

Symbolism of COLOR

It is not only ornaments on Easter eggs which carry symbolic weight; colors also make a difference. Every area of Ukraine had its specific color combination; although the oldest Easter eggs were simply two-toned, our pagan ancestors believed that the more colors on a decorated egg the more magical powers it held and could thus bring the owner a better fate.

The colors used in pysanka are rich in symbolism. Although each region of Ukraine used its own combination of patterns, designs, and colors certain meanings were associated with the following colors:

WHITE Signified purity, birth, light, rejoicing, virginity.

YELLOW The symbol of light and purity. It signified, youth, love, the harvest and perpetuation of the family. It is the color consecrated to the light deities, and the sun, stars, and moon. It the Christian symbol of reward and recognition.

GOLD Spirituality, wisdom

ORANGE The symbol of endurance, strength, and ambition. The color of a flame represented passion tempered by the yellow of wisdom. It is also the symbol of the everlasting sun.

PINK Success, contentment

GREEN The color of fertility, health, and hopefulness; of spring, breaking bondage, freshness, and wealth. In the Christian era it represents bountifulness, hope, and the victory of life over death. Green is the color of Christmas, Easter, and the Epiphany.

RED The magical color of folklore signifying action, charity, and spiritual awakening. It also represented the sun and the joy of life and love. Pysanky with red fields or motifs are often given to children. In the Christian era it represents the divine love and passion of Christ, hope, passion, blood, fire, and the ministry of the church.

BLUE Represented blue skies or the air, and good health, truth, and fidelity.

PURPLE Represented fasting, faith, trust, and patience.

BROWN Represented Mother Earth and her bountiful gifts; earth, harvest, generosity.

BLACK Represented constancy or eternity, the center of the Earth, the darkest time before dawn. Black also signified death, fear, and ignorance.

COMBINATIONS of COLORS

Black and white: mourning, respect for the souls of the dead.

Black and red: ignorance arising from passions.

Red and White: respect, protection from evil powers.

Four or more color: family happiness, peace and love