

Symbolism and the path

“A Subjective Worker”

Abstract

A symbol is a visual or textual expression of an idea or thought, a bridge between the world of concrete form and the abstract plane or the direct experience of the Mind of God. In working with symbols or by visualizing a specific image, a resonance can be established between the image and the reality for which it stands. This article seeks to show how symbols are evolving in relationship to seekers' level of consciousness.

Visualization and Symbolism

One awakened dream for receiving inspiration is to visualize oneself in a meadow near a stream. We walk uphill following a narrow path beside the stream. Soon we find ourselves in a thick, dimly lit forest. The forest gives way to a barren highland, then to a rocky, snow-covered summit. On the top of the mountain, a hermit is waiting. We ask him or her a single question. The hermit answers and offers us a single gift. After bowing and giving thanks, we slowly descend, down to the highland, into the meadow and then into our own home. The symbolism here is clear; the stream signifies the thin thread of consciousness, the forest an area of illusions, and the hermit our higher Self or spiritual awareness.

Martin Muller takes this exercise further in his book *Prelude to the New Man*.¹ After reaching the summit of the mountain we ascend higher on a beam of light. As we move forward, our body becomes lighter and lighter. Weightless now, we move closer toward the sun, and then turning around—this is a definite step—we become the sun. The step of progressing “toward the sun” to “become the sun” is decisive.

We move from a condition of duality to one of identification, to recognition of the presence and radiation of our pure source within.

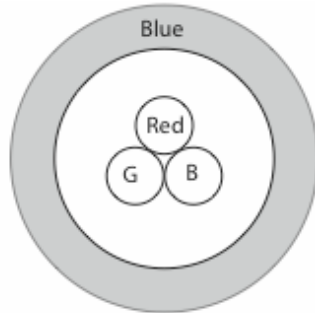
Symbols depict a correspondence between planes of substance and allow for a transfer of perception from one level to another one. Thus the ink on this page—or the pixel on the screen—evokes a meaning in the concrete mind. Most words and icons evoke an impression in the mind, yet some stimulate an echo in higher levels, such as Life, if the individual has already registered a movement in perception corresponding to Life. More generally the usefulness of a teaching or a symbol is to re-awaken or to remind us of past experiences and awareness. Thus the symbol or teaching expands and strengthens the dim insights of the student.

An example of the transfer of perception from one level to another can be seen in the branch of theoretical physics called String Theory. This theory postulates that things or particles are not points but vibrating relations such as tiny threads or strings. Such symbolism helps us to understand that forms are linked to the inner core or subjective life through a sensitive interaction or vibration into logical pattern. This subjective life is pulsating from the inner core of identity into outer expression and back again to its source or inner core. The human being develops or proceeds in much the same way. Humans begin as a pure divine spark that projects itself into the lower planes, where it appropriates sheaths of denser and denser matter in order to do objective work. Eventually the spark begins to shed these sheath or skins in order to return again to inner levels and its pure source.

One of these inner levels is pure consciousness which various mystics, traditions and esoteric philosophies call the Soul. The Soul or pure

consciousness is symbolized by light. Both light and consciousness are in continual movement, and both are emanating and receptive. This allows for a fusion of the object and the subject during the contemplation stage of meditation.

The Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul depicts consciousness as a luminous blue circle containing three dots:²



The white inner circle can be seen as symbolizing the illumined field of consciousness. The outer blue circle depicts the Self and is associated with the second ray of Love-Wisdom and the second aspect of the human being. The three dots within represent the three divine aspects and are linked with the first three rays.³ They are coloured red, luminous blue and green respectively.

The third aspect or green dot represents outward movement, acknowledgement of contact and creative expression. The phrase, “From the center, I, the Soul, outward move” alludes to this third facet of consciousness. The blue dot represents the second aspect of consciousness. It symbolizes, opening, expansion, receptivity, and the quality of love expressing as consciousness. The red dot depicts the first aspect of pure consciousness. The destructive aspect, unceasing renewal and the purifying flame of the conscious Self which is born again from the ashes like a phoenix.

The symbolic facets of this image and the inward assimilation of soul energy are explored in depth in *Prelude to a Modern Man*.⁴

Visualization Exercises

Exercises at the Soul Level

Another technique for visualizing consciousness is to see consciousness as a sphere of transparent light that can be felt and embodied within. Abiding within the center of this sphere, we connect with an outwardly directed current of light or consciousness. Next we seize or try to grasp the receptive current; the pole of acceptance or opening. Then we connect or attune to the renewing pole. This pole is experienced as the will or flame aspect. Finally we fuse the three poles into one: we experience the three facets of consciousness – outward emission, inner opening and renewal becoming a single, unified whole. Then we Sound the OM and feel it sustaining this fresh radiation.

This exercise assumes one is in the light and one is observing what is happening within, in other words one is moving in the light and receptive to its movement. The method is very close to the “Technique of Fusion on The Presented Attributes” described in *Esoteric Psychology*, II,⁵ which depicts a third-ray technique for discerning the principles or natures operating within consciousness.

The luminous blue circle depicts the level where one is identified as the soul on its own plane or within the causal body. The soul is the centre of radiant subjective identity. From this point the conviction to realize the Self can be extended beyond the causal plane to the monadic level.

Once we become the Self or “sun”, we can expand our awareness further still and enter into the vast magnetic group consciousness embodied in the constellations and stars. But in order to go further than the sun, we have to recognize Space, “the field wherein states of being are brought to the stage of recognition.” We might see Space as the Entity or Presence which is sustaining the radiation.

In *Prelude to the New Man*, Martin Muller suggests that we feel ourselves as a pure space, immaterial, completely free of objectified existence. Indeed one may expand into Space as Helena Roerich emphasized and Bruce Lyon invites us to do so when we cross the event horizon into the black hole.⁶ In this way we tune into the energy of the void, as the physicist's term it, or into vacuity or *sunyata*, as the Buddhists call it. The correspondence between the material energy of physics and the Buddhist tradition regarding consciousness is very close. Beyond the light is space, and beyond Angel is Presence. Beyond the light is space, and beyond space is the Angel or Presence and in that space are the thought currents of the abstract or spatial mind.

Currents of the Abstract Mind

1. Imagine space filled with thought currents. Seek to perceive the fundamental currents of thought that are responsible for effecting great changes in civilizations.
2. Tune into Spirit, to true Reality and know that Deity is conceiving and expressing through thought.
3. Imagine that this divine thought current is running through your subjective space. This will evoke the impression that the skull or cranium is crossed by a current. Focus yourself at the source, i.e. at the back of the head. Perceive the world from the back of the head allowing that perception to pass through the intra-skull space and through to the eyes.

One easy way to approach abstract thought currents is to turn one's attention to a third-ray field such as architecture or to history. The twentieth century was marked by an inflow of the fifth ray which brought in an abstraction in mathematics and physics and a new kind of arts and architecture.

The second way to touch abstract mind is to start, not from the tangible concrete world, but from the abstract, from the Source of All. Reflecting on the diagrams on page 99 of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and other highly conceptual images or symbols can give us some hints as to the creative faculty of the Logos. This

creative faculty is expressed though the abstract mind.

The third way consists in using a reflex effect. Martin Muller described it as the psychological impression of being located behind the head and of looking or directing the entire person through the "chamber" of the head and out of the "window of the eyes." This results in a sensation-feeling that allows the student to develop greater detachment and objectivity; in other words, to function at the level of Being.

The abstraction movement which began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century has led us to view space as a set of possibilities – even the position of inter space bodies were viewed as a set of possibilities. This has now become the usual way to describe space. Each time we are classifying things, we are creating an abstract space.⁷

Space is the garment of deity, but only its garment. One may go further than this garment to the field of pure reason. This is the field of direct perception, which needs no interpretation, representation, distance or correspondence, for it is ubiquitous or ever present. It has only—but this "only" requires much training—to be registered. There is no position to be described and thus reality cannot be included in a space. The idea or symbol of space has been transcended. Any awareness or impression we might have of this exalted state tends to quickly vanish or evaporate due to the mental agitation and/or the production of thought.

Tuning into the Buddhist Level

First you must align yourself with the true Self or pure being. Be true to yourself. Practice truth. Truth is naked, without any material content, but present. Realize that the very word *Truth*, evokes a conception of the truth in the mind and at the same time something greater, denuded, subtle which is beyond any concept. For the reality of Truth, like all symbols, tends to transcend consciousness. (In *The Rays and the Initiations* the Tibetan goes so far as to suggest that Truth is a great Life.⁸)

Now turn your attention to an impersonal situation. You might reflect upon the goal of the subjective group or inquire about the nature

of radiance or the radiation of the heart center. Realize that you know, without thinking, without articulating a series of knowledge-based thoughts.

Another variation of this technique which can easily be made a part of one's daily training is to place a particular topic on the breast as if it were being placed on a scale. The Agni Yoga method advises that we use this technique before we go to sleep whenever we are facing a difficult or important choice. Alternatively, we can visualize a laser beam emitting light from the front of your chest: the laser beam is illustrating direct knowledge and the cool intense coherency of the light.

The *Kena Upanishad* is also useful in this regard as it may help us lead the mind from the gross to the subtle, from effect to cause, or to Truth or Reality. *Kena* means "by what." It advises us to move beyond the physical senses by employing a series of questions and answers that helps us to discover the true source of our being. It asks us to reflect upon "whom" or "by what power" we think, see, move, speak and hear. In other words, to deeply question who actuates the activities of the physical woman and man. This approach takes us beyond the personality and the mind into the realm of pure reason or Truth and allows us to understand that; Truth emerges naked from the well, for it has no veil or garment. It supports no representation, no words, no radiation—as radiation is a progressive spreading in space. And truth exists throughout space and needs no form or thought to act as a mediator.

Cohesion of Triadic levels

Contact with the Spiritual Triad provokes the sensation of a powerful current in consciousness. This current momentarily interrupts the vacuity of space, and yet paradoxically it stimulates and sustains the radiation and point of tension. As alignment with the Triad proceeds one is given access to a vast field of intensity. In that intense stimulating vivid presence, thought currents and direct perception intermingle.

One method for approaching the threefold expression of the One is to envision three cur-

rents or ways of contact with the Triad at the same time. To that end, the circle with three dots in a luminous blue circle is once again useful in serving as a starting point to symbolize soul consciousness. To symbolize the "whole" with its three divine aspects one can visualize three dots inside an indigo circle (one green dot, one ultramarine dot and one red dot). Focusing on this symbol may allow us gain a sense of the energy that runs through the spiritual Triad and give us a sense of the intensity of the whole.

Each of these three dots evokes one of the three principles or aspects of divinity. For example, the green dot contained within the indigo circle depicts the Principle of Knowledge or that which gives cognitive ability. The ultramarine dot depicts the Principle of Unity or the cohesive, organizing and inclusive principle. The red dot might be seen as symbolizing the Principle of Direction or that which renews and is moving upon itself.

The term "direction" is not used here to describe a movement in space; rather it implies stimulation, a specific polarization and a means of envisioning the Whole. Direction is the One "moving," first in itself at the atmic level, then inside on the buddhic level, then going outward as spatial thought at the manasic level. Thus the three levels of the Triad are expressing the One.

Tuning into Atmic Levels

In *Esoteric Astrology* we are advised to try to listen to the tremendous sound behind the sweet note of our soul; "the sound which geometrically forces itself into the vision of the beholder."⁹ In other words we attempt to feel the great forward movement which is carrying us along in the dedication of Monadic purpose. We feel the energetic stimulation of existence or Life. If you feel a strong inclination to matter—like the experience of "a strong wind that pins a man against the wall"¹⁰—you must take care not to emphasize it, for it is the "sound of enchantment" that binds spirit to matter.

To attune to the atmic current, stay in renewing balance and increase your receptivity to the inner world of truth and beauty. Diagrams of the human constitution place atma in the cen-

ter, manas on the left, and buddhi on the right.¹¹ The manasic current guiding creation is located at the left side and it is felt as strongly positive, while connection to one's group and the ashrams appears to the right side. The search for atma needs to be balanced between these two polarities.

The atmic plane is linked with the sound, for it is the plane of the electric sound¹² and the worker knows "in terms of colour when dealing with form; in terms of sound when dealing with the life side, and in terms of vitality when dealing with intelligence."¹³ The grounding point in the body for the manasic current is the back of the head. For buddhi it is the heart and for the atmic current it is the top of the head, which is where purpose is anchored.

Approach to Unity

The expression, "the Monad is the One" produces a response in the brain. On some level it is already understood. What remains is for us to fully acknowledge this fact, to integrate it to our sense of Identity, to our intimate "I" and to recognize the One in ourselves and in humanity as a whole, in nature and in all life. The realization of Oneness goes far beyond an intellectual grasp of interconnectedness or the boundless unity of consciousness. It is an experience that pulsates with the fundamental stimulus of Life.

The One or the Monad expresses itself in three ways: in its third aspect, the One expresses as the exteriorizing current, as thought and the concretion of forms. In its second aspect, It supports relationships and promotes sensitivity. About the first aspect, one can merely speculate. The One is FOR itself, it is the apotheosis of the Subject: It knows Itself not as an object but as the origin of attention or the source of the tension to be." So Spirit is laying peacefully IN itself as truth, yet it is willing FOR itself and thus knowing Itself. The fountain of Existence is flowing.

The path is symbolic, a way to ascend and attune to a deeper reality or a greater truth. It can be understood as increased growth or expanded perception, as energy currents directed within the etheric field. In *Leaves of Morya's*

Garden, one finds the following passage on the Path. Under the full moon, Rossul M. and Christ were talking together: I said to Him, "We have lost the way. We must await the indication of the stars." "Rossul M., what is a way to Us, when the whole world is awaiting Us?"¹⁴

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- ¹ Martin Muller. *Prelude to the New Man*. Santa Fe Associates, 1978.
 - ² Alice A. Bailey. *The Rays and the Initiations*. Lucis, 1960, p. 456.
 - ³ Alice A. Bailey. *Esoteric Psychology*, I. Lucis, 1936, p. 418.
 - ⁴ Muller. *Prelude to the New Man*, vol. II, "Sources of Consciousness."
 - ⁵ Alice A. Bailey. *Esoteric Psychology*, II. Lucis, 1942, pp. 391, 296.
 - ⁶ Bruce Lyon. "The Black Hole God." *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Fall 2004, pp. 27-33.
 - ⁷ For an example, the serious student might refer to: Bailey. *Esoteric Psychology*, II, p. 102.
 - ⁸ Bailey. *The Rays and the Initiations*, p. 139.
 - ⁹ Alice A. Bailey. *Esoteric Astrology*. Lucis, 1951, p. 414.
 - ¹⁰ Bailey. *The Rays and the Initiations*, p. 52.
 - ¹¹ Alice A. Bailey. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. Lucis, 1925, p. 99..
 - ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 319.
 - ¹³ Alice A. Bailey. *Letters on Occult Meditation*. Lucis, 1950, p. 229.
 - ¹⁴ Helena Roerich. *Leaves Of Morya's Garden*, II. Agni Yoga Society, 1925, 2 §153. This book is available online at: www.agniyoga.org; however the paragraphs have been renumbered. The referenced passage appears in Part II, V §5.

