

E003 - Symbols, Enigmas, Curiosity

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SPEAKERS

Steven T. Newcomb, Peter d'Errico

Peter d'Errico 00:02

Good morning. Steve, good morning. Peter, how are you good so we're going to talk about symbols today, at least for starters, right? Yeah. Why don't you jump in? You have any something to jump in with?

Steven T. Newcomb 00:18

Well, I think that when we talk about the way in which the dominating society sustains and creates the reality that it has put together over such a long period of time, it's pretty important to look at the way in which symbols play a role in that reality creation process and so an example would be the statue outside the US Supreme Court the majesty of law. I believe the title is, and it's a Roman looking figure with the sword and and that's one example. You also have the symbol of justice, what the balance is the scale and in one hand and the sword and the other hand. And what do these symbols mean? Why are they important? Why are they even there? Another example, as you and I have spoken about before, is the seal of Massachusetts and the depiction of native people in there and the pilgrims in there, or pilgrim figure and native figure and and all of the elements that go into that. So I think it was a good topic for us to focus in on, because a lot of times, when you look at those types of symbol, symbols and so forth, you may see some sense or hint of the theme of domination that we've been focusing on, but perhaps not And who's interpreting those those symbols. So once again, starting with that initial context, the setting of the context, which is the original, free and independent existence of our native nations and peoples, extending back to the beginning of time, contrasted with the system that was brought by ship across the ocean and imposed on everyone and everything. And then that viewpoint of our ancestors from the shore, looking at those ships coming toward them, and the view from the deck of the ship, looking toward our ancestors with the intention, as we know from examining many documents, historical documents, with the intention of establishing domination where it did not yet exist, and once we have that context, within that context, we can begin to discuss the issue of Symbols and Symbolism and the role that that plays in the construction of reality for everyone.

Peter d'Errico 02:55

What do you think about the effort on some people's parts, to destroy symbols, or to erase symbols, or to topple symbols, in this case of statues. Well,

Steven T. Newcomb 03:10

I think that, I think that in in some sense, it's removing evidence of the crime or or of the prior mentality, because that symbolism is a creation of a mental world. It's it emerged from an A mental world and a behavioral world that the people were living and exhibiting, and then they created. They used that mental world to create the the symbolism that we're talking about. So if you just wipe that out, what do

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you point to? What do you use as a frame of reference, or point of reference, a physical, tangible way of looking at these issues that we're even talking about? And so, for example, there's a early day statue that was in the United Nations Plaza or mall area in San Francisco, and I became very fascinated with that symbolic depiction of the past. And a lot of people say, Oh, that's racist. It has to be removed. It has to be taken down. So they, they took it out and put it in a warehouse somewhere, massive statue. And that was that. So now you go to that Plaza, where do you see any frame of reference? It's just now you got the United Nations there. But Okay, so one, one of the depictions in that statue is a priest standing over a native person who seems like they're trying to a man who's laying almost totally down, but he looks like he's trying to get up, and this hand of the priest above him, towering above. Him is aimed at the Indian. When I saw that, my interpretation was, stay down. It was an effort to keep the Indian down and but actually, if you see the finger of the priest, it's pointing heavenward. So the idea is that that this priest is connected. This is the viewpoint review from the ship or perspective, right? It's pointing toward heaven and transmitting some kind of energy to this beneficial, positive energy, this poor Indian who's ill, perhaps, or what have you. So these are the different kinds of things that can be discussed. And how do we arrive? Is there one true interpretation? I don't think there is, and that's where the whole matter of public discourse and exchange of ideas and attempting to illuminate a lot of these issues comes into play.

Peter d'Errico 05:57

And so following that, it seems like if what we're after is understanding the past, the past of the present, the present, that we need as much information as we can to begin to delve into what it is it has gone before, what it is that has maybe, or maybe not, been left behind. And it seems to me, if I just connected dots of some of what you were saying about moving that statue in San Francisco is that there's if, on one hand, you can look at the statue. Well, the statue was a kind of an illusion, or maybe we call it a delusion. It was at least stating some kind of message, I guess you might say our view of reality, and to the extent that that view of reality is actually part of the structure that exists today, then removing it doesn't necessarily change. Well, I shouldn't even say necessarily it doesn't change that structure at all. In fact, you may further mask that structure. And if, in place of that statue, some other statue goes up that's currently validated, like maybe a rainbow or something like that, does that mean that the United Nations has been transformed into something different from what it was before the statue was swapped. Does it mean that the structures, the social structures, the governmental structures, the institutions themselves that are built with those deep roots, have they suddenly been changed? Is because there was a kind of a white law job done on them? Seems like the obvious answer is no. And so when we're looking at symbols, it's it's pretty much like it's the opposite of what we need to do. We need to open those museums, up those warehouses, drag them all out, and have an open discussion, which has at least the potential of leading people to say, Oh, this is what this institution is built on? Well, we don't, if we don't like that, we can't just remove the symbol of the institution. We have to think about, is there any possibility of changing that institution? There may not be any possibility. It's not an easy question, but at least the discussion, whether it's a hard discussion or maybe even almost in a possible discussion. The discussion moves forward, and what we have then what we're valorizing, you and I, when we talk about symbols, is the discussion of symbols. We're not here to say, Oh, we don't like that symbol. Let's take it down. That symbol is bad. We should cover it up, put a bag over it, paint it, move it to the warehouse. That's not the context in which we discuss these things.

Steven T. Newcomb 08:45

Well, that's such a key point you're making. And I think that to the extent, as already said, that you remove those from visible display, they're not available for us to reference. Now it's in a warehouse, whatever kind of depiction was being created by that statue with with whatever intention, we don't even have that available to us to have a conversation about that at all. So it's really destroying the past, in the sense of the record of the past. It's, to me, it's equivalent to burning a book. Basically, you know,

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that book offends me, so let's, let's get rid of it. Let's burn all copies of it. And and that that guy had no business, or that woman had no business writing such a book, it seems to me that it's the opposite of intellectual inquiry and an examination of the historical record to get at a deeper understanding of how things came to be the way they are today, and what are the roots of that, conceptually, behaviorally and so forth.

Peter d'Errico 09:58

So we're talking. Can really as if what we're doing is a kind of an archeological process. We're doing a legal historical archeology. And in some senses, this is limited to text, like if you go find the text of the papal bull that authorizes domination, then the text itself can be looked at. Now, if that document were taken because somebody said it was offensive and it was burned. That wouldn't change the 500 years of history that followed that document. And so

Steven T. Newcomb 10:29

imagine, imagine I had never had any such document available to me. I heard about it. Read reference to it. Maybe there was a paragraph quoted from it by deloria's book, God is red and welcome Washburn's red man's land, white man's law. But that document was not available for me to even investigate because it offended people, and we have to get rid of it and remove it. Well, how in the heck can I go into the Latin and the English and investigate it and get to the insights and understandings that I've been able to gain by that investigation would be impossible. So the it would be equivalent to burning old maps or something destroying them. Because, well, that offends me. It seems to me that the whole point of scholarship. Well, Steven winter said it so well in his book, clearing in the forest, that scholarship is designed to increase understanding in or No, expand knowledge and increase understanding. That's how and so you want to gain those additional insights. And it's a long process, and hopefully there's a back and forth such as you and I have on an ongoing basis, and that I have with many others as well. I'm sure you do as well, and that constant inquiry, that constant effort to gain additional understandings and insights is so critical.

Peter d'Errico 12:00

Yes, I'm thinking about John Marshall. For example, there's a statue of John Marshall there in the in Washington, the author of The so called trilogy of cases, Johnson V McIntosh being the first one. And we've talked about that so often, of Christian domination into US law. And Marshall's reputation is so high in traditional, conventional circles, even in so called Indian law circles, I've read commentators who said Marshall was such a great judge and Oh, he's so skillful with words. Well, we know he was skillful with words. And he crafted a decision which is still law today, that says that none of the original peoples here own any land at all. It's all held, quote, unquote, in trust with them, which was another second case that he decided, and so removing that statue doesn't remove those cases. Removing those cases is a massive legal political effort, and it would be hampered if we got rid of the the image of the statue of the man who did it, because what it would do, it would detract us from let's look besides the legal aspects that he wrote about, what about his own personal interests here? Who was this person? John Marshall, Oh, you mean he? He was part of a family that claimed ownership of 1000s of acres in what was then they called Kentucky and and that his father was a surveyor, and he was actively involved in staking claims to lands, and that Marshall's own personal property interests were involved in the decisions that he made. Well, that sounds completely unethical, and so if we don't have any encouragement to do any work there, in other words, the the statue is not just inviting us into an intellectual discussion of a legal concept like Christian discovery and domination. It's also inviting us to look at the social, political, cultural, I guess you could call them elements that are part of that decision. So it's it's quite widespread. We move beyond strictly talking about law to talking about images of reality, I guess. And then what are the actual what is the what do we know about the factual realities about this person, John Marshall, his personal connections and so forth. And we do that, we can do

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that same thing without a statue of once we know, for example, that Joseph's story was involved in the cases. And maybe there's no statue of story handy. I'm sure there are statues of him, but there's nothing handy, so we're limited just to things that he wrote, like his commentaries on the Constitution. But as you said, If we say, well, let's burn those commentaries because we don't like Joseph's story and we don't like the decisions, we've become more and more empowered. Impoverished in our understanding, and when we're impoverished in our understanding about that which is the view from the ship. What? How does that help us to articulate the view from the shore? The view from the shore is not just tear down the statue. The view from the shore is to articulate something different. It's not just a negation of the view from the ship. And I think that a lot of what causes people to be quite shallow in their even people who listen to us and read our work and say, Oh yeah, right on. We think Christian domination is bad, but many of them just stop there. It's like they've just found a meme that they can criticize. And well, where do you go from there? What's the alternative? Well, I don't know. Why don't you tell us some more. It's not as if they're independently able to start sorting it out. And I think both of us are aiming to make people independently able to sort things out, to engage in discussions and to not get stuck at the surface level of a symbol, but to look behind it, you had some symbols that you can show us, but,

Steven T. Newcomb 16:04

yeah, I will do that. And I think I had sent some to you before. I thought maybe you were going to put those up, but if not, to discuss them. But the other thing with regard to the effort to remove books or symbols or whatever it might be, and get those out of focus and out of view, is really the trend toward totalitarianism and authoritarianism, and that whole notion that that Orwell is pointing to in terms of the effort to suppress thought, and what we're trying to do is accentuate thought and promote thought and deep, deep thought. How do you engage in deep thought about the Johnson versus Macintosh decision? For example, you have to first of all go into the decision and read it maybe 10,000 times, like you've probably done. I mean, that might be a bit of an exaggeration, but certainly, if you're reading a particular piece of work for decades, for four decades or more, that's that's an extraordinary amount of effort intellectually, just on that one piece of information, that one artistic creation of words on parchment, or words on paper, or whatever it might be. And so not the negation of thought, but the promotion of thought. And you have to have that available to you to be able to engage in that process. And so I think that that's so critically important that that we are able to, for example, go into those, as I already said, go into those Vatican documents, and get into the nitty gritty. If I hadn't done that, I was showing my daughter Shauna the other day, those specific passages where it says, lands discovered and to be discovered that are not under the actual that not not in the actual temporal possession of any Christian lords. That's basically how it reads in the English. Well, how in the heck did I get to not under the domination of any Christian dominators? Well, I had to go to the Latin first of all and see okay, this, these are the English words. But what are these Latin words? Okay, and que sub actuale, dominio temporale. Well, what does dominio mean? Oh, my gosh. It means domination. It goes back to that dominium term, and so forth and so on. And then dominorum Christianorum, if i i did type that into Google Translate, and it came back Christian lords, just like the English translation of the document. So okay, but then I know that in Latin, the word Lord is Dominus or domanos, dominos, He who has subdued, which in my mind, means he who has dominated, or domanus, he who subdues by his very nature. He subdues by his very nature, he dominates. And so I had this interaction with the general the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues. I saw a man in the hallway with the caller on the caller of the priest, and I he was engaged in a conversation. And afterwards, I went up to him and asked if he was with the Holy See. And he said, Yes, he was and just random, totally random. I said, Well, you probably know Latin, what does dominorum Christianorum mean? And he said, Well, it probably means lords, probably master, probably mister. Yes, mister. And I said, Oh, okay, so in other words. Is lands not possessed by any Mr. Christian. And he said, Well, it's, it's best not to translate it into English, because it would not fit. Okay, so I go into the other room where the forum is going on, and I'm standing just inside the doorway, and there's a guy that I know standing to my left, and

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we're kind of having this sideways conversation, and looking at the room, and that man with the Holy See, he goes toward their chair over there, and the next thing I know, he's back in front of me, and he takes me by the arm and escorts me out of the room, and the door closes and is very quiet in the hallway. And he says, Now that term you're talking about, I believe that's referring to Jesus Christ or God, which is kind of weird for him to say. And I said, Oh, okay, well, then I have another question for you. There's another sentence in the document I've never said what the document is that says we trust in Him. And when I said the word him, he said, That's Jesus Christ or God? And I continued, and I said, from whom empires and dominations and all good things proceed? So if the empires and dominations are coming out of him, who is Jesus Christ or God? Does that mean it's God of domination? And he never paused for one moment. And he said, Well, everything comes from God, the birds and the trees and what was your name? Again, it's the way. So I'm not so there's a little bit more to the story. So that evening, across the street from the UN there's the 777, building, National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches and people convene over there. And we had a panel discussion on the Doctrine of Discovery there that evening. And a professor of Latin showed up, and he was, he taught at West Lynne college or university, whichever that is, and he was originally from Africa. And I said, Oh my gosh. I said, you teach Latin. What does dominorum Christian norm mean? And he said, as fast as just as instantaneously. He said, Christian dominators. And I thought, Oh my gosh. So what are the odds of me having this bizarre interaction with turned out he was the brand new nuncio of the Vatican at the UN and I had this interaction with him, and then afterwards this interaction with the Latin professor. And I think perhaps because he was from Africa, maybe that's the way he did, the way he translated, for that reason, but going back to the original wording in the document, I could have easily just stopped at, oh, okay. It means Christian lords and call it good, right? After all, Google Translate told me that, so it must be true, right?

Peter d'Errico 22:53

So digging into Latin means digging into the roots of the words that we're using in English and discovering, oh, wait a minute, doesn't really mean what it has been, how it's been translated in English and so the archeology proceeds on so many levels there. And when you talked about burning a book, I've been you and I we've been talking a little bit about Constantine. Constantine, the Emperor. Constantine, his role in the Constitution. If I can play on words there of the Vatican, of the Roman church and the story we I don't want to go on all the details. We'll do that another time. But Constantine has this awakening. Oh, the cross is a symbol of victory for him. And so he turns on a dime and says, Oh, the Roman state is not going to criminalize Christianity anymore. We're going to take advantage of it. And one of the ways that he took advantage was immediately after he wins this battle that his vision said he was going to win if he adopted the cross. He calls together all the bishops that are all the kind of the leaders of the various divergent, you know, groups of people who said that they were following the teachings of Jesus and his assignment at the what became, it was the Council of Nicaea, where he brought together hundreds, I think some people have said there are 3000 people at this council. And he says the most important thing for the security of the Empire is that the church should have a single doctrine, and that any doctrine that deviates from that is going to be prohibited. And the long, the short end of the long story, because the council lasted for some months was that they came up with a creed, and it said that this is the only true statement about the following of Jesus, and this is where the connection begins to be made between Jesus and domination. The other groups that were worshiping Jesus had all kinds of different views, even about. The relationship between Jesus and God, that you know, Jesus was this powerful person who was, you can say some of them said he was definitely the Son of God, but that didn't mean that He was God, and that meant that the apostles, quote, unquote, who hung around with Jesus, if, if he was the Son of God, but he wasn't God, well, then they're already another step removed from God. Whereas the official position of the night of the creed that came out of the Council of Nicea under Constantine sort of demand, basically, you come up with one thing. They that group said that Jesus was God. This is where the development of the idea of the three in one God. And they quarreled about, you talk about language. They quarreled about the

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language in the creed that it had to say that he was begotten, not made, that he was of the same substance, consubstantial with the Father. So that they were emphasizing that there's God in their conception, there's Jesus who was also God, even though he was the son of God. And then the apostles around that figure of Jesus, who were the ones who were carrying this supposed teaching, they themselves were speaking with the authority of God, and that meant that the laying on of hands that had created these bishops from the original apostles, that each of the bishops was speaking as God, and so even today, the one of the titles for the Pope is the Vicar of Christ. Vicar being the word meaning, it's like the vice regent. I'm the one who's in charge in the name of God, and in exercising God's power when I'm speaking ex cathedral, these Latin words are still used. And so what happened was that this thing called the Christian church was created as a moment of domination within the Roman world, and was then the instrument when the Roman world basically collapsed as a military phenomenon. The apparatus of domination was still available and was maintained by these Church authorities, among whom one was elevated to be the Pope, the Vicar of Christ. And everything that proceeds from that was all the elaboration on the original domination that Constantine had imposed on Christianity, so that the people there was one, a bishop named Ariannas, I think was his name. He was one of the teachers who said, you know, we follow Jesus as the Son of God, but he's not the same as God. That was anathema now, and because a creed had been established, the followers the Arianism, they could be attacked. And as it developed, I'm skipping over some many, many years now, but you get into the time of the Inquisition and the people who continued to follow those beliefs were vilified and attacked and the Inquisition, one of the earliest, maybe the earliest, massive attacks on these non approved beliefs, was in what we call France now, and place called Beziers, and the troops had come in and they said, and they were, they knew they were to attack this town because it was a hotbed of this Arianism in the just or non belief, the divergent belief. And they asked the bishop, how are we going to know which people to kill? And the bishop said, kill them all. God will know who to sort out. So 30,000 people were killed. Now, if that isn't an example of domination, and it's so it what? The reason I'm bringing it in behind what you just said is that that Council of Nicea created words, but it also created certain symbols, and among them, of course, the symbol of the cross. And what did the cross really mean? And so the cross became the symbol. And if the cross was supposed to be the symbol of some kind of sacrifice, it and it also became a clear symbol of domination. And so we have, if we go back to those, those years, through the centuries, and we have access to all of that. And one of the things that's been happening, speaking of archeology in the last few decades, is more archeologists have found more documents besides the ones that were allowed to be considered as part of the gospel. And there's even a Gospel of Judas, by the way, and there's a gospel of Mary, Mary Magdalene. And very important things come out of those gospels, which were antithetical to the domination framework that was built around God, Jesus, the Apostles and the bishops. And there's, there's a clear alternative available because of that archeology, I guess it's trying to get at and so. It. In addition to criticizing, we can criticize the Constantinian nice and creed structure, the structure of domination, but now we can actually go behind that and see how that was created, how the domination system that gave birth to Christian discovery and domination 500 years later, after the 1493 papal bull, or at that time, was already being created that the dominator, the dominator, was creating a system of domination for itself, yeah, making that clear,

Steven T. Newcomb 30:35

but it's Yeah. And so with regard to the symbolism the cross, or Jesus on the cross, the crucified, Jesus on the cross, that is the depiction in a symbolic form of some set of beliefs, right with regard, and Also that contest, that challenge, that you're discussing that resulted in so much bloodshed and and heinous, you know, suffering and misery and so forth. But the interesting thing about the symbol of Jesus on the cross is, is that an example of a person who spoke out against the Empire, and this is what can happen to you as well if you speak out against the Empire. Or is it something else? And I think that that's a very interesting phenomenon. Just how do people arrive at interpretations and which one wins out, so to speak, as you're speaking of with regard to Constantine, and by the way, the

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flaming cross in the sky that he supposedly saw in his vision, and all that had Greek words that said by this sign, conquer, which, in my way of interpreting it is by the sign dominate. And that word victory is a key term for that domination. And you have from victory, you also have victim. That's the same root of the on the receiving end of the victory are the people that are the victims of that victory. But you also have victuals, which is the food of the victor, which is really weird, because it's it's spelled the same, but it's pronounced so differently that you would never see the connection and so that's I just see some of these things at times and wonder about it all in terms of how they use the terms to create meaning, but also to obfuscate meaning, or to maybe some other interpretation. One out. You're not allowed to mention that other one. He was not a flesh and blood man, if he even existed, but he, he was not a flesh and blood man. He was divine. And you're not allowed to say that or even suggest that he was a flesh and blood man, that type of thing. You know,

Peter d'Errico 33:17

yeah, yeah. You know. You're talking about decoding stuff. So I'm going to share. I'm going to share the screen for a minute and then come back, because I know you have some other images to share. So let's see here, we share this, and if I go here, no, I want to go here. This is a picture. This is in a museum that I visited. This is an Enigma machine. You've heard of the Enigma machines that the Nazis used. They were coding machines, coding and decoding to carry secret messages. And, I mean, I was stunned when I saw this. It's just to think about everything that went into it, talk about violence and all the rest of it. What? What were the secrets who are being shared, and who they were, who was being excluded, and all and these were the machines, and the particular machine that they have here. I'm going to see if I can zoom in. And by the way, it's made by Siemens. You know, you can buy products from Siemens today. Notice what it says here the German This is a German High Command Enigma machine. It had 10 rotors, and it was only used by five entities within the German High Command and notice what it says. The average time to decode a message on a normal Enigma machine was one hour. But to decode a message from this high command machine took four days. So four days by the people who were running the system to figure out the message. Wow. And so I'm thinking, Well, wait a minute, stop. Share here. Just what does it take to decipher all this stuff? One message sent in. Nazi high command on this machine, which was just for them, four days of work. Now, what about a whole vast archive of documents from the Vatican going back to the time of Constantine? What about all the material that's been digested and, you know, translated, and all the all the rest of that. You're not just talking about one message to take four days. You're talking about massive amounts of information. And we're here at the far end, and we don't have an Enigma machine. We don't have something you are the Enigma machine. You go you read the Latin, you study the Latin, you ask experts. You dig into dictionaries, you dig into translations. You ask people that you bump into by some the grace of whatever the creation that says, Oh, you get to meet this guy from Africa. You get this guy of the nuncio, right? So all of those things which go into your ability to decode dominorum, Christian norm in a way that has some integrity and authenticity to it that you can demonstrate that's how many years of work really

Steven T. Newcomb 36:09

to well. And interestingly, I think the extent to which there's a element of spirit and mystery and just the magic of the process where, what are the odds of those, all those elements coming together in one particular day and but if I hadn't been on this path, none of that would have ever transpired, because you had to be on the path for that to occur, right? And it's a spiritual path. But in terms of the decoding, that's where it gets very interesting, because is it, is it the case that that it isn't Christian lords? No, it is Christian lords in in a given context, yeah, that's accurate, too. So it's not necessarily a matter of rejecting the one. It's adding the additional one that that gives you that even deeper insight and understanding that you wouldn't have had otherwise. I think that. So give you like, let me give you an example, and I think you have this, but there's the the seal, great seal of United States. And there was a lot of discussion that went into that. I wrote about it in my book, pagans in the Promised Land, as

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you'll probably recall. And there was a discussion of whether to depict the Israelites going into the promised land or moving toward the promised land, that sort of thing. And there was a discussion of what, what images Shall we put into this very important seal, the the seal that's supposed to be forever, right? If you want your empire to last forever, or, I think it was Madison who said that it's something that must last for ages. That's pretty much eternal. And by the way, in the papal bull, it talks about the grants being made in Perpetua, meaning eternally or forever. So there's that element of permanence, right? And but the the seal of South Dakota, which I sent you, the outer edge of the of the seal has a chain all the way around that, in other words, to depict the idea that the land itself has been changed. It has been captured. And everything within that is the territory, the domain of the empire, a state called South Dakota. And it's amazing to just allow yourself to engage in kind of a free flow of interpretations and and so forth to get at some of those insights. Now what happened in terms of the passage of time. Eventually, they took that chain off of there and updated the seal of South Dakota so that it wouldn't depict that, that chaining of the land, and who knows what discussions went into that, those revisions and so forth. So did they feel like they had to clean it up a bit? Or, who knows,

Peter d'Errico 39:23

let me get to it. Here's, there's the seal.

Steven T. Newcomb 39:25

Here it is, yeah, now try to find a native person in there. I don't think you'll find one.

Peter d'Errico 39:33

Well, try to find anybody that would look at that and actually think about it. That's what most astounding about the all this type of symbol. But even that are less complicated, like the cross, just with the bare, you know, cross things you that has to be read. In a sense, it has to be interpreted and and so when you look at something like this, it has all these little pieces in. That every one of them, as you said, there was this, like, well, obviously, it was done by an artist, and whoever would, whoever made the design, you know, and however many people had to confer about it, and how many discussions they had about it. But the point is, now somebody, people don't even see this, yeah, it's just, it's just there. It's just like an image on your driver's license, perhaps, or until, it gets replaced by another image, and you don't look at that one either. And so a whole language. So who is this language being read by? Obviously, when you're when you started talking about Madison and others, there's a cohort of people who are very much attuned to this kind of thing. And very clear about this is where the Enigma machine comes in. There are coded messages here, and that code is something that's quite well understood by the people who are working with the images, creating the images, and it's then, it's sort of the people who are not part of that. If I look at this and I'm, oh, look at the farmer. Yeah, that's a good thing, farmers were important in the state of South Dakota, and I'm not necessarily even going to see, well, wait a minute, there's a whole chain around the farmer. Like, what is that supposed to mean? Is a farmer? Were the farmers in chains? I mean, what was the relationship of the farmers to the land and South I'm probably not going to ask those questions, but if I do, I'm treading onto some ground where, most likely it begins to be forbidden territory. I'm asking questions that were not expected to be asked by ordinary people, right?

Steven T. Newcomb 41:37

Well, and the other thing is, how did I obtain that image? I went to the archives the South Dakota, state of South Dakota archives in pure South Dakota, and went in there and found that seal image. And if I hadn't bothered doing that, I wouldn't ever have known that that even existed and but also I previously had read about surveying being called chaining the land. That was the metaphor that they were using. The image of chaining land, literally chaining land. And then I when I saw that chain on the seal, I said, Oh my goodness. What a what an amazing thing that they were conscious of that and made sure that

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they put that on the seal, then later, they kind of sanitized it, apparently, to take that off of there and no longer depict that in that

Peter d'Errico 42:30

manner. So here's another one that you sent me. This is South Dakota, and it's a stone marker saying that right under this place there was a lead tablet buried to claim the region for France, alright. So this is much earlier than so called South Dakota was 1743 or exactly. So what's interesting about this, then, is that the symbol on the lead tablet and lead was known, even then, to be basically indestructible, lasts forever, imperceptual, etc, but it was buried. It was put on the ground. It was not hung up for people to look at. And so there's another this, I think, connects to your work on symbols of possession. Uh, what's the phrase there? You know, the ceremonies of

Steven T. Newcomb 43:27

Yeah, ceremonies of possession, yep.

Peter d'Errico 43:30

So those were done. They were also using symbols. They were using words and symbols, but they were not erecting them high, like statues. They were putting them close on the ground. And so there's something there that's you talk about Magical Mystery Tour. Something in the mind of the people who do this kind of thing says, if I put my mark, here I am, now I am. I've conquered this. I own this. This is not a mark that I put up that everybody is to see. But this is like, this is like, the little trademark symbol, a tiny trademark symbol, or something like that. I've now trademarked this land. I don't want to say something more about this, but it's, well,

Steven T. Newcomb 44:14

that's such a great metaphor trademark because they're engaging in trade and all kind. There's all kinds of ways you could extend that, but the notion and I took a field trip group of students from Saint Francis Indian school up to that marker, to that little area and showed them the ridiculous nature of people can come traipsing across a whole continent and stick a lead plate in the ground. It's interesting, that metaphor unearthing information, right? So then somebody stumbled upon that, but they put that lead plate in the ground that they carried. It wasn't very heavy. Was pretty thin. And apparently, but they carried it all that way, and then they're on an overlook, so you could see a great distance from that vantage point. And so then suddenly they put that there, and it's all theirs, that it belongs to them, even though there are original nations and peoples already living there, existing there, but they don't have access to that French language, perhaps, and certainly don't understand the symbolism, the interpretive framework of the Frenchman in putting that there. And they're representative of a very elite, small, relatively small group of people we talked about that before, as well those scribes that wrote those papal documents, how many of those were there on the entire planet? I mean, were there 1020, 100 I doubt it. There were probably a handful, and they had come through the ranks of being a scribe to get to that ability to write in the manner of the ancient Roman contracts. That's why those Vatican documents are so long and so detailed, because they're contractual agreements, in a sense, right that they're all agreeing on a particular form of reality. You go there and we're authorizing you because we have the connection to God to give you this authority to go forth, embark on an adventure, to go forth as hero, heroic figures, and to identify the geographical location of places where that form of domination does not yet exist.

Peter d'Errico 46:40

I want to, I want to do a couple of things before. I want you to talk more about spirituality. But before, here's, this is a German sword front. This is an actual This is like the the original thing. It's not a replica, uh, 1570 German sword. And you can see the cross image there. I want to show you. I got a I'm

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bouncing around in this screen here. But let me show you there. This is Italian, very, really finely, right? And this is 15th century. The other one was 16th century. And so the spiritual symbol of the cross is carried right there in a sword. And these are unbelievable. I was allowed to handle one of these, and they are so finely wrought. There was so much effort and energy and artistry put into this. And it's a union of the religious symbol and the military power

Steven T. Newcomb 47:41

is that showing up on the screen because I'm not seeing it, I hope the viewers can see it.

Peter d'Errico 47:48

Well, okay, it says that it's screen sharing, so I don't know, I'm not seeing it, okay, well, let's try it again. I don't know, that's just me. Well, it says Participants can see my screen. Okay. Well, we'll assume that's the case. I'll see. When you do, you see the Italian sword there? I

Steven T. Newcomb 48:09

don't. Okay. Oh, now I do. Okay, now I do. I had to click something else. Okay, that's the Italian sword. Oh, look at that. Wow, isn't that something?

Peter d'Errico 48:19

Yes, yeah, quite amazing. Work done on it. Yes, union that's, that's a union that's Constantine's cross right there in hawks in the Latin I just signed. So pretty astounding for people that want just a quick fix, you can get this. I found this in a store in Baltimore years ago. You can get an aerosol commanding, do My will. It has a picture of Jesus with the thorns around his head, and the next one aerosol, esperita dominante. Now I don't know what kind of person or what kind of household, or what kind of whatever would want, domination, air, spray. But it's pretty intense to discover stuff like this, and I don't so I'm I didn't know who to ask. It was just in a store that I happened to wander in.

Steven T. Newcomb 49:16

Where? What store was that

Peter d'Errico 49:18

in Baltimore? Some little store in Baltimore. Yeah. So would you say something more about what we've been talking about? A lot of people might think that the whole work is done by crawling into the archives, but my sense is, if you're crawling into the archives with no spiritual guidance, you're just going to wander in the archives forever. You're going to be lost in the maze. And I'm thinking that without making any claims about spiritual guidance or anything else, let's just use the view. If you have nothing of the view from the shore, how are you going to understand to be able to see the view from a ship as something extraneous to you that you're not engulfed in? And it seems to me, the view from the. Ship has become so much of an engulfment of people, it includes even people who consider themselves tribal council leaders, for example. So I thought maybe you are you, if you want to, and I'll put this up while you're talking about getting near the top of the hour. So this is i This is a spiritual statement by an amazing John Trudell, this is graffiti. So I'm also thinking, what's the difference between graffiti and a statue? An official statue is the statue graffiti? I don't know. Just toss that out, but if you don't,

Steven T. Newcomb 50:37

yeah, there's a lot, a lot, a lot of there are many directions I could take your question with regard to the the spiritual. I mean, I did say it's a spiritual path. So what do I mean by that? The in the sense that I understand it, it has to do with the the I effort to come to a deeper understanding of what this life on planet Earth is all about, and what has transpired over such a long period of time, and what our Native

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nations and peoples and other peoples around the planet have been put through what they have been subjected to. But there's, there's an element of what I'll call spirit, but it's, it's energy. By by that word, I actually mean energy, that there's an energy of inquiry, that curiosity, I think that's a good word for it. There's that curiosity that becomes so passionate, so absorbing, completely overtaking you in such a way that you are compelled to go deeper and deeper, and always continue on and never stop. And if you're fortunate enough to experience something like that and to allow that to carry you forward, then you can arrive at amazing insights and understandings. I think there's an element of mystery to it, in terms of, what is it about my life that enabled me to do the things that I've done, not having any awareness of how to do it, just bumbling along and and always having that forward momentum. I didn't know how to read Latin, for example, but I just made the effort to do that and and somehow found the means of understanding those needle and haystack phrases and passages within those documents which are quite lengthy, that enabled me to focus in on that one theme, and and so I'm not being very lucid in how I'm explaining all this, but the there's something That has happened also, where, because at a very young age, as a teenager, I was able to go into ceremony with very extraordinary spiritual leaders and experience the, in a sense, the magic of those settings. I'm using that term very loosely, but the profound nature of spiritual connection, the spirit within ourselves, the spirit of all life, the spirit of all creation. And to actually have that, not as an intellectual concept and idea, but an actual experience of something so deep and profound that you can't really put it into words you might attempt to. And there are some poetic ways in which we can allude to that. But it's it's something that is is at such a deep level, and I think we share that in common. It's this curiosity about, how do we make sense of it all? And the graffiti, quote, unquote, the artwork of John Trudell there, he's also talking about that in the sense of a curiosity of what does it mean to be a human being, which I've now got a whole different take on that than I did before, because in that city of San Diego versus Cuyamaca water district decision 1930 the state of California Supreme Court is saying that only a state of barbarism was existing in California when the Spaniards arrived. Well, we know from our readings and investigation that that means only a partially. Human existence, or maybe a non human existence. So you have to go through some kind of a process to become human. So the process is to be stripped of your free existence, baptized, given a Christian name, forced under torment, misery and suffering by the inflicted by the priests and soldiers to build those massive mission structures in California. Now you're on your way to becoming human. Doesn't that change our understanding of what human means in that context for the so, oh, you're born into a free society, yeah. Well, maybe not so much. Maybe, maybe that was the propaganda to make you believe that, but actually, you were born into a system of domination, shock of all shocks, to find out, Oh my gosh. This the the implications of this information is so profound as to be almost kind of unbelievable, but yet we see it continue to play out over the course of our lifetimes and and it will continue to do so, but I think we're getting to that deeper insight and understanding of what those actual roots are. But the beautiful thing is we have that original, free existence to reference so that we have that as our sacred birthright. We all as quote, unquote, Homo sapiens, if we want to use that label, have this sacred birthright of of the right to be free, even if others are trying to strip us of that right and that ability to live, what, what to live a free life. But what does that word even mean in many different contexts?

Peter d'Errico 56:41

Yeah, I'm we're near the end of the hour. I think we It's pretty intense. What you just said is that what the basic thing that we're doing is, is trying to understand human being, being human being, alive on this planet. What does that mean? And not even getting caught in those words aren't any words, as you pointed out, the word human has already been captured by the apparatus of something called human rights. And human rights, what does that mean? But that's another whole discussion we'll get into another time that being human is one phenomenon that you were talking about, and rights is a whole different thing that's tied to states and laws and everything else. So let's but I'm really happy that you were able and willing to say a few words about the deep guidance, I guess, or root or wellspring of of the work.

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Steven T. Newcomb 57:37

I think the last thing I want to say about that is that we have an understanding that we do have ancestral assistance, you know, we do have people that, I mean, spirits that are assisting us, energy that is assisting us in the work that we're doing. And, you know, I say my spirit helpers have glasses really thick, you know. Anyway, leave it

Peter d'Errico 58:01

at that, Steve, thank you again. Very much. I'll be in touch.

Steven T. Newcomb 58:05

Thank you, Peter, bye.