

**Gurdjieff Oskiano**

**August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**The Symbols: Meaning and Genesis  
by Michelle Fink**

Attendees: Robin, Paula, Sandy, Marni H, Ekant B, Bobbie P, Kelly C, Michelle F, Stephen A, Robert, Charles A, Stephen F, James O'D, Stewart J

Sandy: Connection of symbols to vision, particularly for blind people. Whether animals have any instinct for symbols – do they use them, like hand signs? Are all symbols visual.

MF: As far as I know symbols are mostly visual. Notes of music are visual. I think G's music can have symbolic value. Same affect as visual symbols have. I went through piles of books and feel I didn't touch everything. Didn't go into 78 cards of Tarot that each have at least 3 meanings.

Braille symbols have a meaning that they can feel with their fingers and guess they are able to recognise symbols when they can touch it and when someone can explain it. I don't know anybody who is born blind.

MF: Visions can be inside – such as in a dream. I saw a vision of a male lion and a little bird and the lion caught the bird and ate it. The Lion is a symbol of my husband's name and Fink is a finch. Can have dreams with symbolic meaning.

Gwynne: Hi Michelle...excellent talk. I have to leave, but I have a question about plants forming symbolic meaning, i.e. Lotus, Bonsai, tree formations from root, etc...???. Hopefully I can hear the recording later...

MF: Of course plants can have symbolic meanings. For instance 7 star flower. Myrtle often used in weddings. Oak trees symbolic.

RB: Poppy has become a symbol because of WW1 and happened because after all the shelling of the ground poppies were everywhere, so all battlefields were carpeted with red poppies.

G quoted Persian saying: Roses are the only flowers worth growing.

Ekant: Misuse of symbols. Use of enneagram for personality stuff?

MF: In my opinion it is a kind of misuse. I have experienced people very fixed on it. Can give an idea of a person's attitude – it is dynamic. Misuse to say "I am a number 8".

Pentagram used in occult turned upside down. Star of David used by Nazis to stigmatise Jews – misuse of holy symbol.

RB: Enneagram is an interesting study. Talking to Stephen Aronson and he said that the Enneagram system of personality is the best that exists. You have 9 points that have different characteristics because of their position in the development of the octave. Read a book on personality types and was completely unclear to me how they arrived at. Grouped the centres ... didn't explain the inner circulation. I think it is an abuse of the symbol. Not representing a cosmos. May be not a bad map. What would you do with the personality map – if you are a four – what do I do with that?

MF: Company where my daughter is working had a workshop for team building and used the enneagram and the team was very unhappy with the classifications.

RB: Can't understand other than as something in motion. So not really valid.

Sandy: Emojis – become popular very fast.

Can very easily be misunderstood.

BP: Started with simple smiley face and now is a whole language.

RB: The number of emojis is about equal to the number of common Chinese characters

RD: Star of David symbol used in Hinduism.

MF: Chakra. Male and Female – down pointing triangle is male and female is pointing up. To do with pitch of voice?

RB: Represents the heart centre on the chakras.

Even in same language – misunderstandings.

MF: Swiss German and Germans.

Robert: Corporate symbols ...

MF: Can change really fast and don't realise it has changed.

Robert: Arabic flag – crescent with star? Constantinople.

MF: Symbol of heaven

RB: Line of prophet comes from Adam and agrees with Jewish line until Christ and Islam adds Mohammed.

Modern hatred between Arab world and Jews and didn't used to exist. Arabic is believed to be a sacred script. No doubt that the Hebrew of the Torah is sacred.

RD: Swastika was used quite widely in Europe before ...

RB: Arabic language is regarded as sacred because the Angels or Allah revealed the text of the Koran to Mohammed they spoke in Arabic.

RD: Gabriel.

RB: In Islamic theology, there is no direct symbolization of the devil as an entity or a being. Instead, Islam teaches that the devil, also known as **Iblis** or **Shaytan**, is a created being who rebelled against God's command and was cast out of heaven.

### **Iblis in Islamic theology:**

In Islamic tradition, Iblis is seen as a fallen angel who refused to bow down to Adam, the first human, when God commanded him to do so. This act of disobedience led to Iblis's expulsion from heaven, and he vowed to mislead humanity and lead them astray.

While there is no direct symbolization of the devil in Islam, some symbols and concepts are associated with evil or the influence of Iblis:

- **The snake:** In some Islamic traditions, the snake is seen as a symbol of Iblis or evil, as it is said to have tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- **The whisperer:** Iblis is often referred to as the "whisperer" (waswas) in Islamic texts, symbolizing his role in whispering evil thoughts and doubts into the hearts of humans.

**The deceiver:** Iblis is also known as the "deceiver" (khadhal) in Islamic tradition, highlighting

his role in misleading humans and leading them astray.

In Islamic art and iconography, there is no visual representation of the devil or Iblis. This is because Islam prohibits the depiction of living beings, including humans and animals, to avoid idolatry and the worship of created beings.

Marnie: We are creatures obsessed with finding and creating meaning. Eager to share the sense of meaning with others and create languages and symbols and tragedy of fragility and how easy to misinterpret symbols. Impossible to communicate what is deep within us.

RB: Question about meaning. Idea that all the letters in Hebrew alphabet are consonants and the vowels are not given and are transmitted verbally. There are some sounds that shouldn't be verbalised.

MF: Like alchemy. Have to be taught by a Rabbi ... have to have somebody to teach you or you won't understand what you are doing and won't get the philosopher's stone. Bible is full of allegory and can't understand from first reading. Sometimes eager to find meaning and there is no meaning. Nothing has a meaning except the meaning you give to it – Anthony Robinson. Holy signs have so many levels of meaning. Difficult to grasp and difficult to communicate. Many symbols are also numbers. Have to find meaning for yourself.

RB: Whether these things can be objective if presented in the right way. Priests that were supposed to carry the Ark of the Covenant – supposed to be initiated or it would kill them. Supposed to be in Ethiopia and the priests there all die young and never leave the place.

RD: And they go blind.

RB: Don't know exactly what the Covenant was.

MF: Vessel and something inside. Very powerful and dangerous.

RB: Is there a basic alphabet of meaning that could be enshrined?

MF: I think it is difficult. You have to study all of them and look deeper in them to understand what is behind this writing and symbols. The symbols are just an expression of something behind it. That is what we forget. It is just an attempt to understand something beyond words and sometimes our understanding.

Robert: Voyager spacecraft – put symbols on to communicate with aliens. Mathematicians at MIT couldn't decipher it 50 years later.

BP: Symbols are everywhere and we don't see them.

RD: Masonic stuff ... seems nefarious.

MF: I realised that there were many symbols I didn't speak about.