

The Dialectic of Meaning and Meaninglessness

Meaning is a voice without an echo.. and meaninglessness is an echo without a voice.

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[جدلية المعنى واللامعنى](#)

In a gaunt body, translucent-skinned and relaxed, he unveiled the veiled scars of opportunistic time. With the tranquility of the knowers, the ascetics of life, he sat on a straw mat woven from harvested gray reeds. He leaned against a support heaped from the pebbles and clay of the earth. He raised a hand adorned with prominent, twisting veins that embraced a structure he ceaselessly carved into the deafrock of days, bringing it to life and transforming it into glories. He plunged fingers into the depths of a white beard, stained with the sweat of the earth and the breath of its basil. He addressed a few youths gathered around him, silent and attentive. He is the Master, he is Meaning. And they are the rare elect, the seekers of meaning.

He began with them a discourse on the creation of the heavens and the earth. He told them how the heavens were raised, and how the earth was spread out. He led them into hidden worlds, concealed from the sight of creation. He took them inside a drop of water. He immersed them into the depths of the sea, where it slumbered. He raised them on the rays of the sun, when it climbed. And he seated them on the shoulder of the wind, when it rested. Then he cast them down onto an earth devoid of life, when its Creator permitted it and it obeyed. He told them of life's awakening thereafter. He told them of the seed splitting its shell, the earth cracking above it, and the plant bursting forth with its shoot.

He told them of their own creation. He began with them from when they were a thing not worth mentioning. Their origin kneads the mire of the depths and its clay. In darknesses, beneath darknesses, beneath yet more darknesses, was their provenance. In a magical composition, the catalysts of their emergence harmonized.

An arduous and grueling labor then brought forth their seed. Through many states their form changed, and after numerous guises, their image manifested.

And as they were immersed in wonder and awe, they heard a clamor; a din. Heralds calling out, and drums beating. The cacophony was still distant, and speech—as well as hearing it—was still possible. After a deep inhalation, Meaning continued his discourse.

"From a single origin was your father Adam and your mother Eve. From the Original, Primal Sin they were; Adam the first of men and Eve the foremost of women. And from a base deed they committed, which they then forcibly burdened all who came after them with, you were, and they were—you and your brothers, partners in humanity. As for the base deed, it became known and recognized. It persists to this very day, practiced in secret and in public. It casts its effects upon the surface of this expanse, making the place clamor and wearying time itself. "

"As for the Fundamental Sin, it remained the Mother of Secrets. Throughout the ages, it persisted as an enigma that occupies the mind and unsettles the wise. The keys to its revelation were never withheld from humankind. But the Creator willed them to be scattered here and there. He left it to the seeker to trace the path, follow the clues of insight, and gather them together to attain the most important revelation: the secret of human creation."

The crowds of noisy, cheering celebrants drew nearer and nearer. Their cries became meaningful. Without a doubt, they were glorifying some matter of importance to them. It now seemed to be among them, and they were dancing around it. Their numbers were undoubtedly vast, betrayed by the immense noise and the roar of the procession.

The Master, Meaning, grew restless. A hint of anger and a great deal of resolve showed on his face. Then he continued in a louder tone and with greater seriousness. His voice rose above the clamor of the approaching masses. It became possible to discern the meanings despite the cacophony of sounds and the thickening of the ether.

"The Fundamental Sin is the foundation of the Form; the form of humankind as male and female. Before it, humanity was not a reality of flesh and blood... it was still in the stage of creation. It existed in the will of the Creator as a name without a form,

or let us say, a form without a projection into the world of existence. For the Merciful willed its existence on this earth. He willed it to be male, and He willed it to be female. Thus, the divine will descended as a command necessitating action.

The Primary Substance received the divine command and set forth into the fields of action for its realization and execution. Plans of action were laid, and responsibilities were distributed to those concerned with the implementation. The tasks were weighty, and the Master of Work was stern. Perfection is His attribute, and the severity of punishment is among His specific means of control and command. Timetables were set for the imperative of execution. For the primal matter has its periods of inertia, and execution is an act that consumes time. It is inferior to the Creator in power, and this is a condition shared by all God's creatures.

The atmosphere grew tense... and the cries of the heralds and celebrants rose. The crowds of approaching reveliers came within striking distance of our gathering. Speech, like hearing, became difficult and arduous. The Master, Meaning, gathered his reserve of breath, and continued.

"The concerted efforts of the Primary Substance, tasked with realizing the act, commenced. After an arduous and grueling journey of creation and construction, it culminated in building the nucleus of humanity: the primal Mother Cell of humankind. This Mother Cell contained the fundamental components of humanity. And through its proliferation, it would grant its numerous daughter structures the potential to form this human being.

*But wait! The daughter cells are identical to the Mother Cell in every aspect. They are the product of asexual replication, making their uniformity an inescapable reality. Even if they succeeded in creating a human, this human would be uniform in color, scent, and flavor. At that point, the forms of humans would become identical. The form would lose its value, and its existence would equate to its absence. The shape would then lose its *raison d'être*...for form, as I have taught and as you have learned, serves a function—it is not the idle sport of players at leisure."*

The matter had reached its climax, or nearly so. The procession was now within sight. We could almost feel the heat of the crowd's breath on our necks amidst their tumult and chaos. Yet the Master, Meaning, refused anything but to finish what he had begun. The discourse itself had reached its peak of intrigue and excitement.

Beginnings must have their endings. The students had become perfectly poised to receive the great news. Meaning could not let such an opportunity pass, so he descended upon us with the monumental words that followed.

"Then came the greatest event in the process of human creation. Everyone stood perplexed at a crossroads. How could a single mother cell give rise to two distinct entities without a monumental event, without the event of the Sin?"

Here, the Primary Substance resorted to cunning and escape from the authority of the laws governing cell reproduction and division, even if just once. The divine command had been issued, and execution was imperative. Such are the laws, the statutes of God, the ordinances of the universe, demanding respect. It knew this. The choice was difficult, with terrors lying beyond it either way: either disobedience to the Creator or a breach of the laws. The Primary Substance did not hesitate long in its choice, for breaking the law carried lighter consequences than disobeying the Creator. And since the goal was to please God and fulfill His will, there was no harm in a means not devoid of cunning and stratagem. And the miraculous solution was a rib, extracted from the very core of a daughter cell and joined to the core of her sister. Then, let us see how matters would unfold thereafter.

And so it was. The two daughter cells now differed in their genetic makeup, necessitating a divergence in their destinies. One was endowed with more hereditary genetic material than her sister, her twin. This heavier cell, which had appropriated her sister's rib, emerged as the sweetest of all: the first female human. She is the first woman, the mother of all humankind—male and female; she is Eve. The daughter cell that lost its rib ultimately chose the path of masculinity. Thus, it became the first man, the origin of our existence: Adam.

Yes, the Primary Substance succeeded in passing the test of merit. It strived, and deemed its salvation to lie in fulfilling the divine will, even if through an error in the cellular division of the Mother Cell. The result was humanity—the Form made reality, of flesh and blood. A speaking form with functional purposes. It is the male and it is the female, and what more is needed after that for the place to teem with movement and clamor? Thus, the succession of humanity on this earth became a divine command that was executed.

The Primary Substance intended the error in cellular division as a solution to a creative dilemma. It intended it to be a unique, singular occurrence without repetition in time. It did not know then that by doing so, it was laying the groundwork for many such sinful events in the days to come. For if an error in cellular division occurs once, it is bound to be repeated in subsequent times. How many ailments and diseases today are the product of similar errors in cellular division! They are too numerous for time's counter to tally, without a doubt.

The matter was concluded. The vast crowds were now in the courtyard of our gathering. Our Master chose silence. I seized the moment to look at the celebrating multitude, seeking to understand the affair. Immediately, I found the mark. A man like a treasure; silk above him, a girdle of beryl, and his ornaments were of beryl. They carried him on a spread of ivory, placing him where the heart would be. And around him they frolicked... cheering. He seemed to be their Master; and they, the students, danced before him. I looked at Meaning, the Master, inquiringly. He appeared calm, as was his way with us, smiling. He watched the people passing on their way.

After a short while, the gloom lifted. After the crowd had departed far from us, the solemnity returned to the place. The ether expelled the fragments of its disturbance. The Master, Meaning, looked at us, intending to resume the interrupted discourse. Before he could begin, I preempted him with a question that erupted in my throat and overcame me.

- *Master! I see you recognized the one being celebrated, and the celebrants.*
- *He is Meaninglessness. And they are his supporters, his entourage and the army of his project.*
- *He passed by without noticing you, and you are Meaning, the Master!*
- *If Meaninglessness were attentive to Meaning, the very basis of its existence would be nullified. For Meaning recognizes Meaninglessness because it is aware of itself and cognizant of others. As for Meaninglessness, it is in truth of two kinds: there is the intentional and there is the compulsive. I believe this passerby is of the second sort. This type of Meaninglessness is utterly ignorant of Meaning. It lacks the intellectual and cognitive foundations to attain Meaning. More than that, it is convinced that it itself is Meaning, and that*

there is no other besides it. This type of Meaninglessness is the most dangerous. It will go to extremes, no matter how perilous the path or how dark those ends may be.

In contrast, intentional Meaninglessness wanted obscurity as a craft. It found in Meaninglessness its ultimate goal. For Meaninglessness is absolute obscurity; you find no obscurity greater than it. Behind this obscurity, motives hide and goals are concealed. It is aware of its own meaninglessness, and knows that Meaning is something entirely different. Yet, it claims Meaning, and offers some of what is precious and valuable as sacrifices to support its claim. But the moment the fire of the sacrifice reaches its treasures, it abandons them, gaining only itself and an escape.

- *Master! You told us about motives and goals hidden behind the obscurity of Meaninglessness. Do you mean the intentional kind, the compulsive kind, or both?*
- *Compulsive meaninglessness cannot be anything but itself; it is meaninglessness. It is inherently veiled from meaning by its very nature. More precisely, it is preoccupied with the products of its own mind and thought, disdaining the insights of others whom it sees as blaspheming against its own view. Its motive is nothing more than ignorance and stubbornness. As for its goals, they are reduced to a single one, even if the price is its own life or the lives of others—it makes no difference. Its primary objective is to flatten everyone under the umbrella of its own belief, eradicating every other creed and demolishing any intellectual structure that does not share its exact horizon. It is "the meaning" in its own claim, and all else is the babbling nonsensical.*

As for intentional Meaninglessness, it is one who purposefully seeks what it wants. Behind Meaninglessness hides a structural deficiency in the innate faculties required to attain Meaning. Behind intentional Meaninglessness rages a self yearning for glory, ambitious. It loves the night, envying the stars. A self capable of dreaming, but incapable of contemplating it. And it is aware of its incapacity, refusing its affliction. It is perpetually a step behind Meaning. It desires it but cannot grasp it. It has heard of its virtues but cannot

embody it. Meaning proved elusive to its seeker, so it settled for what is beneath it. It chose Meaninglessness with prior resolve and planning.

- *Master! Are they many?*
- *As numerous as pebbles and dust.*
- *Master! As you've explained, they are an insurmountable obstacle before Meaning. They are the antithesis of what holds good and righteousness for people. Why don't you, as the Master of Meaning, contemplate dealing with them?*
- *This is precisely what Meaninglessness desires, down to the last letter. It thrives on Meaning's war against it. Meaning is fire, and Meaninglessness is like water. Meaning and Meaninglessness only meet in a struggle for survival. The moment Meaning assails Meaninglessness, the latter turns to vapor, slipping from the fire's grasp. The vapor rises, carried far by the winds of evasion and ignorance. Then it condenses back into water anew, dumping its burdens in another landfill of the earth. Meaninglessness is never truly defeated in a life whose description is the basest. It is everywhere, gnawing at public squares and fields. It cannot overcome Meaning, but in escaping and slipping away, it is like water.*
- *Master! So it is water, and Meaning is fire? And water, as we know, brings the ecstasy of the thirsty, while fire we have long feared to approach and unite with.*
- *Meaning is fire, and light is fire. Fire melts matter, refining it of impurities. Those drawn near to it can never break free; they unite with it in an inseparable bond. Those distant from it still receive its light and warmth. It never leaves the seeker unchanged; it transforms them from one state to another. As for water, it is a find for the thirsty, offering relief to the parched. It is a timed action, lasting but a moment. Afterward, the thirst returns to the thirsty, and the confusion to the perplexed. It leaves the seeker in the state of the previous moment, even if their feeling during the present moment changed. For the essence remains the same, before and after.*

- *Master! But how can he possess such a multitude of followers and supporters, being Meaninglessness? And we, your students, are so few in number, and you are Meaning?*
- *Meaning is a voice without an echo. Unless you sharpen your mind for it and open your heart to it, it will pass through you without finding a resting place. It is subtle; none can truly contemplate it except the pure. It is a profound, resonant truth, inaccessible except to the seeker of authenticity. It is deep, hidden except from the hunter of essence. It exists in itself; it either is or is not. Combine these qualities, and what perplexes you about the small number of your group, the students of Meaning, becomes clear.*

As for Meaninglessness, it is an echo without a voice. It reverberates through corners and alleys. Tongues toss it about without shame. Everyone dares to approach it, for it is compliant and holds no sanctity. Its melodies vary and its doctrines shift color with the changing throats and hues of its adherents. It is cunning, never devoid of the action of delusion upon souls. And delusion possesses its own magic and allure for adolescent minds. When you present Meaninglessness, you offer those minds a mental puzzle for self-testing. The intellect then embarks on a journey to find meaning for this Meaninglessness. For the mind is prey to its own deficiencies; it does not easily accept the absence of Meaning. In its lexicon, the absence of Meaning has only one equivalent: a deficiency of the self. This the mind cannot accept, given its innate tendency towards extremism and pride. And since Meaninglessness is empty of any true meaning, all meanings can become valid for it. Thus, the self-seeking mind engineers its own private meaning for it. So, the meanings for this Meaninglessness multiply, and their number swells to match the number of these nascent or rebellious minds—and how numerous they are!

More than that, Meaninglessness gives itself to its followers, and they become possessed by it. In truth, every follower feels that Meaninglessness is an intimate part of their very self. How could it not be! They are the ones who gave it all its meanings. It exists through them, in foundation and essence, and they are joyous in it, as a garment and a Master. They are the echo, and it is the voiceless one. Thus, an organic relationship forms between the guest, Meaninglessness, and the host, the follower. This leads the latter to become a

fierce defender of his guest every time it faces imminent danger. And Meaninglessness is delighted by this; it invests the zeal and enthusiasm of its followers against anyone whose soul tempts them to wage war or dispute. They are the valiant guardians of the temple—and the temple is empty of all content. But they are deluded and do not know.

- *Master! If you could illustrate this for us, it might save us from this state of confusion and perplexity. Does Meaning equal Meaninglessness in number?*
- *1+1=2. The number 2 is Meaning. 3, 4, 5, etc., are Meaninglessness. So Meaning is singular, as you see, and Meaninglessness extends as far as God wills. The word and the letter are units of Meaning. To say 'the dove of peace is white' is Meaning, by signification. Whereas to say 'the raven of parting is white' is blatant Meaninglessness. For you cannot shake a word to make it vomit what is not in its belly, so that the word falls martyr as prey to a wayward imagination. Then the temple guardians arise, glorifying this moment of rupture as if it were the martyrdom of Meaning.*

So it is with line and color: they are generous mediums for manifesting Meaning. The harmonious interplay of color and line, when thoughtfully composed, gives us a Meaning of unparalleled brilliance. But to splatter color haphazardly and assemble incompatible forms is to undoubtedly harvest Meaninglessness. You must not burden line and color until the former commits suicide and the latter abandons its spectrum. Then, after this, to claim immortality and glory based on a chaos of senses and a cacophony of colors is unconscionable.

And as the Master, Meaning, was concluding his discourse, the clamor of another approaching celebration appeared on the horizon. The sounds of pipes and drums invaded the tranquility of the place. The Master smiled, looked at us calmly, and said: "Go forth on your path in peace. Your time here has ended, and you have become free to choose your own direction..."

I walked away slowly, carrying the solemn face of our Master in my mind, pondering all that had transpired in our discourse. I could not sleep that night until dawn's approach. I spent my night stretched on the ground, gazing at the sky, contemplating the beautiful meanings shimmering in the firmament. I wondered: How can a grim face overcome such radiance?! How can darkness conquer a shining sun?! How can

Meaning fail to crush Meaninglessness in foolish minds?! How can Meaning recede, while Meaninglessness roams freely everywhere?! Is this a trial, so that only the sincere are saved? Or is it an affliction? Then woe unto it, for what a great affliction it is

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***An Important Note:** I have explained in detail the Fundamental Original Sin in the creation of humankind in the form we know—male and female. I have encompassed all of this in a comprehensive article and a dynamic presentation. The article is titled:*

["The Creation of Eve from Adam's Rib: A Marvel of Philosophical Allusion and Scientific Metaphor" DOI](#)

You can also watch the accompanying video at the following link:



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In other contexts, you can also read the following articles:



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