different aspects of Kant's philosophical thought, it is clear that his philosophy is caught in a continual struggle with the relation between the ends of practical reason, as they are defined in the universal principles. The attempt to relate ideal to real ends in a paradox. As mentioned above, the dual determination of critique by the assertion of both reason in limitation and its legislative power resulted in a series of struggles to fulfill tasks which the presuppositions of critique itself made impossible. The ambition of reason in practice of critique is worked in a series of unsatisfactory resolutions on the dichotomies which grounded reason's ambition, to secure the legitimate territory of knowledge, morality, and aesthetic
judgment, given reason's inherent limitation. Therefore, Kant's theories of law, the state and history struggle to overcome the gulf between transcendent reason and the realm of empirical. Thus, Kant's attempt to lay the foundations for a new metaphysics continually brings him to the questions of the legitimacy of his own enterprise and leads to same peculiar consequences.

On the other hand, Habermas' work forms an appropriate starting point for the examination of the Kantian legacy in the contemporary critical social and political thought since he embraces the Kantian project more wholeheartedly and holistically. Habermas claims that Kantian critique can be reconstructed in such a way so as to avoid the problems that haunted Kant's own attempt to legitimize his (Kant's) own arguments. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate the central importance of Kant's critical philosophy in Habermas' own conception of critical theory. Since the publication of Knowledge and Human Interests, Habermas has found himself constantly defending and reformulating his critical theory in the light of Kantian critical philosophy. Habermas has claimed, in his mature theory, to have captured what is useful in the Kantian project without falling into any of the above mentioned flaws. My
disposition is the following: Habermas’ mature work remains locked into the logic of Kantian critical thought and therefore, shares its peculiar and paradoxical nature.

In Knowledge and Human Interests, Habermas argues for a revival of Kant’s epistemological project, premised on a concept of knowledge which is neither equated with pure scientism nor with Hegel’s absolute knowledge. To drive home the importance of Kantian epistemological project Habermas states, “Kant recognition of the need to reflect on the limits of the validity of human knowing remains the crucial philosophical insight of modern philosophy.”2

Habermas wants to preserve Kant’s critical turn in his philosophy. He accomplishes this in Knowledge and Human Interests by identifying transcendental conditions for different kinds better known as the concept of knowledge-constitutive interests. Continuing in the same vein he tries to subsume theoretical reason under practical reason. In this regard he opines, “Orientation towards technical control, toward mutual understanding in the conduct of life, and toward emancipation from seemingly ‘natural’ constraint establish the specific view

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points from which we can apprehend reality as such in any way whatsoever.”

The natural sciences, therefore, are “subjects to the transcendental conditions of instrumental reason” whereas, the “social/hermeneutic sciences [are] governed by the requirements of communicative action”. However, the Meta-critical sciences, which are processes of self-reflection, are governed by the demands of emancipatory action.

At the end of *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Habermas hoped to have paved the way for a critical political and social theory necessarily linked to political and social practice. The concept of knowledge-constitutive interests supposedly grounded in objective facts about the human condition and human evolution. It made transcendental critique possible without being haunted by either transcendental ideal or things-in-itself. However, it did not take long for Habermas to rethink the extent to which he had evaded the pitfalls of Kantian transcendentalism. In particular, the notion of constitutive relation between emancipation and critical theory was difficult to ground plausibly in regard to the human condition and it appeared to be uncritically presumed rather than

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3 Ibid. p. 311.
4 Ibid. p. 191.
5 Ibid. p. 191.
self-reflectively established. Without guarantee of an emancipatory interest the relevance of critical theory became vague placing the critic in danger of becoming a metaphysician. In light of above mentioned problems, Habermas abandoned his first attempt to ground the possibility of critique in the concept of transcendental interests and moves towards the analysis of structure of language and its role. Whereas, Kant's search for the conditions of human cognitive and practical judgment led him into positing unknowable ideas in a transcendental beyond, for Habermas the search takes him to the analysis of structure of language and a set of requirements for meaningful discourse.

Meta critique has been reformulated as a reconstructive science, the paradigm for which is provided by universal pragmatics. Universal pragmatics provides Habermas with a tool for the analysis of the logic of both individual cognitive development and evolution of society. Since Habermas' turn to language in *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, his theory has developed in line with the logical and historical claims made there for the critical potential of formal pragmatic analysis. In *The Theory of Communicative Action*, emphasis is placed on the hypothetical standing of the universal rules, transcendentally
deduced through formal-pragmatic analysis. The argument of Habermas' formal pragmatics is that this internal structure is universally implicit in any discursive attempt to reach an understanding.

At first sight, Habermas' turn to a history of social theory as the means of grounding and developing his own critical theory is difficult to understand. The question arises, in what manner can such a history help to establish the universality of the logic of communicative rationality? The answer, for Habermas, seems to lie in the way in which social theory in itself illustrates the self-understanding of the times in which it is produced and combines the conceptual and empirical insights into the nature of rationality and action. By criticizing and reflecting on social theory, Habermas aims to arrive at his own interpretation of modernity and the possibility of critical theory within it.

According to Habermas, in the mature articulation of his critical social theory, the strong transcendentalism of earlier formulations of his thought has been overcome. Although acknowledging the significance of the Kantian philosophy in his work, Habermas sees himself as having evaded its danger. My argument is that Habermas is not fully successful in avoiding
Kantian transcendental dangers in his critical philosophy. For Habermas, as also for Kant, the critique of reason involves addressing the problems of determining the conditions of judgment and delimiting the domains of reason, which are identified in both cases as theoretical, practical and aesthetic. Clearly, Habermas is aware of the possible pitfalls into which a Kantian inspired critique may fall. In particular, he is anxious to avoid 'metaphysical' connotations in the postulations of transcendental grounds. Abandoning his early attempt to establish these grounds in the concept of constitutive interests, Habermas turns to universal pragmatics and the way in which different claims are grounded in the logic of the use of language. The transcendental unity of apperception and regulative ideas of reason are replaced by inter subjectivity and the ideas of communication oriented towards understanding. However, a careful tracing of Habermas' grounding of the possibility of legitimate judgment, and the relations between domains of reason, suggests that Habermas is not successful in escaping Kantian pitfalls, as he does not find any concrete solutions and as he progresses in his *Theory of Communicative Action*, he falls deeper in Kantian transcendental traps.
If we take Habermas’ view of formal pragmatics, we see that the universal validity of the findings of formal pragmatics can not be known but it can only be hypothesized. It is a hypothesis, however, which like Kant’s transcendental hypothesis (of noumena and ideas of reason) is incapable of empirical proof or disproof, though it may be rendered “more or less plausible by reference to speakers own intuitions.” The hypothetical nature of the conditions enabling distinctions between valid and invalid judgment is claimed by Habermas to be a guarantee of his operating without metaphysical support thereby, trying hard to evade Kantian transcendental traps, nevertheless, fails to do so. Further, if one examines Habermas’s threefold modes of judgment as against Kant’s, one finds they too have a peculiar relation to one another and continually challenge their own demarcation.

In Kant’s work, the relation of cognitive and moral judgment at a transcendental level is one, in which the conditions of moral judgment also guarantee the possibility of cognitive judgment. This is echoed by Habermas’ grounding of judgments of truth about objects in the normative procedures of communicative rationality. At the level of empirical judgment, validity claims relating to all three realms of judgment are

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present, and yet, judgment always relates primarily to one of those realms, which exist independently from one another.

The role of aesthetic judgment in Kant echoes peculiarly in Habermas' work. The aesthetic validity claim is essential to all discourses, since it involves the claim of truthfulness or sincerity. It therefore, underwrites all cognitive and moral claims and yet its own domain of validity—the subjective world, is shadowy and accessible.

The concept of communicative rationality and its correlative distinction between the domains of reason is crucial to Habermas's idea of 'life world'. According to Habermas, the life world comprises those aspects of social life that properly are coordinated through action oriented towards understanding through the mechanisms of communicative rationality which enable understanding this concept of life world is contrasted analytically with systematic aspect of social life, which under capitalism are instrumentally oriented through strategic rationality. The life world / system duality reflects the duality between communicative and strategic rationality and provides the context for the complementarily of different methodological approaches to the sociological explanation of the social world. Critics of Habermas
have tended to focus on the extent to which he has gone too far towards systems theory in his acceptance of the autonomous logic of systemic steering media what is most striking about the life world / system distinction in the context of argument, however, is the extent to which it maps on to Kantian distinctions between reason and nature, noumena and phenomena. The way in which the distinction is used by Habermas, and in particular, his concept of the ‘colonization of the life world’ echoes very closely Kant’s assertion of both the authority and limitation of reason over nature.

A thorough examination of the writing of Habermas reveals that several key principles of Kantian Philosophy such as – transcendental, a priori antinomies, illusion have been avoided by him. In spite of these divergence, some core concept of Kantian philosophy such as –critique universal, rationality, emancipation, values have undoubtedly philosophy of Habermas. I opine that Habermas consciously evades these issues in order to avoid metaphysical connotation in his critical theory.

An examination of the main elements of Habermas’s critical theory, points to the fact that his work still manifests a close relation to Kantian critique. This is demonstrated in Habermas’s
attempts to develop a formalist ethics and his conception of, and treatment of the links between, the realms of morality and theory.

In essence, we can say that Habermas's self-conscious utilization of Kant's critical philosophy to deal with his difficulties (difficulty of legitimation, application and enforcement of reason) has direct consequences for both theory and practice. In both the instances, Habermas shifts between claims to authoritative judgment and the impossibility of legitimating that authority. In an effort to ground critical approach, Habermas employs the idea of knowledge-constitutive interests, and further this effort to universal pragmatics, theory of rationalization and the art of reflective judgment. But sadly, none of the ways of overcoming the divisions of reason is sustainable except as hope or hypothesis. Similarly, the development of life world and of autonomous public spheres, which promises progress in history, remains permanently weak outside Habermas's own judgment. Rather than exemplifying a success of critique, Habermas's theory like Kant's critical philosophy, is a testimony to impossibility, and its persistent tendency to lapse back into the speculative and skeptical
alternatives it is designed to come – A utopian alternative which can be hypothesized but can never be achieved.

Another finding of my research points to the impact the politics of human rights as universal norm and rival culture staking their claims as ‘the culture’ one could discuss that Immanuel Kant’s theory of categorical imperatives can explain the dominate European modern culture, propagated as the universal culture of the world. The categorical imperatives of Kant propagates that the imperatives are universal and are binding on the whole, where there is not place of difference of opinions.

But Habermas’s point of departure as regards to the concept of disagreement where validity claims of rival cultures and values are incorporated in his theory of communicative action and is further strengthened in his model of participatory democracy. In total, he emphasizes the significance of the culture.

In view of these challenges, I conclude that the abstract and highly procedural character of Habermas’s version of the project of radical democracy is its primary strength and weakness. Its strength lies in the fact that his theory of communicative action and reason, postulates a unique and powerful argument for a model of democracy, in which the public and private autonomy of
citizens are of equal consideration. It puts forth a intersubjective account of basic rights and procedural democracy more powerful than any of the existing liberal accounts. It also offers a strong argument for the establishment of institutions that would facilitate discussion based on mutual respect, albeit the highly abstract character of the proposal suggests that greater research needs to be done if it is to contribute concretely to more specific debates about basic rights, and the 'dilemmas of difference' in contemporary world.

However, critically speaking, both the philosophers have failed in their meta theories in dealing with the problem of differences among various section of society and the different stages of their development. The significant aspect that has been ignored is how negotiation for consensus can be achieved among them, when there are vast differences in bargaining powers among different section of society. Arguably, Habermas's notion of bargaining in democratic politics is skewed. On the fundamental questions, such as constitutional principles, it is important that citizens are given the opportunity to discuss and deliberate in a constraint -free forum. While this discourse is essentially open ended, decision making is essentially closed ended. A realistic model of
deliberative democracy must concede that decision rules in large democracies will always place constraints on constraint-free dialogue. This means that the potential for a more rational politics needs to be found in fostering and promoting dialogues in which the goal is mutual understanding and not necessarily a binding decision.

In total, the project of emancipation structured in its own utopia, its own images of the good life, has led to path-breaking theories enunciated namely by Kant and Habermas. Kant’s theory of Enlightenment arose from the need to deconstruct, uncouple and unpack the basic question of how to arrive at a universally accepted good life. Continuing this insatiable and never-ending quest of philosophy in search of good life, Habermas offers a ‘third way’, that synthesis the creative residues of both liberal and Marx’s theories of society into a new and critical social theory.