“ MEANS AND ENDS WHEN THE ordinary man is asked to explain what is meant by the term reason, his reaction is almost always one of hesitation and embarrassment. It would be a mistake to interpret this as indicating wisdom too deep or thought too abstruse to be put into words. What it actually betrays is the feeling that there is nothing to inquire into, that the concept of reason is self-explanatory, that the question itself is superfluous. When pressed for an answer, the average man will say that reasonable things are things that are obviously useful, and that every reasonable man is supposed to be able to decide what is useful to him. Nat- urally the circumstances of each situation, as well as laws, customs, and traditions, should be taken into account. But the force that ultimately makes reasonable actions possible is the faculty of classification, inference, and deduction, no matter what the specific content the abstract function- ing of the thinking mechanism. This type of reason may be called subjective reason. It is essentially concerned with means and ends, with the adequacy of procedures for purposes more or less taken for granted and supposedly self-explanatory. Jft attaches little importance to the^ques- tion whether the purposes as such are reasonable. If it concerns itself at all with ends, it takes for granted that ^ they too are reasonable in the subjective sense, i.e. that they serve’ the subject’s interest in elation_Jo_sel^^^^ be it that of the single individual, or of the community on whose maint(raancfLhatjoJii^ The idea that an aim can be reasonable for its own sake on the basis of virtues that insight reveals it to have in itself without reference to some kind of subjective gain or ad- vantage, is utterly alien to subjective reason, even where it rises above thetonsideration of immediate utilitarian values and devotes itself to reflections about the social order as a whole. However naive or superficial this definition of reason may seem, it is an important symptom of a profound change of outlook that has taken place in Western thinking in the course of the last centuries. For a long time, a diametrically opposite view of reason was prevalent. This view asserted the existence of reason as a force not only in the individual mind but also in the objective world in relations among human beings and between social classes, in social institu- tions, and in nature and its manifestations. Great philosoph- ical systems, such as those of Plato and Aristotle, scholas- ticism, and German idealism were founded on an objective theory of reason. It aimed at evolving a comprehensive system, or hierarchy, of all beings, including man and his aims. The degree of reasonableness of a man’s life could be determined according to its harmony with this totality^ Its objective structure, and not just man and his purposes, was to be the measuring rod for individual thoughts and actions. This concept of reason never precluded subjective reason, but regarded the latter as only a partial, limited ex- pression of a universal rationality from which criteria for 6 way, the xaison d’etre of theory in the social process of pro-duction. In the subjectivist view, when ‘reason’ is used to connote a thing or an idea rather than an act, it refers exclusively to the relation of such an object or concept to a purpose, not to the object or concept itself. It means that the thing or the idea is good for something else. There is no reasonable aim as such, and to discuss the superiority of one aim over another in terms of reason becomes meaningless. From the subjective approach, such a discussion is possible only if both aims serve a third and higher one, that is, if they are means, not ends.1 The relation between these two concepts of reason is not merely one of opposition. Historically, both the subjective and the objective aspect of reason have been present from the outset, and the predominance of the former over the latter was achieved in the course of a long process. Reason in its proper sense of logos, or ratio, has always been essen- tially related to the subject, his faculty of thinking. All the 1 The difference between this connotation of reason and the objectivistic conception resembles to a certain degree the difference between functional and substantial rationality as these words are used in the Max Weber school. Max Weber, however, adhered so definitely to the subjectivistic trend that he did not conceive of any rationality not even a ‘substantial’ one by which man can discriminate one end from another. If our drives, intentions, and finally our ultimate decisions must a priori be irrational, substantial reason becomes an agency merely of correlation and is there- fore itself essentially ‘functional/ Although Weber’s own and his fol- lowers’ descriptions of the bureaucratization and monopolization of

knowl- edge have illuminated much of the social aspect of the transition from objective to subjective reason (cf. particularly the analyses of Karl Mann- heim in Man and Society, London, 1940), Max Weber's pessimism with regard to the possibility of rational insight and action, as expressed in his philosophy (cf., e.g., 'Wissenschaft als Beruf/ in Gesammelte Aufsarze zur Wissensehaftslehre, Tubingen, 1922), is itself a stepping-stone in the renunciation of philosophy and science as regards their aspiration of defin- ing man's goal. MEANS AND ENDS 7 terms denoting it were once subjective expressions; thus the Greek term stems from Mry&v, 'to say,' denoting the sub- jective faculty of speech. The subjective faculty of thinking was the critical agent that dissolved superstition. But in denouncing mythology as false objectivity, i.e. as a creation of the subject, it had to use concepts that it recognized as adequate. Thus it always developed an objectivity of its own. In Platonism, the Pythagorean theory of numbers, which originated in astral mythology, was transformed into the theory of ideas that attempts to define the supreme con- tent of thinking as an absolute objectivity ultimately be- yond, though related to, the faculty of thinking. The present crisis of reason consists fundamentally in the fact that at a certain point thinking either became incapable of conceiving such objectivity at all or began to negate it as a delusion. This process was gradually extended to include the objective content of every rational concept. In the end, no particular reality can seem reasonable per se; all the basic concepts, emptied of their content, have come to be only formal shells. As reason is subjectivized, it also be- comes formalized.2 The formalization of reason has far-reaching theoretical and practical implications. If the subjectivist view holds true, thinking cannot be of any help in determining the desirability of any goal in itself. The acceptability of ideals, the criteria for our actions and beliefs, the leading principles of ethics and politics, all our ultimate decisions are made to depend upon factors other than reason. They are sup- 2 The terms subjectivization and formalization, though in many respects not identical in meaning, will be used as practically equivalent throughout this book. 8 posed to be matters of choice and predilection, and it has become meaningless to speak of truth in making practical, moral, or esthetic decisions. 'A judgment of fact/ says Russell,3 one of the most objectivist thinkers among sub- jectivists, 'is capable of a property called ''truth/' which it has or does not have quite independently of what any one may think about it. ... But ... I see no property, analogous to "truth/7 that belongs or does not belong to an ethical judgment. This, it must be admitted, puts ethics in a different category from science/ However, Russell, more than others, is aware of the difficulties in which such a theory necessarily becomes involved. 'An inconsistent sys- tem may well contain less falsehood than a consistent one/ **Despite his philosophy, which holds 'ultimate ethical values to be subjective/ 5 he seems to differentiate between the objective moral qualities of human actions and our percep- tion of them: 'What is horrible I will see as horrible/ He has the courage of inconsistency and thus, by disavowing certain aspects of his anti-dialectical logic, remains indeed a philosopher and a humanist at the same time. If he were to cling to his scientistic theory consistently, he would have to admit that there are no horrible actions or inhuman conditions, and that the evil he sees is just an illusion. According to such theories, thought serves any particular endeavor, good or bad. It is a tool of all actions of society, but it must not try to set the patterns of social and in- dividual life, which are assumed to be set by other forces. In lay discussion as well as in scientific, reason has come to 3 'Reply to' Criticisms/ in The Philosophy of Bertrand RusseZI, Chicago, 1944 p 723. 4 Ibid. p. 720. 5 Ibid MEANS AND ENDS 9 be commonly regarded as an intellectual faculty of co-ordi- nation, the efficiency of which can be increased by methodi- cal use and by the removal of any non-intellectual factors, such as conscious or unconscious emotions. Reason has never really directed social reality, but now reason has been so thoroughly purged of any specific trend or preference that it has finally renounced even the task of passing judg- ment on man's actions and way of life. Reason has turned them over for ultimate sanction to the conflicting interests to which our world actually seems abandoned. This relegation of**

reason to a subordinate position is in sharp contrast to the ideas of the pioneers of bourgeois civilization, the spiritual and political representatives of the rising middle class, who were unanimous in declaring that reason plays a leading role in human behavior, perhaps even the predominant role. They defined a wise legislature as one whose laws conform to reason; national and inter- national policies were judged according to whether they followed the lines of reason. Reason was supposed to regu- late our preferences and our relations with other human beings and with nature. It was thought of as an entity, a spiritual power living in each man. This power was held to be the supreme arbiter nay, more, the creative force behind the ideas and things to which we should devote our lives. Today, when you are summoned into a traffic court, and the judge asks you whether your driving was reasonable, he means: Did you do everything in your power to protect your own and other people's lives and property, and to obey the law? He implicitly assumes that these values must be re- spected. What he questions is merely the adequacy of your 1O behavior in terms of these generally recognized standards. In most cases, to be reasonable means not to be obstinate, which in turn points to conformity with reality as it is. The principle of adjustment is taken for granted. When the idea of reason was conceived, it was intended to achieve more than the mere regulation of the relation between means and ends: it was regarded as the instrument for un- derstanding the ends, for determining them. Socrates died because he subjected the most sacred and most familiar ideas of his community and his country to the critique of the daimonion, or dialectical thought, as Plato called it. In doing so, he fought against both ideologic conservatism and relativism masked as progressiveness but actually subor- dinated to personal and professional interests. In other words, he fought against the subjective, formalistic reason advocated by the other Sophists. He undermined the sacred tradition of Greece, the Athenian way of life, thus preparing the soil for radically different forms of individual and social life. Socrates held that reason, conceived as sight, should determine foflfefa regnbf-e relations man and man,, .yd between man and nature Although his doctrine might be considered tfrq pfrilp- sophicfll origin of thft ronrq.r>f.the subject aoJtJmate jiidgLflf good . and evil, he spokfi ,.(- ra^ verdicts not as mere names or conventions, but as reflect- ing the true nature of things. As negativistic as his teachings may have been, they implied the idea of absolute truth and were put forward as objective insights, almost as revelations. His daimonion was a more spiritual god, but he was not less real than the other gods were believed to be. His name was supposed to denote a living force. In Plato's philosophy MEANS AND ENDS 11 the Socratic power of intuition or conscience, the new god within the individual subject, has dethroned or at least transformed his rivals in Greek mythology. They have be- come ideas. There is no question whether they are simply his creatures, products or contents similar to the sensations of the subject according to the theory of subjective ideal- ism. On the contrary, they still preserve some of the pre- rogatives of the old gods: they occupy a higher and nobler sphere than humans, they are models, they are immortal. The daimonion in turn has changed into the soul, and the soul is the eye that can perceive the ideas. It reveals itself as the vision of truth or as the individual subject's faculty to perceive the eternal order of things and consequently the line of action that must be followed in the temporal order. The term objective reason thus on the one hand denotes as its essence a structure inherent in reality that by itself calls for a specific mode of behavior in each specific case, be it a practical or a theoretical attitude. Thi? structure is accessible to him who takes upon himself the effort of dialectical thinking or. identically, who is capablff, of On the other handr the terqi objective reason .may designate this very effort and ability to reflect^ndLailjib- jective order. Everybody is familiar with situations that by their very nature, and quite apart from the interests of the subject, call for a definite line of actionfor example, a child or an

animal on the verge of drowning, a starving popu- lation, or an individual illness. Each of these situations speaks, as it were, a language of itself. However, since they are only segments of reality, each of them may have to be neglected because there are more comprehensive structures MEANS AND ENDS 11 the Socratic power of intuition or conscience, the new god within the individual subject, has dethroned or at least transformed his rivals in Greek mythology. They have be- come ideas. There is no question whether they are simply his creatures, products or contents similar to the sensations of the subject according to the theory of subjective ideal- ism. On the contrary, they still preserve some of the pre- rogatives of the old gods: they occupy a higher and nobler sphere than humans, they are models, they are immortal. The daimonion in turn has changed into the soul, and the soul is the eye that can perceive the ideas. It reveals itself as the vision of truth or as the individual subject's faculty to perceive the eternal order of things and consequently the line of action that must be followed in the temporal order. The term objective reason thus on the one hand denotes' as its essence a structure inherent in reality that by itself calls for a specific mode of behavior in each specific case, be it a practical or a theoretical attitude. Thi? ftfr^cfa^ js accessible to him who takes upon himself the effort of dialectical thinking, or. identically^ who is capable of CTWr Op the Qtfrer hflpd, the term objective TO?„SQH rpqy also designate this very effort and ability to reflect such aa_nb- iective order. Everybody is familiar with situations that byi their very nature, and quite apart from the interests of the subject, call for a definite line of action for example, a child or an animal on the verge of drowning, a starving popu- lation, or an individual illness. Each of these situations speaks, as it were, a language of itself. However, since they are only segments of reality, each of them may have to be neglected because there are more comprehensive structures 12 demanding other lines of action equally independent of personal wishes and interests. systems of objective reasprLjmpligd bdng couldl feg discovered and a conception^ gf derived .from it ,They .umbcatood of thig n^ne^ as an i speculation. They were opposed to any epistemology that would reduce the objective basis of our insight to a chaos of uncoordinated data, and identify our scientific work as the mere organization, classification, or computation of such data. The latter activities, in which subjective reason tends to see the main function of science, are in the light of the classical systems of objective reason subordinate to speculation. Qhjgctive^ieason aspires to r H>‼ L^ thought and insight anj! thus to become a source of tradi- tion all by itself. Its attack on mythology is perhaps more serious than that of subjective reason, which, abstract and formalistic as it conceives itself to be, is inclined to abandpn the fight with religion by s^^ one for science and philosophy, and one for instjtutJiQaal'- jgl mythpljogy, thus recognizing both of them. For the philosophy of objective reason there is no such way out. Since it holds to the concept of objective truth, it must take a positive or a negative stand with regard to the content of established religion. Therefore the critique of social beliefs in the name of objective reason is much more portentous although it is sometimes less direct and aggressive than that put forward in the name of subjective reason. In modern times, reason has displayed a tendency to dis- MEANS AND ENDS 13 solve its own objective content. It is true that in sixteenth- century France the concept of a life dominated by reason as the ultimate agency was again advanced. Montaigne adapted it to individual life, Bodin to the life of nations, and De TH6pital practiced it in politics. Despite certain skeptical declarations on their part, their work furthered the abdication of religion in favor of reason as the supreme in- tellectual authority. At that time, however, reason acquired a new connotation, which found its highest expression in French literature and in some degree^ is still preserved in modern popular usage. It came to signify a conciliatory at- titude. Differences over religion, which with the decline of the medieval church had become the favorite ground on which to thrash out opposing political tendencies, were no longer taken seriously, and no creed or ideology was con- sidered worth defending to the death. This concept df reason was doubtless more humane but at the same time weaker than the religious concept of truth, more pliable to prevailing interests, more adaptable to reality as it is, and therewith from the very beginning in danger of surrender- ing to the 'irrational/

Reason now denoted the point of view of scholars, states- men, and humanists, who deemed the conflicts in religious doctrine more or less meaningless in themselves and looked upon them as slogans or propaganda devices of various political factions. T^the humanists there was no incon- gruity about a people living under one government, within given boundaries, and yet j^rof^ing and beast- t>ut to - create layQiaM&,QB 14 merce and industry, to solidify law and order, to assure its citizens peace inside and protection outside the country. With regard to the individual, reason now played the same part as that held in politics by the sovereign state, which was concerned with the well-being of the people and op- posed to fanaticism and civil war. The divorce of reason from religion marked a further step in the weakening of its objective aspect and a higher degreg of formalization, as became manifest later during the period o.the EnlightenmBt But in the seventeenth century the objective aspect of reason still predominated, because the main, effort of rationalist philosophy was to formulate a doctrine of man and nature that could fulfil the intellectual function? at least for the privileged sector of society- fl^t ^ig^,^At lQim^,J^^d. From the time of_the Renaissance, men have tried to excogitate a doctrine as com- prehensive as theology entirely on their own, instead of accepting their ultimate goals and values from a spiritual qjftthority. Philosophy prided itself on being the instrument for deriving, explaining, revealing the content of reason as reflecting the true nature of things and the correct pattern of living. Spj&i^^ that insist Mo eternal universe, necessarily awakens love for this universe. For him, ethical conduct is entirely determined by such insight into nature, just as our devotion to a person may be determined by insight into his greatness or genius. Fears and petty passions, alien to the great love of the universe, which is logos itself, will vanish, according to Spinoza, once our understanding of reality is deep enough. The other great rationalist systems of the past also em- MEANS AND ENDS 15 phasize that reason will recognize itself in the nature of attitude springs from such insight. This attitude is not necessarily the same for every individual, because the situation of each is unique. There are geographical and historical differences, as well as differ- ences of age, sex, skill, social status, et cetera. However, such insight is universal in so far as its logical connection with the attitude is theoretically self-evident for each im- aginable subject endowed with intelligence. Under the philosophy of reason, insight into the plight of an enslaved people, for instance, might induce a young man to fight for its liberation, but would allow his father to stay at home and till the land. Despite such differences in its conse- quences, the logical nature of this insight is felt to be in- telligible to all people in general, Although these rationalist philosophical systems did not command as wide allegiance as religion had claimed, they were appreciated as efforts to record the meaning and exi- gencies of reality and to present truths that are binding for everybody. Their authors thought that the lumen naturale, natural insight or the light of reason, was sufficient also to penetrate so deeply into creation as to provide us with keys for harmonizing human life with nature both in the external world and within man's own being. They retained God, but not grace; they thought that for all purposes of theoretical knowledge and practical decision, man could do without any lumen supranaturale. Their speculative reproductions of the universe, not the sensualistic epistemologies Giordano Bruno and not Telesio, Spinoza and not Locke clashed di- rectly with traditional religion, because the intellectual as- pirations of the metaphysicians were much more concerned l6 with the doctrines of God, creation, and the meaning of life than were the theories of the empiricists. In the philosophical and political systems of rationalism, Christian ethics was secularized. The aims pursued in in- dividual and social activity were derived from the assump- tion of the existence of certain innate ideas or self-evident intuitions, and thus linked to the concept of objective truth, although this truth was no longer regarded as being guaran- teed by any dogma extraneous to the exigencies of thinking itself. Neither the church nor the rising philosophical systems separated wisdom, ethics, religion, and politics. But the fundamental unity of all human beliefs, rooted in a common Christian ontology, was gradually shattered, and the relativist tendencies that had been explicit in the pio- neers of bourgeois ideology such as Montaigne, but had

later been temporarily pushed into the background by rationalist metaphysics, asserted themselves victoriously in all cultural activities. Of course, as suggested above, when philosophy began to supplant religion, it did not intend to abolish objective truth, but was attempting only to give it a new rational foundation. The contention in regard to the nature of the absolute was not the main ground on which metaphysicians were persecuted and tortured. The real issue was whether revelation or reason, whether theology or philosophy, should be the agency for determining and expressing ultimate truth. Just as the church defended the ability, the right, the duty of religion to teach the people how the world was created, what its purpose is, and how they should behave, so phi- losophy defended the ability, the right, the duty of the mind to discover the nature of things and to derive the right modes of activity from such insight. Catholicism and Euro- MEANS AND ENDS 17 pean rationalist philosophy were in complete agreement regarding the existence of a reality about which such insight could be gained; indeed, the assumption of this reality was the common ground on which their conflicts took place. The two intellectual forces that were at odds with this particular presupposition were Calvinism, through its doc- trine of Deus absconditus, and empiricism, through its no- tion, first implicit and later explicit, that metaphysics is concerned exclusively with pseudo-problems. But the Catholic Church opposed philosophy precisely because the new metaphysical systems asserted the possibility of an in- sight that should itself determine the moral and religious decisions of man. Eventually the active controversy between religion and philosophy ended in a stalemate because the two were con- sidered as separate branches of culture. People have gradu- ally become reconciled to the idea that each lives its own life within the walls of its cultural compartment, tolerating the other. The neutralization of religion, now reduced to the status of one cultural good among others, contradicted its 'total' claim that it incorporates objective truth, and also emasculated it. Although religion remained respected on the surface, its neutralization paved the way for its elim- ination as the medium of spiritual objectivity and ultimately for the abolition of the concept of such an objectivity, itself patterned after the idea of the absoluteness of religious rev-elation. In reality the contents of both philosophy and religion have been deeply affected by this seemingly peaceful settle- ment of their original conflict. The philosophers of the Enlightenment attacked religion in the name of reason; in l8 the end what they killed was not the church but metaphysics and the objective concept of reason itself, the source of power of their own efforts. Reason as an organ for perceiv- ing the true nature of reality and determining the guiding principles of our lives has come to be regarded as obsolete. Speculation is synonymous with metaphysics, and meta- physics with mythology and superstition. We might say that the history of reason or enlightenment from its begin- nings in Greece down to the present has led to a state of affairs in which even the word reason is suspected of connot- ing some mythological entity. Reason has liquidated itself as an agency of ethical, moral, and religious insight. Bishop Berkeley, legitimate son of nominalism, Protestant zealot, and positivist enlightener all in one, directed an attack against such general concepts, including the concept of a general concept, two hundred years ago. In fact, the cam- paign has been victorious all along the line. Berkeley, in partial contradiction of his own theory, retained a few gen- eral concepts, such as mind, spirit, and cause. But they were efficiently eliminated by Hume, the father of modern positivism. Religion seemingly profited from this development. The formalization of reason has made it safe from any serious at- tack on the part of metaphysics or philosophical theory, and this security seems to make it an extremely practical social instrument. At the same time, however, its neutrality means the wasting away of its real spirit, its relatedness to truth, once believed to be the same in science, art, and politics, and for all mankind. The death of speculative reason, at first religion's servant and later its foe, may prove cata- strophic for religion itself. MEANS AND ENDS 19 All these consequences were contained in germ in the bourgeois idea of tolerance, which is ambivalent On the one hand, tolerance means freedom from the rule of dog- matic authority; on the other, it furthers an attitude of neutrality toward all spiritual content, which is thus sur- rendered to relativism. Each cultural domain preserves its 'sovereignty'

with regard to universal truth. The pattern of the social division of labor is automatically transferred to the life of the spirit, and this division of the realm of culture is a corollary to the replacement of universal objective truth by formalized, inherently relativist reason. The political implications of rationalist metaphysics came to the fore in the eighteenth century, when, through the American and French revolutions, the concept of the na- tion became a guiding principle. In modern history this concept has tended to displace religion as the ultimate, supra-individual motive in human life. The nation draws its authority from reason rather than from revelation, reason being thus conceived as an aggregate of fundamental in- sights, innate or developed by speculation, not as an agency concerned merely with the means for putting them into effect. Self-interest, on which certain theories of natural law and hedonistic philosophies have tried to place primary em- phasis, was held to be only one such insight, regarded as rooted in the objective structure of the universe and thus forming a part in the whole system of categories. In the industrial age, the idea of self-interest gradually gained the upper hand and finally suppressed the other motives con- sidered fundamental to the functioning of society; this attitude dominated in the leading schools of thought and, 2O during the liberalistic period, in the public mind. But the same process brought to the surface the contradictions be- tween the theory of self-interest and the idea of the nation. Philosophy then was confronted with the alternative of accepting the anarchistic consequences of this theory or of falling prey to an irrational nationalism much more tainted with romanticism than were the theories of innate ideas that prevailed in the mercantilist period. The intellectual imperialism of the abstract principle of self-interest the core of the official ideology of liberalism- indicated the growing schism between this ideology and social conditions within the industrialized nations. Once the cleavage becomes fixed in the public mind, no effective rational principle of social cohesion remains. The idea of the national community (VolJbgemeinschaft), first set up as an idol, can eventually be maintained only by terror. This explains the tendency of liberalism to tilt over into fascism and of the intellectual and political representa- tives of liberalism to make their peace with its opposites. This tendency, so often demonstrated in recent European history, can be derived, apart from its economic causes, from the inner contradiction between the subjectivistic principle of self-interest and the idea of reason that it is alleged to ex- press. Originally the political constitution was thought of as an expression of concrete principles founded in objective reason; the ideas of justice, equality, happiness, democracy, property, all were held to correspond to reason, to emanate from reason. Subsequently, the content of reason is reduced arbitrarily to the scope of merely a part of this content, to the frame of only one of its principles; the particular pre- empts the place of the universal. This tour de force in the MEANS AND ENDS 21 realm of the intellectual lays the ground for the rule of force in the domain of the political. Having given up autonomy, reason has become an in- strument. In the formalistic aspect of subjective reason, stressed by positivism, its unrelatedness to objective content is emphasized; in its instrumental aspect, stressed by prag- matism, its surrender to heteronomous contents is empha- sized. Reason has become completely harnessed to the social process. Its operational value, its role in the domi- nation of men and nature, has been made the sole criterion. Concepts have been reduced to summaries of the character- istics that several specimens have in common. By denoting a similarity, concepts eliminate the bother of enumerating qualities and thus serve better to organize the material of knowledge. They are thought of as mere abbreviations of the items to which they refer. Any use transcending auxili- ary, technical summarization of factual data has been elimi- nated as a last trace of superstition. Concepts have become ‘streamlined/ rationalized, labor-saving devices. It is as if thinking itself had been reduced to the level of industrial processes, subjected to a close schedule in short, made part and parcel of production. Toynbee 6 has described some of the consequences of this process for the writing of history. He speaks of the ‘tendency for the potter to become the slave of his clay. … In the world of action, we know that it is disastrous to treat animals or human beings as though they were stocks and stones. Why should we sup- pose this treatment to be any less mistaken in the world of ideas?’ The more ideas have become

automatic, instrumental- 8 A Study of History, zd ed., London, 1935, vol. i, p. 7. 22 ized, the less does anybody see in them thoughts with a meaning of their own,. They are considered things, ma- chines. Language has been reduced to just another tool in the gigantic apparatus of production in modern society. Every sentence that is not equivalent to an operation in that apparatus appears to the layman just as meaningless as it is held to be by contemporary semanticists who imply that the purely symbolic and operational, that is, the purely senseless sentence, makes sense. Meaning is supplanted by function or effect in the world of things and events. In so far as words are not used obviously to calculate technically relevant probabilities or for other practical purposes, among which even relaxation is included, they are in danger of being suspect as sales talk of some kind, for truth is no end in itself. In the era of relativism, when even children look upon ideas as advertisements or rationalizations, the very fear that language might still harbor mythological residues has endowed words with a new mythological character. True, ideas have been radically functionalized and language is con- sidered a mere tool, be it for the storage and communication of the intellectual elements of production or for the guid- ance of the masses. At the same time, language takes its revenge, as it were, by reverting to its magic stage. As in the days of magic, each word is regarded as a dangerous force that might destroy society and for which the speaker must be held responsible. Correspondingly, the pursuit of truth, under social control, is curtailed. The difference between thinking and acting is held void. Thus every thought is re- garded as an act; every reflection is a thesis, and every thesis MEANS AND ENDS 23 is a watchword. Everyone is called on the carpet for what he says or does not say. Everything and everybody is classi- fied and labeled. The quality of the human that precludes identifying the individual with a class is 'metaphysical' and has no place in empiricist epistemology. The pigeon-hole into which a man is shoved circumscribes his fate. As soon as a thought or a word becomes a tool, one can dispense with actually 'thinking' it, that is, with going through the logical acts involved in verbal formulation of it. As has been pointed out, often and correctly, the advantage of mathematics the model of all neo-positivistic thinking- lies in just this 'intellectual economy/ Complicated logical operations are carried out without actual performance of all the intellectual acts upon which the mathematical and logical symbols are based. Such mechanization is indeed essential to the expansion of industry; but if it becomes the characteristic feature of minds, if reason itself is instru- mentalized, it takes on a kind of materiality and blindness, becomes a fetish, a magic entity that is accepted rather than intellectually experienced. What are the consequences of the formalization of rea- son? Justice, equality, happiness, tolerance, all the concepts that, as mentioned, were in preceding centuries supposed to be inherent in or sanctioned by reason, have lost their in- tellectual roots. They are still aims and ends, but there is no rational agency authorized to appraise and link them to an objective reality. Endorsed by venerable historical docu- ments, they may still enjoy a certain prestige, and some are contained in the supreme law of the greatest countries. Nevertheless, they lack any confirmation by reason in its 24 modern sense. Who can say that any one of these ideals is more closely related to truth than its opposite? According ' to the philosophy of the average modern intellectual, there is only one authority, namely, science, conceived as the classification of facts and the calculation of probabilities. The statement that justice and freedom are better in them- selves than injustice and oppression is scientifically unveri- fiable and useless. It has come to sound as meaningless in itself as would the statement that red is more beautiful than blue, or that an egg is better than milk. The more the concept of reason becomes emasculated, the more easily it lends itself to ideological manipulation and to propagation of even the most blatant lies. The ad- vance of enlightenment dissolves the idea of objective reason, dogmatism, and superstition; but often reaction and obscurantism profit most from this development. Vested interests opposed to the traditional humanitarian values will appeal to neutralized, impotent reason in the name of 'common sense/ This devitalization of basic concepts can be followed through political history. In the American Constitutional Convention of 1787, John Dickinson of Pennsylvania contrasted experience with reason when he said: 'Experience must be

our only guide. Reason may mislead us/ 7 He wished to caution against a too radical idealism. Later the concepts became so emptied of sub- stance that they could be used synonymously to advocate oppression. Charles O'Conor, a celebrated lawyer of the period before the Civil War, once nominated for the presi- dency by a faction of the Democratic party, argued (after 7 Cf. Morrison and Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, New York, 1942, vol. i, p. 281. MEANS AND ENDS 2 outlining the blessings of compulsory servitude) : 'I insist that negro slavery is not unjust; it is just, wise, and benefi- cent ... I insist that negro slavery ... is ordained by nature . . . Yielding to the clear decree of nature, and the dictates of sound philosophy, we must pronounce that in- stitution just, benign, lawful and proper/ 8 Though O'Conor still uses the words nature, philosophy, and justice, they are completely formalized and cannot stand up against what he considers to be facts and experience. Subjective reason conforms to anything. It lends itself as well to the uses' of the adversaries as of the defenders of the traditional humani- tarian values. It furnishes, as in O'Conor's instance, the ideology for profit and reaction as well as the ideology for progress and revolution. Another spokesman for slavery, Fitzhugh, author of Sociology for the South, seems to remember that once philosophy stood for concrete ideas and principles and there- fore attacks it in the name of common sense. He thus ex- presses, though in a distorted form, the clash between the subjective and objective concepts of reason. Men of sound judgments usually give wrong reasons for their opinions because they are not abstractionists. . . . Phi- losophy beats them all hollow in argument, yet instinct and common sense are right and philosophy wrong. Philosophy is always wrong and instinct and common sense always right, be- cause philosophy is unobservant and reasons from narrow and insufficient premises.9 8 A Speech at the Union Meeting at the Academy of Music, New York City, December 19, 1859, reprinted under title, 'Negro Slavery Not Unjust/ by the New York Herald Tribune. 9 George Fitzhugh, Sociology for the South or the Failure of Free Society, Richmond, Va., 1854, PP 18-19. 26 Fearing idealistic principles, thinking as such, and intel- lectuals and Utopians, the writer prides himself on his com- mon sense, which sees no wrong in slavery. The basic ideals and concepts of rationalist metaphysics were rooted in the concept of the universally human, of mankind, and their formalization implies that they have been severed from their human content. How this de- humanization of thinking affects the very foundations of our civilization, can be illustrated by analysis of the prin- ciple of the majority, which is inseparable from the principle of democracy. In the eyes of the average man, the principle of the majority is often not only a substitute for but an im- provement upon objective reason: since men are after all the best judges of their own interests, the resolutions of a majority, it is thought, are certainly as valuable to a com- munity as the intuitions of a so-called superior reason. How- ever, the contradiction between intuition and the demo- cratic principle, conceived in such crude terms, is only imag- inary. For what does it mean to say that 'a man knows his own interests best' how does he gain this knowledge, what evidences that his knowledge is correct? In the proposition, "A man knows . . . best/ there is an implicit reference to an agency that is not totally arbitrary and that is incidental to some sort of reason underlying not only means but ends as well. If that agency should turn out to be again merely the majority, the whole argument would constitute a tau- tology. The great philosophical tradition that contributed to the founding of modern democracy was not guilty of this tau- tology, for it based the principles of government upon more or less speculative assumptions for instance, the assump- MEANS AND ENDS 27 tion that the same spiritual substance or moral conscious- ness is present in each human being. In other words, respect for the majority was based on a conviction that did not it- self depend on the resolutions of the majority. Locke still spoke of natural reason's agreeing with revelation in regard to human rights. 10 His theory of government refers to the affirmations of both reason and revelation. They are sup- posed to teach that men are T>y nature all free, equal, and independent/ n Locke's theory of knowledge is an example of that treach- erous lucidity of style which unites opposites by simply blurring the nuances. He did not care to differentiate too clearly between sensual and rational, atomistic and structural experience,

nor did he indicate whether the state of nature from which he derived the natural law was inferred by logi- cal processes or intuitively perceived. However, it seems to be sufficiently clear that freedom 'by nature' is not identical with freedom in fact. His political doctrine is based on ra- tional insight and deductions rather than on empirical research. The same may be said of Locke's disciple, Rousseau. When the latter declared that the renunciation of liberty is against the nature of man, because thereby 'man's actions would be deprived of all morality and his will deprived of all liberty' M he knew very well that the renunciation of lib- erty was not against the empirical nature of man; he himself bitterly criticized individuals, groups, and nations for re- nouncing their freedom. He referred to man's spiritual 10 Locke on Civil Government, Second Treatise, chap, v, Everyman's Library, p. 129. 11 Ibid. chap, vm, p. 164. 12 Contrat social, vol. i, p. 4. 28 substance rather than to a psychological attitude. His doctrine of the social contract is derived from a philosophi- cal doctrine of man, according to which the principle of the majority rather than that of power corresponds to human nature as it is described in speculative thinking. In the history of social philosophy even the term 'common sense' is inseparably linked to the idea of self-evident truth. It was Thomas Reid who, twelve years before the time of Paine's famous pamphlet and the Declaration of Inde- pendence, identified the principles of common sense with self-evident truths and thus reconciled empiricism with rationalistic metaphysics. Deprived of its rational foundation, the democratic prin- ciple becomes exclusively dependent upon the so-called interests of the people, and these are functions of blind or all too conscious economic forces. They do not offer any guarantee against tyranny. 18 In the period of the free market system, for instance, institutions based on the idea of human rights were accepted by many people as a good instrument for controlling the government and maintaining peace. But if the situation changes, if powerful economic groups find it useful to set up a dictatorship and abolish majority rule, no objection founded on reason can be opposed 13 The anxiety of the editor of Tocqueville, in speaking of the negative aspects of the majority principle, was superfluous (cf. Democracy in America, New York, 1898, vol. i, pp. 334-5, note). The editor asserts that 'it is only a figure of speech to say that the majority of the people makes the laws/ and among other things reminds us that this is done in fact by their delegates. He could have added that if Tocqueville spoke of the tyranny of the majority, Jefferson, in a letter quoted by Tocqueville, spoke of 'the tyranny of the legislatures/ The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Definitive Edition, Washington, D. C., 1905, vol. vn, p. 312. Jefferson was so suspicious of either department of government in a democracy, 'whether legislative or executive/ that he was opposed to maintenance of a standing army. Cf. ibid. p. 323. MEANS AND ENDS 29 to their action. If they have a real chance of success, they would simply be foolish not to take it. The only considera- tion that could prevent them from doing so would be the possibility that their own interests would be endangered, and not concern over violation of a truth, of reason. Once the philosophical foundation of democracy has collapsed, the statement that dictatorship is bad is rationally valid only for those who are not its beneficiaries, and there is no theoretical obstacle to the transformation of this statement into its opposite. The men who made the Constitution of the United States considered 'the fundamental law of every society, the lex ma/oris partis/ 14 but they were far from substituting the verdicts of the majority for those of reason. When they incorporated an ingenious system of checks and balances in the structure of government, they held, as Noah Webster put it, that 'the powers lodged in Congress are extensive, but it is presumed that they are not too extensive/ 15 He called the principle of the majority 'a doctrine as universally re- ceived as any intuitive truth" 16 and saw in it one among other natural ideas of similar dignity. For these men there was no principle that did not derive its authority from a metaphysical or religious source. Dickinson regarded the government and its trust as 'founded on the nature of man, that is, on the will of his Maker and . . . therefore sacred. It is then an offence against Heaven to violate that trust/ 1T The majority principle in itself was certainly not consid- 14 Ibid. p. 324. 15 'An Examination into the Leading Principles of the Federal Con- stitution . . . / in Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States, ed. by Paul L. Ford, Brooklyn,

N. Y., 1888, p. 45. 18 IbicJ. p. 30. 17 Ibid. ‘Letters of Fabius/ p. 181. 3 ered to be a guarantee of justice. ‘The majority/ says John Adams,18 ‘has eternally and without one exception, usurped over the rights of the minority/ These rights and all other fundamental principles were believed to be intuitive truths. They were taken over directly or indirectly from a philo- sophical tradition that at the time was still alive. They can be traced back through the history of Western thought to their religious and mythological roots, and it is from these origins that they had preserved the ‘awfulness that Dickin- son mentions. Subjective reason has no use for such inheritance. It re- veals truth as habit and thereby strips it of its spiritual authority. Today the idea of the majority, deprived of its rational foundations, has assumed a completely irrational aspect. Every philosophical, ethical, and political idea its lifeline connecting it with its historical origins having been severed has a tendency to become the nucleus of a new mythology, and this is one of the reasons why the advance of enlightenment tends at certain points to revert to super- stition and paranoia. The majority principle, in the form of popular verdicts on each and every matter, implemented by all kinds of polls and modern techniques of communica- tion, has become the sovereign force to which thought must cater. It is a new god, not in the sense in which the heralds of the great revolutions conceived it, namely, as a power of resistance to existing injustice, but as a power of resistance to anything that does not conform. The more the judgment of the people is manipulated by all kinds of interests, the 18 Charles Beard, Economic Origin of /effersonian Democracy, New York, 1915, p. 305. ‘’