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Our topic today is meaning, and we have five main divisions: (1) carriers of meaning, (2) elements, (3) functions, (4) realms, and (5) stages.

1 Carriers of Meaning

Meaning is not something on its own. It is always in some way embodied. It is embodied (a) in intersubjectivity, (b) in art, (c) in symbols, (d) in language, and (e) in persons – incarnate meaning.

1.1 Intersubjectivity

With regard to intersubjectivity, we have first something on intersubjectivity itself, and then on intersubjective meaning. First, just as there is a ‘we’ that results from the mutual love of an ‘I’ and a ‘Thou,’ so there is a prior ‘we’ that precedes the distinction of subjects and survives its oblivion. It is vital and functional rather than intentional.

Spontaneously one raises one’s arm to protect one’s head; with equal spontaneity one reaches out to prevent another from falling. And it is not that one first sees another fall and then decides to help him; one perceives oneself doing it; one’s advertence to it is concomitant with the act. It is as though we were one, members of a single body prior to our distinction from one another. Such intersubjectivity appears not only in mutual aid, but also in some of the ways in which feeling is shared. And here I call on Max

1 The first part of the lecture of the fourth day on what was then conceived as chapter 4 of *Method in Theology*, ‘Meaning.’ The audio recording can be found at 52100A0E060.

Scheler as described by Manfred Frings in his book, *Max Scheler*, Pittsburgh, 1965, pp. 56-66. Scheler distinguishes community of feeling, fellow feeling, psychic contagion, and emotional identification.

The first two, community of feeling and fellow feeling, are intentional responses; they arise from the perception of an object. In community of feeling, two people respond in parallel fashion to the same object. Two parents grieve over their child's death; or the worshipers in church respond in parallel fashion to God, with whom they are occupied. This community of feeling is similar feeling of people who are together and responding to the same object.

Fellow feeling is illustrated by another person coming in and seeing the sorrow of the parents and sympathizing with them, sharing their sorrow. The cause of the fellow feeling is other peoples' feelings rather than the object that is causing their feelings. Again, people in church are people who are devout, worshipping God; there are other people who are moved to a prayerful attitude because these other people are praying; that is fellow feeling.

Psychic contagion and emotional identification are less; they do not have the same intentional basis as the others; even though the object is not known, not adverted to, still one shares someone else's feeling — people are all laughing, they do not know what they find funny, but spontaneously you start grinning; or others are sorrowful, weeping, and you do not know why they are so sorrowful but you start feeling sad yourself. And such contagion, according to Scheler, psychic contagion, is the mechanism of mass excitement, panics, demonstrations, revolutions, strikes. And because it is something that is on the level of feeling without adverting to objects, personal responsibility tends to disappear, intelligence decreases, and the

domination of drives over thinking emerges along with readiness to submit to a leader. And such psychic contagion can be deliberately provoked, built up, exploited by political activists, the entertainment industry, religious and especially pseudo-religious leaders. In psychic contagion, one shares another's emotions, even though one does not know the object of those emotions.

Emotional identification also has a vital rather than an intentional basis. And in it, differentiation tends to disappear. Either the differentiation has not yet clearly emerged, or, if it has emerged, it is submerged. The basic illustration of differentiation that has not yet emerged is between the mother and her infant. Also, the little girl playing with her doll; she identifies herself with the doll, and herself with the mother at the same time. The retreat from differentiation is illustrated by Scheler in his account of hypnosis; hypnosis is the vanishing of that differentiation. It is suspension in sexual intercourse; both partners undergo a suspension of individuality and fall back into a single stream of life. In the group mind, members identify with their leaders, spectators with their team – as a group watching a hockey match or a football match, the people on one side feeling with their team and quite annoyed with those feeling with the other team. In the ancient mysteries, the mystic in a state of ecstasy became identified with his god. In the writings of later history mystics, experiences with a pantheistic implication are not infrequently described.

1.2 Intersubjective Meaning

So much, then, for intersubjectivity on the level of mutual aid and common feelings. Now, intersubjective meanings are illustrated by drawing on the

work of (Lonergan says Susanne Langer, but in fact it is M.J.J. Buytendijk -Ed.) There we have a phenomenology of the smile. And, first of all, a smile has a meaning. It is not just a certain combination of movements of lips, facial muscles, and eyes; it is a combination with a meaning. Because that meaning is different from the meaning of a frown, a scowl, a stare, a glare, a snicker, a laugh, it is named a smile. Because we all know that meaning exists, we do not go about the streets smiling at everyone: you would be misunderstood.

Secondly, a smile is highly perceptible. Perceiving is not just a function of the impressions that are made on our senses. Perceiving is selecting out of impressions a *Gestalt*, some sort of shape, some sort of meaning. And because there is that shape, that form, that meaning to the smile, a smile is very easily detected, even an incipient smile that the person is trying to suppress, you get it. Again, one can converse with a friend on a noisy street, disregarding the meaningless surrounding tumult, and picking up the band of sound waves that has a meaning. Again, a smile is natural and spontaneous. Both the meaning of the smile and the act of smiling are natural and spontaneous. We do not learn to smile as we learn to walk, talk, and so on. Commonly, we do not think of smiling and then do it; we just do it.

Further, we do not learn the meaning of smiling as we learn the meaning of words; we make the discovery on our own, and the meaning of a smile does not seem to vary from culture to culture, as does the meaning of gestures. A smile has something irreducible about it; it cannot be explained by causes outside meaning; it cannot be elucidated by other types of meaning.

This may be illustrated by comparing the meaning of the smile with the meaning of words, language. Linguistic meaning tends to be univocal, whereas smiles have a wide variety of different meanings: smiles of recognition, welcome, friendliness, friendship, love, joy, delight, contentment, satisfaction, amusement, refusal, or contempt; they can be ironic, sardonic, enigmatic, glad or sad, fresh or weary, eager or resigned. They are not like words, tending to be univocal; smiles have all sorts of meanings, and the meaning comes out of the context.

Linguistic meaning may be true in two ways: true as opposed to mendacious, and true as opposed to false. A smile can be true as opposed to mendacious: one can smile and smile and be a villain. But it cannot be true as opposed to false. Linguistic meaning contains distinctions between what we feel, what we desire, fear, hate, know, wish, command, intend. The meaning of a smile is global; it expresses what one person means to another; it has the meaning of a fact and not the meaning of a proposition. Linguistic meaning is objective; it expresses what has been objectified. The meaning of a smile is intersubjective; it supposes the interpersonal situation with its antecedents; it is a recognition of that situation and a determinant of it, an element in the situation and its process, a meaning with its significance in the context of antecedent and subsequent meanings. The meaning of a smile is not about some object but an immediate revelation of the subject. It is not the basis of some inference. Rather, in the smile one incarnate subject is transparent or again hidden to another, in a way that antedates all subsequent analyses of body, soul, and sign and signified.

Now, from the smile one might go on to all the facial and bodily movements or pauses, to all the variations of voice in tone, pitch, volume and in silence, to all the ways in which our feelings are revealed or betrayed

by ourselves, or are depicted by actors on the stage. Our purpose is not to exhaust intersubjective meaning, but to indicate a distinct carrier of meaning, something that is different from art, symbol, language, and incarnate meaning.

1.3 Art

Next, there is artistic meaning. Langer's *Feeling and Form* defines art as the objectification of a purely experiential pattern, and she explains these terms. Patterns may be abstract: the musical score, the indentations and the grooves of the gramophone record; or it may be concrete: the pattern in given colors, given tones or volumes or movements. Concrete patterns consist in the internal relations of colors, tones, volumes, movements, not in colors as unrelated, or as representative of something else. Besides the pattern of what is perceived, there is the pattern in the perceiving, and that pattern is experiential: an experienced pattern. But all perceiving is a selecting and organizing. Precisely because the perceived is patterned, it is easily perceived. Decoration makes a wall perceptible, a carpet perceptible. When one repeats a tune or a melody – one cannot repeat a succession of street noises – in the tune or melody there is a pattern; and there is not a pattern in the street noises.

Patterns are especially perceptible by drawing on organic analogies: repeated variations in movements from roots to trunk, from branches to leaves and flowers. Complexity can mount to a definite plane and yet be organized and perceptible as a whole.

A pure pattern is a pattern inasmuch as it excludes alien patterns which instrumentalize experience, where one's senses can become merely an

apparatus for receiving and transmitting signals: the pattern of the readymade man in his readymade world. One is performing automatically things one is doing all the time; one's sensitivity is simply being used by something else. Or when one is in the intellectual pattern of experience, one's sensitivity is merely a tool for forming concepts and making judgments, verifying, and so on. Or where some theory of what one's sense should be is interfering with the way your sensing: what is perceived is something objective, and the pattern of the perceiving is something subjective, or some other a priori view. Sense has to be liberated from any alien control in the pure pattern, in the purely experiential pattern. It is purely experiential also in the sense that it is of the colors that are seen, not of the stereotypes that are anticipated. The example I used in Rome was that the students from the German College wore red cassocks, and because they had been washed, they had all sorts of shades of red. You can perceive a stereotype, and call that the real color of the thing, as though you were seeing in some standard lighting. When you move into a different lighting, you are seeing something different, but you can perceive the stereotype and not what is there to be seen. Similarly, you can perceive objects, not in perspective: the way they are visible and the way you get them on a camera when you hold the camera properly, but you perceive them as they are built, at right angles, everything straight, perpendicular, and so on. The purely experiential pattern is the pattern of what the artist perceives, not the man who perceives the stereotype.

To the purely experienced color, sound, movement, and so on, there accrue their retinue of associations, affects, emotions, incipient tendencies. Out of them may rise a lesson, but into them a lesson may not be intruded in the manner of didacticism, moralism, or social realism. To them also

accrues the experiencing subject with his capacity for wonder, for awe and fascination, with his openness to adventure, to daring, greatness, goodness, majesty.

When you say ‘purely experiential pattern,’ what you are seeking is not impoverishment but enrichment, the curtailing of what is alien, to let experiencing find its full complement of feeling, its own proper patterns, take its own line of expansion, development, organization, fulfillment. So experiencing becomes rhythmic, one movement necessitating another, and the other in turn necessitating a third. Tensions build up to be resolved, variations multiply and grow in complexity, yet remain within an organic unity that eventually rounds itself off.

Artistic meaning, when fully developed, intends something meant. But the meaning of an experiential pattern is elementary. It is the conscious performing of a transformed subject in his transformed world. This world may be regarded as illusion, or regarded as more true and more real. We are transported from the space in which we move to the space within the picture, from the time of sleeping and waking, working and resting, to the time of the music, from the pressures and determinisms of home and office, economics and politics, to the powers depicted in the dance, from conversational and media use of language to the vocal tools that focus, mold, grow with consciousness. So too the subject is transformed. He has been liberated from being a replaceable part adjusted to a readymade world and integrated within it. He has ceased to be a responsible inquirer, investigating some aspect of the universe or seeking a view of the whole. He has become just himself, emergent, ecstatic, originating freedom.

This purely experiential pattern is objectified in the work of art. The elemental meaning of the transformed subject in his transformed world can

be set within the conceptual field, but this reflects without reproducing the elemental meaning. Art criticism and art history are like the thermodynamic equations: the equations control the production and the use of heat, but they don't make anyone feel warmer or cooler. Similarly, art criticism does not reproduce the work of art, but puts it into conceptual categories. The proper expression of elemental meaning is the work of art itself. That meaning lies within the consciousness of the artist. At first, it may be only implicit, veiled, unrevealed, unobjectified. Aware of it, the artist has yet to get hold of it. He is impelled to behold, inspect, dissect, enjoy, repeat it; this means objectifying it, making it explicit, unveiling, revealing.

The process of objectifying involves psychic distance, for elemental meaning is just experiencing. Its expression involves detaching, distinguishing, separating from experiencing. The smile or frown expresses intersubjectively the feeling as felt; artistic composition recollects the emotion in tranquility. It involves insight into the elemental meaning, a grasp of the commanding form that has to be expanded, worked out, developed, and the subsequent process of working out and adjusting, directing, completing the initial insight.

The result is an idealization of the original experiential pattern. Art is not autobiography, not telling one's tale to the psychiatrist; it is grasping what is or seems significant, of moment, concern, import to man. It is truer than experience, leaner, more effective, more to the point; it is the central moment, with its proper implications that unfold without the distortions, interferences of the original pattern. The proper apprehension and appreciation of the work of art is not any conceptual clarification or judicial weighing of evidence; the work is an invitation to participate, try out, to see it for oneself. As the mathematician withdraws from the sciences that

verify, to explore the possibilities of organizing the data, so the work of art invites us to withdraw from practical living to explore possibilities of living in a richer world.

What am I saying? I am just saying that, besides intersubjective meaning, there is another type of meaning: artistic meaning. I have given some sort of description of it; if you want to have it made concrete, apply it to drawing and painting, statuary and architecture, music and dance, epic, lyric and dramatic poetry, see Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form*.

1.4 Symbols

Symbol is another carrier of meaning. A symbol I take as an image of a real or imaginary object that evokes a feeling or is evoked by a feeling. I will speak first on feeling; second, on objects and images; third, on symbolic evocation; and fourth, I will make some attempt at explaining

Feelings are related to objects, to one another, and to their subjects. They are related to objects: one desires food, fears pain, enjoys a meal, regrets a friend's illness, etc. They are related to one another through changes in the object: one desires the good that is absent, hopes for the good that is sought, enjoys the good that is present. One fears absent evil, becomes disheartened at its approach, sad in its presence. Feelings are related to objects through personal relations: so love, gentleness, tenderness, intimacy, union go together as do alienation, hatred, harshness, violence, cruelty, which form a union. So too, sequences occur, such as offense, contumacy. Not only did I offend him, I really meant it and still do. Judgment, punishment, or offense, repentance, satisfaction, forgiveness.

Feelings may conflict, yet come together: one may desire despite fear, hope against hope, mix joy with sadness, love with hatred, gentleness with harshness, tenderness with violence, intimacy with cruelty, union with alienation.

Feelings are related to their subject. They are the mass and momentum and power of conscious living, the actuation of his affective capacities, dispositions, habits; the effective orientation of his being.

Next, feelings and their objects. The same objects need not evoke the same feelings in different subjects. And, inversely, the same feelings need not evoke the same symbolic images. First, the difference in affective response. This may be due to difference in age, sex, education, state in life, temperament, existential concern. More fundamentally, there is in human beings an affective development that may suffer aberrations. It is the history of that process that terminates in the person with a determinate orientation in life, with determinate affective capacities, dispositions, and habits. What these latter are in any individual can be specified by the symbols that awaken determinate affects, and inversely by the affects that evoke determinate symbols.

Symbols may be undifferentiated or transformed. Undifferentiated symbols result from the same affective orientation and disposition. They are interchangeable, and may be combined to increase their intensity and reduce ambiguity. Such combinations and organizations reveal the difference between the aesthetic and the symbolic. The monsters of mythology are just bizarre; they are not aesthetic, but they express determinate feelings of a man; for example, St George and the Dragon. It is ascensional symbolism, where being high, the use of one's hands, easy movement above, having a weapon at one's disposal are all the ascensional things. The dragon

represents all the dangers that would result from falling: falling to the ground, blinded by the smoke from the monster, hurt by fire, pressed down by his scaly body – all the things that provoke revulsion. You have there two sets of symbols: the good of being up and free and in control of the situation; and the dangers from falling. This type of symbolism develops from the child's efforts to maintain equilibrium while standing on his feet. Learning to walk gives the child an appreciation of all the advantages of being up and not falling. That combination of symbolism, according to G. Durand, is based on that dominant reflex. If you are going to lose your balance, everything else stops until restore your balance again; and that maintaining of balance, the acquisition of balance in the child, etc., is what gives that type of symbolism its power.

You can have a transvaluation and transformation of this symbolism. What before was moving no longer moves; what before did not move now is moving. The symbols stay to express new affective capacities and dispositions. The conquest of terror replaces the dragon as insignificant fantasy with the meaning of Jonah's whale, the monster that swallowed the drowning man, and three days later vomited him unharmed onto the shore. And here you have, not falling, but going down into the belly. And going down adds something along the lines that despite any going down, everything is going to be all right. You get the opposite meaning attached to the same symbol, and Durand connects that type of symbolism, in which everything is being reverted, as associated with the dominant reflex of swallowing. If you are swallowing something, and something goes wrong, everything else stops until you get that right. And, inversely, symbols that do not advance, cannot be transvalued or transformed, seem to indicate a block in development. It is all right for a child to be afraid of the dark,

because he hears things and can't see what's going on; but for a grown man to be afraid of the dark is something else.

Symbolic evocation. Symbols obey the laws of image and feeling, not the laws of logic. Where logic sets up classes, symbols set up representative figures. Where logic wants words to be univocal, symbols have a wealth of meaning, not just one meaning but many. Where logic wants proof, symbolic expression overwhelms with a manifold of images that converge on the same meaning. Logic wants excluded middle: either yes or no, but not both; but symbols express the coincidence of opposites: both love and hate. Logic says no, it denies; symbol rejects by overstatement, it piles up opposed images. The logical meaning is linear; and symbolic meaning is condensed, it condenses into a bizarre unity all its present concerns. The example of condensation, what Freud meant by condensation, you have in Macbeth. When MacDuff says to Macbeth: 'And Pity, like a naked newborn babe, Striding the blast, or Heaven's Cherubin, hors'd Upon the sightless couriers of the air, Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye That tears shall drown the wind – things that don't go together at all, but it is easy to remember, it makes a terrific impression. It is condensing two different things that do not go together at all, except insofar as they exert their symbolic power.

The power of the symbol, its function, is to recognize and express what logical discourse abhors: the existence of internal tensions, incompatibilities, conflicts, struggles, destructions. A dialectical or methodological viewpoint can embrace what is concrete, contradictory, and dynamic. But symbol did this before either logic or dialectic were conceived, and still does it for those unfamiliar with logic and dialectic.

Moreover, it does it in a way, on a level, that logic and dialectic cannot touch; and that is internal communication. Organic and psychic vitality must reveal themselves in intentional consciousness and, inversely, intentional consciousness has to secure the collaboration of organism and psyche. Again, our apprehensions of values occur in intentional responses, in feelings. There is need for feelings to reveal objects, and objects to awaken feelings. It is through such symbols that mind and body, mind and heart, heart and body communicate.

The proper meaning of the symbol is an elemental meaning, not yet objectified. It is like the smile prior to the phenomenology of the smile; it is like the purely experiential pattern prior to the work of art. It is meaning that fulfills its function in imagining and perceiving, apart from any further conceptual interpretation of the symbol. The proper context of this meaning is its function that it fulfills in the process of internal communication in which it occurs. To this context with its associations, memories, and tendencies, the interpreter has to appeal if he is to explain the symbol.

The interpretation of the symbol is to go beyond the symbol; it is a transition from elemental meaning in image or person to a linguistic meaning. The context of linguistic meaning involves possible relations, roots, suggestions in the construction of the elemental context of the symbol. Such interpretative contexts are many, and they reflect the many ways human beings can develop and suffer deviation.

There are the therapeutic interpretations of symbols and the non-therapeutic interpretations. Durand, whom I mentioned previously, has three or four hundred pages on symbols in terms of three dominant reflexes: the ascensional symbolism based upon maintaining one's balance; the opposite symbolism based upon swallowing; and then a combination of

both, when you are able to shift from one to the other and back again, based upon the dominant reflex involved in mating. Eliade has worked at the symbolism of primitive religions, Northrop Frye has worked on symbolism in literature, and Ludwig Binswanger, Rollo May, and Victor Frankl are all existentialists.

1.5 Linguistic Meaning

Linguistic meaning. By its embodiment in language, in a set of conventional signs, meaning finds its greatest liberation. For conventional signs can be multiplied indefinitely, can be used reflexively in analysis and control of linguistic meaning itself. In contrast, intersubjective and symbolic meaning seem restricted to the spontaneities of human living together, and whatever conventions they may develop are limited by the materials in which colors and shapes, solid forms and structures, sounds and movements, are embodied.

The moment of language is best illustrated by the story of Helen Keller's discovery that the successive touches made on her hand by her teacher conveyed names of objects. When she first got that insight, her emotional reaction was tremendous; she immediately started asking for the names of other things. She had the teacher take her out to the yard, to a pump and water, and the water flowed over Helen's hands; the teacher made the sign for water on her hand, and Helen connected this with the name for water: an insight into the use of a sign to convey a meaning. And there was a terrific emotional response, and then question after question. She got down on the ground and asked the name of earth, etc. She learned about twenty words in a very short time, and it was the beginning of a terrific

career of learning. It is in that sort of narration that you see why the ancients, the primitives, had a terrific veneration of the word. They think highly of the word, not because they confuse it with the essence of the thing; concern with essences was much later with Socrates and the introduction of universal definitions. What they prized was bringing conscious intentionality into sharp focus, and thereby setting about the double task of ordering one's world, and orientating oneself within it. Without linguistic meaning consciousness has no sharp focus; it is words that picked out things to be noticed, and you can talk about them when you have them picked out.

Consequently, conscious intentionality develops in and is molded by its mother tongue. We not only learn the names of what we can see and attend to and talk about, but we can attend to and talk about the things we can name. Available language takes the lead. It picks out aspects of things that are pushed into the foreground, relations between things that are stressed, movements that demand attention. Different languages develop in different manners, and the best of translations can express not the exact meaning of the original, but the closest approximation possible in another tongue. The words do not exactly correspond from one language to another, and a good translation is knowing about those non-correspondences. For example, the importance in studying Aristotle of knowing Greek, is that no translation of Aristotle can use the same word every time Aristotle uses the same word. And you are missing out on Aristotle's meaning if you are just approaching it through a translation. You are not getting the associations he has in his words. And the same is true when studying any other author.

By its embodiment in language, besides molding consciousness language structures the world about the subject. Spatial adjectives and adverbs relate places to the place of the speaker. Tenses of verbs place times

to his present; moods correspond to his intention to wish or exhort, or command or declare; voices make verbs active or passive, pin subjects to objects and objects to subjects; grammar almost gives us Aristotle's categories of substance, quality, quantity, relation, etc.; and Aristotle's logic and theory of science are deeply rooted in the grammatical function of predication, which is not fundamental in the symbolic logic. There what you have is conjunctive – combinations and propositions.

As language develops there emerges a distinction between ordinary, technical, and literary language. Ordinary language is the vehicle in which the human community conducts its collaboration in the day-to-day pursuit of the human good. It is the language of the home and school, of industry and commerce, of enjoyment and misfortune, of the mass media and casual conversation. It is transient: it expresses the thought of the moment, at the moment, for the moment. It is elliptical: it knows that a wink is as good as a nod, that full statement is superfluous and would only irritate. 'For heaven's sake, don't keep explaining what is obvious to everyone.' It is based on common sense: common sense is the nucleus of habitual insights, such that, with the addition of one or two more, one will be able to understand what to do or say in any of a commonly occurring series of concrete situations. It is centered in the subject: it regards the world as related to him, as the field of his behavior, influence, action; as colored by his desires, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows. As shared by a group, the nucleus of insights is the common sense of the group. When it is just personal, it is thought odd; when it pertains to the common sense of a different group, it is considered strange. On common sense see *Insight*, chapters 6 and 7. So much for ordinary language.

Technical language. The commonsense development of human intelligence yields not only common but also complementary results.

Primitive fruit-gatherers differentiate into gardeners, hunters, fishers. New groups, ends, tasks call for new words. Continued division of labor fosters the specialization of language. A distinction emerges between words in common use that refer to what is generally known about particular tasks, and, on the other hand, the technical words employed by craftsmen or experts or specialists when they speak among themselves. And this development of technical language goes on infinitely more when language begins to express theoretical development, where inquiry is pursued for its own sake, and logics and methods are formulated, when a tradition of learning is established, different branches are distinguished, and specialties multiplied.

Literary language is the vehicle of a work, a *poiema*, to be learnt by heart, to be written out. As ordinary language is content to supplement the common understanding and feeling of every kind of common living, literary language not only aims at a fuller statement, but also attempts to make up for the lack of mutual presence. It has the listener and reader not only understand but also feel. Where the technical treatise aims at conforming to the laws of logic and the precepts of method, literary language tends to flow somewhere between logic and symbol. And that is the meaning of Giambattista Vico's contention on the priority of poetry. To state things with perfect literal accuracy is an ideal pursued by the linguistic analysts, and it is attained with the greatest difficulty as we can tell from their work. Ordinary communication flows in between the demands of the logical treatise and the communication on the symbolic or artistic level.

1.6 Incarnate Meaning

Finally, there is incarnate meaning. *Cor ad cor loquitur*. Incarnate meaning combines all, or at least many, of the other carriers of meaning. It can be at once intersubjective, artistic, symbolic, linguistic. It is the meaning of a person, of his way of life, of his words, of his deeds. It may be his meaning for just one other person, or for a small group, or for a whole national or social or cultural or religious tradition. Such meaning may attach to a group achievement: to a Thermopylae or a Marathon, to the Christian martyrs, to a glorious revolution. It may be transposed to a character or characters in a story or a play, to a Hamlet or Tartuffe or a Don Juan. It may emanate from a whole personality and the total performance of an orator or a demagogue. Finally, as meaning can be incarnate, so too can the meaningless, the vacant, the empty, the vapid, the insipid, the dull.