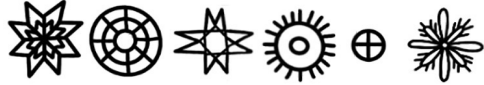


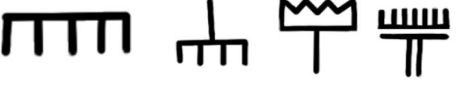


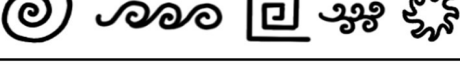



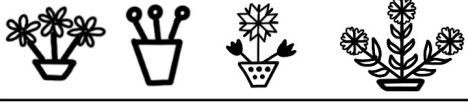









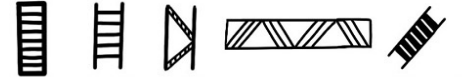

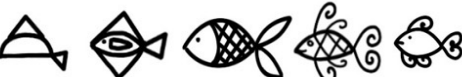


Disclaimer on symbols and their uses: We will never know exactly what these symbols mean, similarly to how we could never know what the symbols mean in prehistoric caves. Many of these symbols are 3000 years older than biblical Abraham. The symbols on pysanky have been handed down from generation to generation, while some symbols were lost, and most were appropriated. Some symbols, like the star, were created back in early Ukrainian prehistory. The indigenous peoples of the region that is now Ukraine clung to their beliefs and practices, so eventually an accommodation was made through a process of *religious syncretism* (blending of traditions into a new belief). The pysanka was then adapted as a Christian talisman with Christian symbols after it was made the official religion of the region in 988 AD. Many books and websites will offer lists of symbols and their meanings, but much of what they state is conjecture and invention. There is little in the early pysanka literature to support many of the meanings now assigned to the various motifs. Similar motifs can have totally different interpretations in different places, and can even be called by very different names. This is a comprehensive list compiled from multiple sources. To write a prayer onto your egg, it is best to consider what the symbols mean to you.

Symbol	Possible Meaning	Examples
The Star	An 8-pointed star is the most common motif on pysanky. Represents the sun= the giver of life. White stars radiate peace and hope. Eternal life and good fortune. Love of God	
Basket/Fishnet	Pre-Christian- Motherhood, giver of life and gifts, knowledge Christian- Fisher of men	
Bird Motif	Harbingers of spring, fertility, fulfillment of wishes, driving out evil. Reference to the afterlife (Roosters specifically have been used for eggs intended to be buried with a loved one, to awaken the soul in the other world). Messengers of Christ	
Combs/ Rakes	Ancient agricultural symbol for rain and water	
Church	Christ, ability to separate good from evil	
Cross	Pre-Christian- symbol of life Christian- symbol of Christ, 4 corners of the world	
Curls/ Spirals	Safety, protection, defense, mystery of life and death, divinity, immortality	
Dots	Pre-Christian- stars Christian- Mary's tears	
Endless Lines	Immortality, harmony	
Flowers	Femininity, wisdom, elegance, beauty, caring, friendship, childhood, miracle of spring	
Flower Pot	Pre-Christian- reference to Berehynia when leaves are upward like arms Christian- charity, goodwill	
Grapes	Pre-Christian- continuity, good harvest Christian- Holy Communion	

Symbol	Possible Meaning	Examples
Deer/Stag	Wealth, prosperity, leadership, good health	
Triangles	Pre-Christian- air, fire, water Christian- Holy Trinity	
Mother/ Goddess/ Berehynia	Birth, wisdom, renewal, motherhood, womanhood, warmth, goodness	
Wheat	Associated with Berehynia (Goddess), good health, wishes for bountiful harvest (Considered a more modern symbol)	
Ram	Masculinity, many children, nobility, triumph	
Spider	Patience, skill, good luck, miracles	
Waves/ Water	Wealth, good fortune, life force, productivity	
Windmill	Happiness, ancient solar symbol	
Ladder	Symbolic of searching, rising about problems, good husbandry, ascension to heaven, prosperity, prayer	
Tree Motif	Strength, growth, renewal, creation, tree of life, stamina, a long life. Oak leaves, pine needles, and branches are also common	
Fish	Christ, faith, abundance	

Color symbolism:

WHITE- purity, innocence, birth

PINK- fertility, elegance, calm

BLUE- good health, trust, truth, fidelity

BROWN- mother earth, bounty, generosity

ORANGE- endurance, strength, ambition

RED- passion, love, fire, action, hope, spiritual awakening, joy of life

YELLOW- light, purity, youth, happiness, warmth, harvest

VIOLET- faith, nobility, patience, wisdom, trust in God

GREEN- spring, renewal, freedom, fertility, hopefulness

BLACK- absoluteness, eternity, respect of spirits