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CONTEMPORARY DEBATE
The controversy of ‘ends and means’ in contemporary perspective centered on Leon Trotsky, leading Marxist thinker of the 20th century, and John Dewey, liberal and American pragmatic philosopher. In late 1930's they entered into a debate on ‘ends-means’, which is highlighted by the liberal philosopher George Novack in his article titled “The Liberal Morality” in self-edited book on “Their Morals and Ours: Marxist versus Liberal View on Morality”.

**Trotsky on Morality**

Trotsky views philosophy as idealistic form from the classical period. This idealism in its progress tried to secularise morality by freeing it from religious sanctions.¹ According to Trotsky, Hegel was a remarkable step in this direction. The secular moral philosophy getting out of the religious shackles was forced to ground itself. Idealism, nevertheless, for Trotsky ushers in change and for him, change is an inherent condition of social reality that cannot stop and for this reason change has advanced civilization, enlightened culture and scientific knowledge. In the same manner, philosophic ideas too have been changing and reached the rational and secular basis of moral philosophy. In secularisation morality has been disconnected from heavenly ideas and evolved with the changing needs. Historical materialism
is an attempt to provide scientific explanation for the origin and substance of moral codes, their social functions and limitations. Trotsky sarcastically criticises moral philosophy by saying,

“…moralists wish that history should leave them in peace with their little books, little magazines, subscribers, common sense, and moral copybooks. But history does not leave them in peace. It cuffs them now from the left, now from the right”.2

From the philosophical point of view the sanctity of moral principle like, ‘Do not kill’ are justified, but self-defense is exempted. According to Trotsky the State nevertheless reserves the authority to transforms the ‘obligatory’ moral principle ‘Do not kill’ into its opposite.

However, there is a contradiction of moral sanction in liberal thinking, because in liberal society there are exceptional grounds of getting immunity from punishment after committing violence or crime and in case of State organised violence the immunity that is, contradiction of the moral sanction ‘Do not kill’ is absolutely applicable and the State has given the right ‘officially’ like in case of war the highest duty of an army is to destroy and kill the greatest number of people.
Trotsky points out that the moral judgments are deduced from some moral sense assumed to be universally given, which leads to,

“...the acknowledgment of a special substance, of a “moral sense”, “conscience”, some kind of absolute which is nothing more than the philosophic – cowardly pseudonym for God. Independent of “ends”, that is, society, morality, whether we deduce it from eternal truths or from the “nature of man”, proves in the end to be a form of “natural theology””.

Trotsky asserts that in divine revelation the priests long ago discovered reliable moral criteria. But now the secular priests speak about endless moral truths without giving their original source. If, as is claimed, these truths are eternal and endless, they should have existed not only before the appearance of man upon the earth but also before the evolution of the solar system. Trotsky argues that the theory of eternal morals can not survive without God. Trotsky goes on to argue,

“Bourgeois evolutionism halts impotently the threshold of historical society because it does wish to acknowledge the driving force in the evolution of the social forms: the class struggle. Morality is one of the
ideological functions in this struggle. The ruling class forces its ends upon society and habituates it into considering all those means which contradict its ends as immoral. That is the chief function of official morality. It pursues the idea of the “greatest possible happiness” not for the majority but for a small and ever diminishing minority. Such a regime could not have endured for even a week through force alone. It needs the cement of morality. The production of this cement constitutes the profession of the petty–bourgeois theoreticians and moralists. They radiate all the colors of the rainbow but in the final analysis remain apostles of slavery and submission” [Italics in the original, highlighted added].

As a Marxist, Trotsky points out that the bourgeois moralists live in the idealized memories of yesterday and waiting for its return. But they do not know that morality is a function of class struggle and democratic morality corresponds to the phase of liberalism and progressive capitalism that intensifies the class struggle. According to Trotsky, this latest phase definitively and permanently destroyed this morality and replaced it with fascism on one side and the morality of proletarian revolution on the other.

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Marxists argue that morality is the product of society and changes with its development. Marxist argues that morality has little impact since it only serves social interests are contradictory. Morality, for Marxists more than any other form of ideology has class character and develops with it; there is nothing permanent or unchanging about it as claimed by the idealist philosophers.

Trotsky argues that though some basic moral principles exist, evolved in the development of mankind and necessary for the functioning and maintenance of every collective body but their influence is extremely limited and unsuitable. The maxim that moral norms are obligatory for all loses its influence with the sharpening of the class struggle. The norms of moral obligatory, is in reality filled with class, that is, antagonistic in content.\(^7\)

Marxist assertion, like Engels, the theoretical justification of morality is the product of the economic stage of a society at particular point of time. Because of the human civilization, the civilized society is now moving in class antagonism and it will continue because of morality which is basically a class morality. The concept of morality is justified either by the domination or interests of the ruling class or by the oppressed class. For this reason, morality has become powerful enough and it has represented the revolt against this domination and further the interests of the oppressed.\(^8\) However, Trotsky argues,
“A society without social contradictions will naturally be a society without lies and violence. However, there is no way of building a bridge to that society save by revolutionary, that is, violent means, the revolution itself is a product of class society and of necessity bears its traits. From the point of view “eternal truth” revolution is of course “anti-moral”. But this merely means that idealist’s morality is counter-revolutionary. That is, in the service of the exploiters”.9

Marxists, including Trotsky, argue that religious, or broadly any morality alluding to heavenly givenness can not be claimed in a society that only human morality can exist which stands above class antagonism and tries to overcome class antagonism. Thus, Marxists materialistic explanation for the changes and diversity in moral judgments also provides the justification for new ones.10

Dewey on Morality

The pragmatists view is that social life has to be given priority to evolve a genuine morality which can produce effective social action. From the pragmatists point of view a society is divided by antagonisms where people appeal to different moral demands
and different moral judgments imposed by the contending classes. If this fact is ignored the end of morality is bound to be either imaginary or unreal and actions emanating from it will be harmful as consequences or ends. Novack points out pragmatists view and argues,

“The pragmatists...Moral theory is...their substitute for conventional religion...it provides their major means of defense and offense against a thoroughly materialist approach to social problems”.11

Novack asserts that pragmatists consider moral theory as their substitute for conventional religion. In this sense he points out Dewey’s view that the significance or worth of any action, is to be judged solely by its ends or consequences. It is not the intention, motive or aim of an individual but the concrete ends which flow from action. For him, morality is an unconcealed activity having ends instead of as a mere inner personal attribute.12 The moral worth for Dewey depends upon as Novack points out, “goodness of heart”.13 However, Novack highlights the moral approach of pragmatism and argues,

“A scientific approach to morality should be able to inform us, not only that exploitation is evil, but why
the rich must act that way in the first place and thereby indicate how the evils of exploitation can be removed. This is not an individual but collective social problem”.14

In this sense, Dewey argues that individual actions are necessarily or unavoidably subordinate to social action and that morality is permanently bound up with social conditions and ends. The pragmatists do not rely on any endless deep-seated or transcendental truth as a sanction for moral standards. Novack in support of the pragmatist argues,

“Whatever actions tend to increase wealth and equalize its distribution, extend democracy and freedom, institute peaceful relations, open more opportunities for more people, enhance their sensitivities, add to their understanding, etc. are good. If they have the contrary consequences, they must be condemned as immoral”.15

As an example Novack refers to exploitation which according to the pragmatist principle would be wrong for it deprives, divides, and oppresses the people. He points out that pragmatists would require that exploiters should be made to realise that they should either correct themselves or be corrected by the community. He
points out that for Dewey, force is wrong and has harmful in its ends and therefore it must not be resorted to or should only be employed if absolutely necessary. Novack himself is of the view that class conflict is wrong and it should be replaced by class harmony or collaboration and togetherness.

The pragmatists consider that the highest aim of human morality is the self-realisation of each individual, the development and perfecting of the human personality.

**Trotsky on Ends and Means**

Trotsky as a Marxist argues that dialectical materialism does not know dualism between ends and means. The ends are determined by the historical movement with means subordinated to the end which in turn can be means for some other end. The dialectical view of ends and means was explicated in the second chapter of this thesis that we not only show the end but show the means also which is closely interlinked and go with one another. ‘Ends’ and ‘means’ are expressed by Marxists, entirely in terms of dialectical interdependence and argue that the end determines the means. However, the immediate end may become the means for a further end.

Indeed Marxist dialectical materialism depicts a dynamic process that changes as it proceeds endlessly. The proportional
influence and interaction between the ideal and the actual gives birth to means, which in its turn, through this dynamic process, becomes harmonious with the end. In short, the relation between ends and means in Marxist thought does never imply that any end justifies any means and vice versa. Marxists argue that the nature of the means is determined by the nature of the end in the given historical situation. Ends and means are inseparably connected with one another in such a way that the nature of means, whether it is violent or non-violent, changes in accordance with the nature of the ends.

Arguing on the liberals own moral principles, Trotsky states that if neither personal nor social ends can justify the means then obviously, they make the criteria from outside the historical society. If liberals are not taking the criterion from practical relations to the society; hardly they will pick it from heaven.

**Dewey on Ends and Means**

Dewey argues that means are means which function in an intermediary position like the middle term of a categorical syllogism. Dewey also understanding that the commonly held dualism of ends and means is done with. The term ‘end’ is merely a series of acts viewed at a distant stage and the term ‘means’ is merely the series viewed at an earlier one.
For Dewey the means within our power are just a matter of habit. The projections of the end are the elements that hinder this habit. It is also the primary means in its realisation. The habit is pushing forward and moves anyway toward some end, whether it is a plan as an end-in-view or not. In the second chapter of this thesis this view of Dewey was portrayed by explicating that ends and means as two names of the same reality. The terms do not distinguish the reality but the judgment which makes it moral and non-moral.\textsuperscript{16}

In Dewey ‘end’ is used in two senses, that is, the final justifying end and ends that are themselves means to this conjectured final end. Dewey points out that Trotsky does not anywhere claim that some ends are but means, which nevertheless is certainly implied in the Marxists statement that some ends lead to domination of man over nature, etc.\textsuperscript{17} As is pointed out in the second chapter of this thesis. Dewey argues that ends are literally endless coming into existence as new activities occasion some new ends. The endless end is a way of saying that there are no ends which is finally self-enclosed.

Dewey asserts that the relation between ends and means is clearly bound up in a temporal relation. He argues that ends are in the future, whereas means are in the present. Therefore,
implying that we can control the means, but not on the ends.

Dewey says,

“…the foolishness of conceiving ends apart from means. On the contrary, ends must be judged, and evaluated in the light of available for their attainment…the means to be used might well require an excessive amount of effort, or might well in some different way involve the sacrifice of other ends or other means”.

Dewey argues that the distinction between ends and means arises in surveying the course of a proposed line of action, a connected series in time. The ‘end’ is the last act we think of and the ‘means’ is the acts to be performed prior to it in time. To reach an end we must take our mind off from it and attend to the act which is next to be performed. We must make the end.

There is a belief in Dewey in plurality of changing, moving and individualised ends. The criterion for distinguishing ends and means may be interrogated. Dewey in turn points out that an end is the relational quality of a set of activities, which confers or presents order upon them and insures their continuity; such a quality is ordinarily synthesised by focusing some particular foreseeable outcome of the same set of activities in some
moment of the future. Any aspect of experience which precedes that moment and is related as a part to the whole must be considered a means. Dewey argues,

“…ends can be valued apart from appraisal of the things used as means in attaining them. The sole alternative to the view that the end is an arbitrarily selected part of actual consequences which as “the end” then justifies the use of means irrespective of the other consequences they produce is that desires, ends-in-view, and consequences achieved be valued in turn as means of further consequences” [Italics in the original].

Gotesky argues that Dewey’s concept of end-in-view is not necessarily an end. We try to restrict ends to those ends-in-view which include some kind of rational justification. Ends-in-view that are concerned with interest, desire, want, etc. are not as such ends; they are simply matters of concern or interest. For example, to want an apple is an end-in-view, but it may not, in our mode of talking, be called an end unless, it involves some kind of justification such as wanting an apple because it has a particular taste or quality which is not found in other fruits.
Dewey distinguishes ‘end-in-view’ from ‘ends’ as accomplished result conceived as plan. A plan is never ultimate and final, never an ‘end-in-itself’. A plan is rather a means to an end. For example, the plan an architect employs while building a house, whose instrumental function as a device is useful in regulating the actual procedures of the construction that requires no further explanation. However, this does not make it impossible to continue to distinguish between ends and means. We may say that such a plan serves as a means for building, while ‘building’ is itself a means for having the house.

But Dewey argues that ends are ends-in-view arising out of natural effects or consequences. We like some of the consequences and dislike others. Therefore, attaining or averting similar consequences are to be classed as ends. These consequences constitute the meaning and value of an activity as it is deliberated on.

For Dewey ends-in-view are taken to be valued as good or bad on the ground of their serviceability. They are appraised as fit or unfit, proper or improper, right or wrong, on the ground of their requiredness in accomplishing this end. Any content that the end-in-view possesses comes from the means, not from abstract ideals. The content of the end as an object held in view is intellectual or methodological; the content of the attained end as
consequence is existential. No physical object may be considered a means unless it is used in some human activity to accomplish some end.

Dewey asserts that if ends-in-view are entirely apart from means, there is nothing absurd, nothing ridiculous, in his procedure, for the end attained, the existing result is just the end desired. Dewey emphasises that it is only after an assessment of the means in relation to its alternatives it is possible to evaluate the attained end. Dewey argues,

“They [moralistic persons] deny that consequences have anything at all to do with the morality of acts. Not ends but motives they say justify or condemn acts. The thing to do, accordingly, is to cultivate certain motives or dispositions, benevolence, purity, love of perfection, loyalty. The denial of consequences thus turns out formal, verbal. In reality a consequence is set up at which to aim; only it is a subjective consequence. “Meaning well” is selected as the consequence or end to be cultivated at all hazards, an end which is all-justifying and to which everything else is offered upon in sacrifice. The result is a sentimental futile complacency rather than the brutal efficiency of the executive. But the root of both evils is the same. One man selects some eternal
consequence, the other man a state of internal feeling, to serve as the end. The doctrine of meaning well as the end is if anything the more contemptible of the two, for it shrinks from accepting any responsibility for actual results. It is negative, self-protective and sloppy. It lends itself to complete self-deception” [Italics in the original].

For Dewey, moral end is that something we cannot attain, since for him this is a stage of fancy where something agreeable and desirable is primarily transmitted through establish channels of authority. In fact, for him, ends are determined by fixed habit and the force of circumstance. Dewey argues that ends are morally irrelevant which is true only in the sense that any act is always likely to have some end which could not have been foreseen, even with the best will in the world.

Dewey argues that moral will is an end in itself, not a means to something else. For him, every person is equally an end in himself which is a quality that marks off a person from a mere thing. We use things as means and subordinate them to our own purposes such as, stones, timber, heat, and electricity and so on. But if we use a person as a means to an end then we violate the very existence of human being. It means that we treat the person as a slave and reduce her/his status merely to physical objects.
Balndshard points out that there are no such things as intrinsic values or ends in themselves. Balndshard feels that Dewey will reply that this is what it implies and admits that end is determined by the facts which are also means. Dewey, however, argues that value of ends is thought of and in other cases the value of means.²⁷

**Debate between Dewey and Trotsky**

Dewey in his article “Means and Ends” remarks that the relation of ends and means has been a bargaining issue in moral philosophy, as well as in political theory and practice. Novack says,

“For Dewey, ends and means are independent. But he believed that these two terms merely *condition* to one another; either one can determine the other or be predetermined by the sufficient material conditions. The one is as conditional and hypothetical as the other.

“For example, exploitation is bad and must be eliminated. But for Dewey it may be uprooted in any number of ways: by class struggle, by class agreement or by a combination of both. None of these means are decisive for accomplishing the
desired aim: the abolition of capitalist exploitation such is the abstract theoretical position”.  

In contrast, Trotsky lays no emphasis on means,

“…the means itself can be a matter of indifference but that the moral justification or condemnation of the given means flows from the end. Thus, shooting in itself is a matter of indifference; shooting a mad dog that threatens a child – a virtue; shooting with the aim of violation or murder – a crime”.  

For Trotsky the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ naturally, raises the question what justify the end. He answered that in practical life as in the historical movement the ends and the means constantly change positions. He gives an example that a machine under construction is an ‘end’ in the production and when it enters into the factory it may be transformed into a means.  

The pragmatists seem to agree with the Marxist and argue that those who contend that ‘end justifies the means’ is morally perverted doctrine, Dewey on this point asks that if ‘end does not justify the means’ then what does? Dewey asserts that it is the only end that can justify the means. On the other hand, Marxists argue that means have no moral weight and do not enter into the moral scales, only the ends can count. Novack argues,
“Many liberal moralizers contended that, if means were justified only through their usefulness in achieving ends, the most vicious practices were licensed and the gates opened to the totalitarian abominations of Stalinism.” ³²

Trotsky can be cited as representative of Marxist view. Trotsky had the quality of being not only a Marxist with worries about setting up a practical regime but was a thinker in his own rights. The differences between Stalin and Trotsky sprang from this very dispute that latter was involving himself in interpretative exercise. Trotsky could therefore argue that all means were not proper in the class struggle but only those which really lead to the liberation of mankind. Novack points out Marxists view and argues,

“Permissible and obligatory are those means, we answer, which unite the revolutionary proletariat, fill their hearts with irreconcilability to oppression, teach them contempt for official morality and its democratic echoers, imbue them with consciousness of their own historic mission, raise their courage and spirit of self-sacrifice in the struggle”. ³³
Trotsky categorically explains that to achieve an end the permissibility of means depends on its removal of social oppressions which can only be achieved through revolution. It is irreconcilably counteracts not only religious dogma but all kinds of idealistic fetishes, these philosophic gendarmes of the ruling class. It deduces a rule for conduct from the laws of the development of society primarily from the class struggle and this is the law of all laws.\textsuperscript{34} Here Dewey points out,

“This increase of the power of man over nature, accompanying the abolition of the power of man over man, seems accordingly to be \textit{the} end –that is, an end which does not need itself to be justified but which is the justification of the ends that are in turn means to it” [Italics in the original].\textsuperscript{35}

The pragmatists then view the Marxist justification of means through the notion of liberation of man from which it follows that for Marxists not all means are permissible as has been misunderstood by non-Marxists. Dewey’s reading Trotsky on this point is cared for Trotsky argues,

“When we say that the end justifies the means, then for us the conclusion follows that the great
revolutionary end spurns those base means. And ways which set one part of the working class against other parts, or attempt to make the masses happy without their participation; or lower the faith of the masses in themselves and their organization, primarily and irreconcilably, revolutionary morality rejects sterility in relation to the toiters, that is, those characteristics in which petty – bourgeois pedants and moralists are thoroughly steeped”.36

Trotsky settles the liberals inquiry on whether the Marxists insist on class struggle against the capitalists all means are permissible, for which including lying, frame-up, betrayal, murder, and so on. Trotsky denies that the end justifies any or every means; he still insists that a means can be justified only by its end and argues that the base ends will justify the base means.37 Dewey, however, not satisfied argues against the Trotsky on the ground of inevitability and historicity present in the Marxists view,

“…examination of history – just as an assertion that the Newtonian laws are the final laws of physics would preclude further search for physical laws – it would not follow, even if it were the scientific law of history, that it is the means to the moral goal of the liberation of mankind. That it is such a means has to

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be shown not by “deduction” from a law but by examination of the actual relations of means and consequences; an examination of mankind as end, there is free and unprejudiced search for the means by which it can be attained” [Italics in the original].

Novack argues that every law is limited by the nature of the reality and deals with its own nature as a human and historically developed formulation which is relative and conditional character, which may be one aspect of its content. If we assume that the law is true then it is absolute for the processes and phenomena covered in the area of its operation.

For example, the Marxists view of the laws of the class struggle is valid only under the condition of class society. Before primitive culture, society divided into classes and these laws were not only inapplicable but unthinkable. At the other end of the historical process, as class society disappears in the socialist future, these laws will gradually lose their field of operation and wither at the roots. But Dewey argues,

“…a law of history determines the particular way in which the struggle is to be carried on certainly seems to tend toward a fanatical and even mystical devotion to use of certain ways of conducting the class
struggle to the exclusion of all other ways of conducting it…noted that means were deduced from a supposed scientific law instead of being searched for and adopted on the ground of their relation to the moral end of the liberation of mankind”.\textsuperscript{39}

Novack argues against Marxists view,

“\textit{In reality, class struggle methods are simply inconsistent with his in–between position where he is pulled in opposite directions by the antagonisms, between capital and labor, ‘white and black’}”.\textsuperscript{40}

He asserts that social relations are both relative and absolute in application. The relativity is based upon the changing and contradictory course of social evolution from primitive collectivism through civilization on to socialism. The Marxists absolutism is based upon the central role that the antagonism of class interests plays in the structure and activity of civilized society.\textsuperscript{41} For Novack, the real relations of classes and their roles in capitalist society are determinative. He asserts,

“The ends of classes, and of their members and movements, are actually determined by their material needs and interests. These arise from the parts they play in social production and their stake in specific
forms of property. Thus the collective end of the capitalist class in the United States is to preserve and extend their economic system. That is their primary end. And it determines the conduct of persons belonging to that class, just as it conditions the lives of everyone in our society” [Italics in the original].

Selsam points out that Dewey and Huxley oppose the genuine movement towards socialism only on the ground that means determine the end, and since the necessary means are not satisfactory to them; they remain content with the capitalist world with its poverty, unemployment, and aggressive wars. They ignore one thing, that the means necessary for the attainment of socialism then they are by product of capitalism. The point Selsam is trying to emphasis that the means available to attain an end are embedded in the then existing condition and therefore adopting them may amount to accepting them hindering the attainment of the goal.

Dewey argues that for Marxists, the choice of means is not decided on the ground of an independent examination of measures and policies with respect to their actual objective consequences. Means are deduced from an independent source,
an alleged law of history which is the law of all laws of social development. But Dewey goes on to argue,

“…genuine interdependence of means and ends does not automatically rule out class struggle as one means for attaining the end. But it does rule out the deductive method of arriving at it as a means, to say nothing of its being the only means. The selection of class struggle as a means has to be justified, on the ground of the interdependence of means and end, by an examination of actual consequences of its use, not deductively. Historical considerations are certainly relevant to this examination. But the assumption of a fixed law of social development is not relevant” [Italics in the original].

Dewey asserts that liberation or emancipation may be consistent with the principle of interdependence of ends and means. Accordingly Dewey argues that a thorough examination of the means is required to ascertain what Marxists actual objective consequences will be that is in to show that they do really lead to the liberation of mankind. It is at this point that the double significance of end becomes important. As far as it means consequences actually reached, it is clearly dependent upon means used, while measures in their capacity of means are
dependent upon the end in the sense that they have to be viewed and judged on the ground for their actual objective ends.

Dewey argues that an end-in-view represents the idea of final ends, in case the idea is formed on the ground of the means that are judged to be most likely to produce the end. The end in view is thus itself a means for directing action, for example, a man’s idea of a house to be built is not identical with end in the sense of actual outcome but is a means for directing action to achieve that end.\textsuperscript{46} However, Dewey as detailed above argues,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“…the idea of the liberation of mankind as the end-in-view, there would be an examination of all means that are likely to attain this end without any fixed preconception as to what they must be, and that every suggested means would be weighed and judged on the express ground of the consequences it is likely to produce” [Italics in the original].}\textsuperscript{47}
\end{quote}

He asserts that the use of means that can be shown by the Marxists are in its nature leads to the liberation of mankind as an objective end or consequence.

Novack argues that the revolutionary morality of scientific socialism is effective and progressive because it equips the labouring masses with the kind of outlook and values they need
for emancipation. It generalises and justifies in theory the cause they strive for is just. It explains the aims of their efforts and illuminates the kind of means required for their realisation. Novack points out the ancient moralist view that you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.\textsuperscript{48}

Dewey argues that means to be used are not derived from consideration of the end, that is, the liberation of mankind, but from other outside sources. He claimed that to be an end – the end-in-view, the liberation of mankind is thus subordinated to the class struggle as the means by which it is to be attained. Instead of interdependence of ends and means, the end is dependent upon the means but the means are not derived from the end. Since the view that it is the only means is reached deductively and not by inductive examination of the means–ends in their interdependence, the means, that is, the class struggle, does not need to be critically examined with respect to its actual objective consequences. For Dewey, the end-in-view, as distinct from objective consequences, justifies the use of any means in line with the class struggle and it justifies the neglect of all other means.\textsuperscript{49}

Dewey points out that orthodox Marxists having allegiance to the ideals of scientific socialism depend heavily on the objective relations of ends and means method of attaining the
class struggle as the law of historical change. The set up created by the Marxist attitude derived from the law of deduction from ends to means makes all moral questions, finally to be attained, meaningless and futile, For Dewey human ends are interwoven into the very texture and structure of existence. But Trotsky, as a materialist, asserts that not human ends but class ends are objectively woven into the very texture and structure of social existence under certain historical condition.\(^{50}\)

Dewey asserts that to be scientific about ends, does not mean to read them out of laws, whether the laws are natural or social. For him, orthodox Marxism shares with orthodox regionalism and with traditional idealism the belief that human ends are interwoven into the very texture and structure of existence the concept of which is inherited from Hegel.\(^{51}\)

Dewey explains that increasing the power of man over nature, the abolition of the power of man over man seems to be the end, that is, an end which does not need itself to be justified but which is the justification of the ends that in turn are means to it. For him, Marxists may accept this formulation of the end and hold that it expresses the moral interest of society – if not the historic interest and not merely and exclusively that of the proletariat.
Dewey criticises the Marxist conception of ends that Marxist theory of social practice clearly implies a discontinuity of ends and means. For him, the presumed means are not considered; and the assumption that the means will in fact achieve the expected end is not questioned. Consequently, Marxists regard themselves as absolved from the responsibility of considering the actual ends of promoting class conflict. 52

Dewey further criticises Trotsky’s view that Marxists are absolutistic in appealing to fixed laws for their choice of means in social action. He claimed that Trotsky’s view is not empirical or scientific but idealistic and religious because Trotsky imposes his desired aims upon social development and acted as through that human ends are interwoven into the very texture and structure of existence. 53

As a materialist, Trotsky never said that human ends are interwoven into nature’s existence. But he asserts that class ends are objectively woven into the texture and structure of social existence under certain historical and social frameworks and circumstances. 54 Novack explains Dewey’s view,

“…society does not have to a determinate texture and structure that any general laws on the objectives of class can be obtained from an analysis of social
development and subsequently used to calculate their conduct as a basis for action.

“If there are no definite laws governing the activities of classes, there can be no necessary means, like the class struggle, to attain social objectives. If there are neither ascertainable laws nor prescribed means, then what takes their place...many different kinds of means, and in principle almost any means, may achieve the end-in-view. If you don’t know where you are going or what you are really up against, any road will presumably take you there”.*55

Dewey goes on to argue that the Marxists can make no moral sense consistently with their premises or means. If history leads by an inevitable sequence to an inevitable end then there is no determination of ends or means by way of discrimination and selection. However, he argues that the end is the outcome of procedures of judgment than is the end of water spilling over a dam.56

However, Novack argues that the clash of incompatible ends determines the means employed by the contending forces. The historical course of struggle leads toward the final showdown in which one of the decisive polar classes emerges victorious.
over the other. Marxists consciously work for the supremacy of the working people.\textsuperscript{57}

The class ends are definite and clear, even if they are not always grasped or stated with precision by the representative of capital and labor who are obliged to act in accordance with them by the environing circumstances of their socio-economic situations, as these develop from one stage to the next. In this sense, Novack argues,

“Dewey, too, regarded these [social oppression] as the worthiest of objectives. Trotsky further stated that all those means that contributed to the realization of these aims are morally justified. So far, there was no disagreement between Marxist and the pragmatist”.\textsuperscript{58}

In this sense Novack points out Trotsky’s view and asserts,

“…the only force in modern society capable of carrying through this job was the organized working class. The only way labor can eliminate oppression and complete the conquest of nature was by developing to the very end its struggles against the capitalist beneficiaries and upholders of economic privilege”.\textsuperscript{59}
Novack asserts that Trotsky is not right in assigning the fundamental task of social reconstruction in our epoch to the workers. According to Novack, this is a matter of common concern which is better than is preferred to any special class interests. All people of good will from the topmost level of society to the lowest should be mobilised in joint effort to secure collective control over nature and our economy.

Dewey claimed that Trotsky also made a mistake in his exclusive reliance upon the prosecution of the class struggle as the means of arriving at the desired goals. For Dewey, ways and means other than of sharpening the contradiction between the capitalists and workers not only as good but will also bring better results.\(^{60}\)

Dewey argues against the Marxists view of using the logical method and scientific procedure, and points out that Trotsky’s method of reasoning is incorrect, because he deduced the means, the class struggle from his reading or misreading of the course of social development. By illegitimately erecting the class struggle into the supreme and absolute law of history, Trotsky actually subordinated the ends to a particular means instead of permitting the ends to determine the means and he has derived the means by an examination of actual consequences of its use.
This is the only genuinely scientific approach which takes into account the real interdependence of the two factors.\footnote{61}

Here Novack argues that in deduction, the extraction of particular conclusions from general rules. Dewey counterposed the procedure of induction, the arriving at generalisations on the basis of repeated or duplicated instances. However, Novack points out for Dewey Trotsky did actually derive his means arbitrarily and only through deductive method. Novack argues,

“To be sure, Trotsky did explicitly evaluate means by reference to the laws and needs of the class struggle. These laws, however, were not freely created and imposed upon society by the Marxists. They had been drawn from a prior comprehensive study of social processes over many generations by strictly scientific methods. The laws of class struggle are first of all empirical generalizations developed from analysis of the facts presented by the history of civilizations…” \cite{italics in the original}.\footnote{62}

Novack interrogates the grounds on which one can select a set of means over others. Dewey’s reply is that previous knowledge and experience is to be used in the process of selection. But these are never adequate or decisive. Their significance is demonstrated only by what flows from their use.
The ends emerge only after the choice of means is made. But the question is why the choice of means cannot be guided and determined by the lessons drawn from the accustomed ends of the past. For the pragmatist no amount of predetermination is over definitive; determination comes only after the act and only for that particular act.\textsuperscript{63}

Dewey's understanding is that the individual functions in a given socio–economic framework and that individual morality is bound up with public codes of conduct. For him, social ends are ultimately decisive in moral matters. But what conditions actually do, and what ought to, decide what means will produce the desired ends then Dewey asserts

"…informed or “creative intelligence” has to step in and do the job".\textsuperscript{64}

In choice of means and obscuring of ends, Dewey fulfilled a specific social function as a philosophical representative of those liberal middle class elements who wish to be the supreme mediators and moderators of class conflict in our society. In their choice of ends and means the revolutionary Marxists for whom Trotsky spoke likewise fulfill their role as champions of the fundamental, long–range interests of the working masses. The ends and means both in practice are determined by their class functions and allegiances.\textsuperscript{65} Novack points out that the objective
historical end of the middle classes which is according to Dewey’s conception of the subject. He then argues on the point,

“In the domain of theory their function is to deny the crucial importance of the class struggle, its necessity and its fruitfulness if properly organized and directed. In practice, they usually strive to curb its development by the working class while its enemies remain unrestricted and powerful. This is a hopelessly reactionary task in social science, politics, economics – and morality”.

In the ‘ends-means’ controversy debate, however, we have found that both Dewey and Trotsky agree on the maxim the ‘end justifies the means’ and the terms ‘ends’ and ‘means’ are interdependent. Dewey on the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ argues that neither ends nor means can be justified by the alleged deliverances of reasonable standards of consequence, or a moral sense, or some brand of eternal truths. They can be justified only by their actual results and he holds that the end in the sense of consequences provides the only justification that can be found for means employed. Nothing else can make means good or bad but the outcome of their use.
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