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In day to day life we act to achieve something, that is, with some purpose, goal or end in mind. However, in order to achieve the intended purpose, goal or end some method or means are adopted. Therefore, to explain the claim to an action as purposive or meaningful, ‘ends-means’ relationship comes into play. The applicability of the framework of ‘ends-means’ relationship is not restricted to individuals but also covers group of individuals. However, in either case some moral rules or principles are adopted that affect the individuals and organise and regulate the society as a whole. These moral principles or rules are identified and termed by the Marxists as Liberal concepts.

Morality or set of moral rules, from the ‘ends-means’ perspective, has been historically a lengthy and controversial debate that mostly implicitly but sometimes explicitly revolves round the maxim ‘end justifies the means’. The philosophers are unevenly divided on accepting or not accepting the maxim. This thesis has attempted to explore or bring into focus the logical subtleties and other nuances of ‘ends-means’ relationship.

At the risk of repeating what has been said earlier it may be said that our actions are often purposive or goal-oriented. It has been argued that these goal-directed actions are performed on the basis of some moral rules or principles. So, the first chapter of this thesis has explored the concept of morality and its conclusion.
development and brings out its relationship with ethics and politics. The chapter also tried to bring out the views of the critics of the concept of morality, including the Marxists. It was argued in the chapter that actions viewed through the ends-means perspective show a reference to the moral or ethical or the political sphere. The chapter, however, brought out that when an action is performed in the private or personal domain then that action is moral, whereas, when an action is performed in the public domain then it is political. In other words, group morality is identifiable with the political. An action is either moral or political is specifically identified in modern times by the Marxists. This conceptual division of an action makes it a controversial debate between the Marxist and the Liberal philosophers. The controversy touches the logical relationship of ends and means in the maxim ‘end justifies the means’. However, the controversial debate on ‘ends and means’ and its morality starts to take shape with Machiavelli and Jesuits.

The second chapter, ‘Origin of the Controversy’, of this thesis is an attempt to locate the logical relationship of ‘ends’ and ‘means’ in the light of the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ and to trace out the origin of the controversy. The chapter shows that the origin of the controversy over the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ can be identified with the engagement of Machiavelli and Jesuits.
in the issue. There is hardly any doubt that the debate in Machiavelli is not moral but political. Machiavelli propounded that the Prince (or the ruler) is free to adopt any means because he was not under obligation to follow a transcendental moral or religious ideas. The maxim ‘end justifies the means’ was accepted by Machiavelli but restricted to the political arena for promotion of public good and the formulation or development of a polity. The chapter also shows that the historical controversy on the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ systematically hinges on morality entering into the debate which originated from the Judeo-Christian thought. The chapter concludes that the view of both Machiavelli and Jesuits seem to be logically untenable at the level of rational debate and acceptance.

The third chapter of the thesis outlines the controversy on morality of ends and means as it emerged. The chapter is a survey of the debate regenerated in modern moral philosophy where it is found that there are two basic Liberal moral theories, namely, Deontology or Kantian Ethics and Teleology or Consequentialism. Deontological moral theory, especially in Kant, tries to distinguish ‘means’ from ‘ends’ and strongly opposes the maxim ‘end justifies the means’. Teleological moral theory, especially Mill et al, sometimes favoured the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ pointing out that means can be ignored in special
circumstances to attain some ends, for example, to tell a lie in order to save a life. Thus, both moral theories centered on the individual action, which identifies the Liberal approach. These two theories differ only on the point that Deontology is based on rule without care for consequence, while teleology is based on consequence and at times ignoring means altogether.

Moreover, the chapter showed that the Indian socio-political and practical Liberal philosopher Gandhi, explains the morality embedded in the ‘ends-means’ relationship when considering individual action, through his method and technique of Truth and Non-Violence. Gandhi explicitly rejects the maxim ‘end justifies the means’. At the end of the chapter the thesis dwells on the Marxist view on morality of ends and means and their emphasis on the maxim ‘end justifies the means’. The chapter showed that Marxists favoured this maxim and found it to be justified when and only when there arises the question of class domination or social oppression in the society. The Marxists view goes against Liberal philosophers on the point that Marxists are concerned with society as a whole, based on equality, against the Liberal concentration on the individual perspective.

However, the chapter finally brought out that there is a misunderstanding or confusion about the Marxist view on the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ among the Liberal philosophers,
especially Gandhi. Interestingly, Gandhi prefers and supports Marxist use of violent means in fight against social oppression or exploitation in the society but at the same time he opposes violent means by the Marxists in all circumstances, which as the chapter shows is a misconception among the Liberal thinkers. The Marxist used violent means and applied it only in relation to welfare and emancipation of the masses and that too because the capitalist society fully resists any change in the socialist direction.

Marxists basic concern is with the issue of class domination or exploitation of the masses in the society and they blame the Liberal ideas of morality for the continuations, perpetuations and maintenance of it in the society. Marxists have argued that morality is a false notion as it is a particular class ideology devised as a political tool to dominate the society. The idea behind condemning the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ too is a political tool in the hands of the Liberals to blame the Marxists. Therefore, the concept of morality of ends and means is part and parcel of the Liberal or capitalistic ideology.

The fourth chapter focuses on the contemporary thought on ‘ends and means’, which is best available in the debate between pragmatist Liberal philosopher John Dewey and Marxist philosopher Leon Trotsky. The entire debate hinges on the moral aspect of the ends-means relation, which both the philosophers

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were interrogating. Dewey remarks that the relation of ends and means has been a bargaining issue in moral philosophy, as well as in political theory and practice. This chapter shows that both Dewey and Trotsky agree on the validity of the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ and ends and means are interdependent. They agree on the point that end justifies the means and therefore, violent means are permissible, specifically in an attempt to do away with class domination that is abolition of power of man over man, or exploitation in the society, that is liberation from oppression in the society, and in the case of increasing the power of man over nature. For both the thinkers the liberation of mankind is the end, for according them in any legitimate and rational sense of morality liberation of mankind is a moral end, which Dewey argues,

“The end is no longer a terminus or limit to be reached. It is the active process of transforming the existent situation…Growth [progress] itself is the only moral end”.¹

Dewey goes further to suggest that there is no scientific laws, in the Marxian sense, which can determine a moral end, save by a revolutionary principle of the interdependence of ends and means. Dewey is arguing that if one has to scientific then one cannot deny the interdependence of ends and means as is made
out by the Marxists. However, despite the apparent agreement Dewey goes on to argue,

“…class struggle is a means of attaining the end of the liberation of mankind. It is a radically different thing to say that there is an absolute law of class struggle which determines the means to be used. For if it determines the means, it also determines the end — the actual consequences, and upon the principle of genuine interdependence of means and end it is arbitrary and subjective to say that consequence will be the liberation of mankind” [Italics in the original].

The Marxist view is different from the commonly conceived notion of ends that they do not show any special social character, any particular disposition to be shared or to be participated in by others. The commonly held view of ends is that it is purely and simply individual concern, which coincides with the Liberal perspective. However, Dewey, a Liberal, even though conceives the concept of ends mainly as factors for reorganising the whole course of activities that turn out to be essentially social in nature but keeps it confined to the individual. In this context Dewey while upholding the Liberal point of view with an air of superiority comments on the inadequacy of the focus of the Marxists on class struggle and terms it dogmatic, especially the historicity in the
notion of class struggle which according to him is the law of all laws for the Marxists. Novack argues,

“The claim of the pragmatic Liberals that their morality is superior to that of the Marxists in theory and practice cannot be sustained. Their ethics lacks a sound scientific basis because it systematically disregards the most fundamental factor in the shaping of social relations and the motivating of individual conduct in modern life: the division and conflict of classes. Their moral injunctions are rendered ineffectual by failure to recognize these social realities. This not only hinders them from promoting the praiseworthy ideals of equality, cooperativeness and peace they aspire to. Their blindness to the facts of life actually helps reinforce reaction by restraining and disorienting the main counter forces against the evils of the existing system from taking the right road”.

However, Dewey is in agreement with Trotsky in criticising the traditional moral philosophy in which he finds something artificial and misleading in the notion of distinguishing the ends and means. For Dewey, in making moral judgment about a course of action, one judges the means together with the ends as interdependent. He agrees that while the importance of the ends must surely be considered in deciding the means there is no moral sense in considering one in isolation from the other. He
insists that serving means and ends incautiously risks oversimplifying the world.\(^4\)

The debate between Marxist thinkers and Liberal or moral philosophers hinges on the importance each lays on the individual or human social equality. This is even more easily discernible in the contemporary debate between Dewey and Trotsky on morality of ends and means, where it is apparent that their differences are with regard to the focus on individuals or social, that is, particular or general. The former prefers the individual as the starting point, while the latter lays emphasis on the social. This is the center of the entire contemporary debate which has arisen out of the ideological conflict of the Liberals and Marxists. The entire debate of ends and means revolves around the controversial maxim ‘end justifies the means’.

An action by itself is a fact and is neither moral nor immoral; it is amoral or morally neutral. The issue of morality only arises if an act is judged to have been done under a moral obligation. The Liberals insist that moral questions are concerned with the ends that we ought to pursue. But it can be argued that in order to determine what ought to be done in a given situation, it is not sufficient to know the end but the means too, and the problem of the efficient or proper means to a given end is not at all moral, rather scientific in character.\(^5\) Ewing argues,
“...it is just the question of forecasting the actual affects of an event, which is to be answered only by knowledge of the circumstances under which the event occurs and of the causal laws determining its effects. Such of course bulk very largely in politics, and in so far as it is only such questions which are being discussed the issue is not a moral one”.  

Russell too argues that if the end is held as good then we must choose means to achieve it. These means can be treated in a purely scientific manner, not moral, that is, without any regard to the goodness or badness of the ends. In this sense Maclver points out,

“The political end may become simply and solely the ethical end, not being of itself coextensive, but rather in that conflict of ends which is the heart of every moral issue becoming established as the ‘ought’. In a word, it is always ‘conscience’ or whatever the inner principle of action be called...Because conscience is essentially individual, always, however clarified, a particular perspective of the universal, we must always, in the analysis of conduct, remain at the point of view of the individual with his recognition of a common good.”

However, Steger, in a Liberal vein, argues that the ends of moral and political reconstruction of society can only be pursued by
means that reflect the values inherent in the goal.\textsuperscript{9}

Trotsky highlights that he Darwin tries to dissolve the concrete historical morality into the biological needs of social animals. Trotsky point out that the attempt at dissolution is a time when the understanding of morality arises out of an antagonistic situation, that is, in a society divided into classes.\textsuperscript{10} Trotsky also points out Spencer’s view as,

“…the idea of [Darwin’s]…evolution…taught that in the moral sphere evolution proceeds from “sensation” to “ideas”. Sensations impose the criterion of immediate pleasure, whereas ideas permit one to be guided by the criterion of future, lasting and higher pleasure. But the content of this criterion acquires breath and depth depending upon the level of “evolution”” [Italics in the original].\textsuperscript{11}

Spencer through Darwin’s theory showed that the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ does not embrace anything immoral. As Liberals pointed out that morality is not an end for its own sake but they argued that it is a means to an end beyond itself because it is an indispensable means both for its own sake and for others. In this sense Hazlitt argues that morality is primarily a means rather than an end in itself and is to serve human needs.\textsuperscript{12} Castaneda argues,
“Morality is...concerned with the highest ends of agents, but it does not prescribe the highest ends. Morality prescribes only a limiting of those ends, while insisting that everyone pursue his own maximal ends...Morality, therefore, is also an ideal of maximal freedom for everyone” [Italics in the original].

All actions are directed towards some ends and one cannot oblige another to adopt certain ends as his own. Moral perfection, however, lies in the free and independent adoption of these ends. But Huxley disagrees when he writes,

“If we want to realise the good ends proposed by the prophets we shall do well to talk less about the claims of ‘Society’ and more about the rights and duties of small co-operation groups.”

Singer argues that one may sympathise with the ends some of these groups are fighting for, but the means they are using hold no promise of gaining their ends. Even realising this, Singer, true to his Liberal stance, still insists on proper and non-violent means, such as civil disobedience, as the only way to achieve the ends when legal means have failed, because, though we know these violent means are illegal yet that does not threaten the majority.

Mises strengthens the Liberal argument when he writes,
“Liberal social theory proves that each man sees in all others…only means to the realisation of his purposes, while he himself is to all others a means to the realization of their purposes…by this reciprocal action, in which each…simultaneously means and end, the highest aim of social life is attained – the achievement of a better existence for everyone. As society is only possible if everyone, while living his own life, at the same time helps others to live, if every individual is simultaneously means and end; if each individual’s well-being is simultaneously the condition necessary to the well-being of the others, it is evident that the contrast between I and thou, means and end, automatically is overcome”.

Selsam argues that it is commonplace now to hope that the days when age-old evils can be righted only by such means as the terror Mark Twain is speaking of are coming to an end. However, he feels such an expectation can only be actuated and depends on the degree to which the channels of peaceful democratic change are opened up and kept open. Marxists in particular have learned many lessons and have many yet to learn about the relation of means and ends. It is clear that the means to social progress must be directed to their ends and also harmonious with it. This requires from Marxists some things they have often lacked, and sometimes even questioned on grounds of principles of fullest adherence to the ideals of democracy and civil rights,
strictest integrity in all relationships, and refusal ever to use other people or movements as mere stepping-stones. It is the progressive world that carries and must carry mankind’s highest moral ideals.\textsuperscript{17}

The Liberals assume we have to choose that which is necessary as well as the best or most efficient means to our ends. The choice can itself be best when we know a line of action and take it in accordance with reason. The relation of ‘ends and means’ has always given rise to a reasonable choice of a particular means so as to serve the agent’s ends or collective ends, which implies that inferring a reasonable choice necessarily belongs to the selection of means. Despite the divergences among the Liberals there is no controversy among them with regard to ends being understood as given and falling outside the scope of rational choice. For the Liberals the ends are acceptable on the grounds of their being brought about by justifiable means. However, the assumption that all chains of justification eventually come to an end is something unjustified. The pragmatists sharply disagree with this line of argument to assert that the ends we choose relative to a concrete situation after careful deliberation are reasonable or desirable. This is in consonance with the pragmatists outlook that choices will be perverse or irrational if they are based on prejudice and ignorance. Fletcher agrees with

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the pragmatists and argues that to will the end is to will the means and added that only the end justifies the means and nothing else.\textsuperscript{18}

Liberal philosophers, except for pragmatists, have argued that end does not justify the means and pointed out that means should be moral to attain an end. Moreover, the Liberal philosophers emphasised, argued and attributed the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ as identical with the Marxists contentions. The Liberals while attributing the slogan to Marxists, that is, Socialistic approach, also accuse them of being Machiavellian. There is added accusation that Marxists by this slogan are suggesting an always violent means to achieve an end. However, this is a gross misunderstanding for on the contrary the Marxists are willing to adopt peaceful means so long as it leads to the desired end which is revolutionary leading to the emancipation of humanity. It is also a misconception of the Liberals that the Marxists consider an individual as a means for the social collective end. This misconception is apparent in Ewing for he argues that the Marxist making the individual as a means when talking about the state or class or party.\textsuperscript{19} However, as shown in the third chapter of this thesis, the correct Marxist view is that the collective is to be preferred in case of a conflict of interest between it and the individual.
The Marxists, like Trotsky, have argued that the bourgeois moralists live in the idealised form in the society and the democratic morality corresponds to the phase of Liberalism and progressive capitalism that intensifies the class struggle. The Marxist aim is to overcome the divisions of society and to have a classless form of it. The class domination in the capitalist society, according to them, can only be overcome through revolution, that is, violent means to make a classless society, which they consider to be unjust. Marxists argue that violent means may result in the greatest happiness of the greatest number, which is then justified. Marxists argue that the means, adopted by them to achieve socialism, are restricted by the opportunity provided by capitalism. The controversy is that it is capitalism which is responsible for the means since it controls the whole apparatus of the state and the society, thereby controlling the means. If revolution is to employ violent means to attain a socialistic pattern of society, the Liberal society is responsible for the use such violent means since they want to retain their power, and are equally blameworthy and therefore their arguments are counter-revolutionary to serve and protect their selfish interest. Those who want to see change in the material conditions and thereby progress in society will have to confront the Liberals and their capitalist ideology. It is argued that the emphasis on peaceful means to achieve the end by the
Liberals is for they do not want to see change and progress in the society. It is therefore that the Liberals branding the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ as signifying violence to bring about a revolution is primarily with the intention to use it as a political tool or propaganda to discredit the Marxist socialistic ideology. Selsam points out that Marxists themselves tended to dismiss the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ as a capitalist propaganda, as exhibiting Liberal illusions, as simply the to-be-expected attack of the class enemy.20

The Liberal means are fixed and rigid, which are the moral means separated from ends. In this sense post-modernists assert as highlighted by Bauman,

“The liberation of means from ends lies at the heart of the modern revolution. To be liberated, means must be ‘in excess’ of ends; the doers must be able to do more than the ends, as they have known them thus far, have made imperative. It is this excess that infuses the modern world with its unique and unprecedented feeling of freedom”.21

The morality of ends and means debate is insisted upon by the Liberals for its value as a political tool to be used against Marxists to sustain and continue themselves in power in the society. Marxists clearly insist that in choosing the end one chooses its means also. The means are chosen because they are appropriate and suitable to the ends to be achieved. In short, the relation
between ends and means in Marxist thought is not meant to imply that any end justifies any means and vice versa. The Marxist position is that 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. The Marxist argue against the construction of morality by the Liberals into the relation of ends and means as primarily indicating a separation of ends from the means, which breaks the interdependence between the two. It is because of this rupture by the Liberals, the Marxists argue, that means are demanded to be justified independently of the ends.

Marxists feel that the need of the society is to change in order to progress and to have a society free from class oppression and exploitation. Therefore, they think it necessary to find out the earthly roots of morality. They have criticised the Liberal notion of morality and preferred, what they term, the human morality, which changes in a progressive manner in the society. Therefore, the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ is not concerned with Marxists but it is a Liberal slogan to blame their challengers, the Marxists, which is then not moral but political.

The difference of approaches of Liberal and Marxist, in the contemporary debate on the morality of ends and means, is a political debate. It is a debate on the best means of acquiring
emancipation of mankind. In the context of the controversy of ends and means, morality can be defined as the principles or rules with the help of which individuals or group of individuals in the society are governed. In a society there are individuals and different group of individuals who have their own ideology to support their dominance in the society, and these ideologies are conveniently classed as morality. So, morality is, in fact, a group or class ideology, and when these ideologies try to dominate another ideology in the society, then it is not a question of morality but of political principles.

From Marxist point of view morality is neither moral nor immoral. It is part of the design of the Liberal society and its thought to perpetuate their dominance by creating confusion through subscribing the element of morality to the casual relationship of ends and means. We found in the second chapter of this thesis that when morality appears in the public sphere then it is or becomes political. Therefore, the debate on the maxim ‘end justifies the means’ and the relation of ends and means should be looked at more from the angle of group morality or political, as has been defined in the second chapter of this thesis. Now that the debris of confusion is cleared by this thesis it is expected that some more research would more clearly and categorically bring out the features of the relation between ends
and means.

However, morality and corollary morality of ends and means cannot ignore the political aspect of the ideological conflict and the confusion that it gave rise to and which is held even today. The contemporary debate has cleared the debris even more and has exhibited clearly the political aspect of the debate on the relation of morality of ends and means.
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