

THREE PHASES OF MAGIC SQUARE OF THREE

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The magic square of three was first used to facilitate child birth. Next most ailments could be cured. Jabir exploited it to facilitate changing base metals into gold.

Then it becomes the symbol of cosmogony. Finally it is shown to be a symbol of Heaven and Earth, reduced as symbols to square with even numbers and to a cross with odd numbers.

In ancient times even words, numbers and designs, were looked upon as potential powers. When union occurred with their opposites they became dynamic releasing auspicious energy. That words have given rise to Mantras is well known. Then in Babylon even Venus, the goddess of fertility was assigned number 15. Number as such cannot constitute a tangible symbol. Hence a geometrical design was preferred, as the magic square of three. There were 9 cells which could accommodate 9 numbers and these counted as any series gave the result as 15. Thus the magic square of 3 became a proper symbol of Venus. Now it is within the purview of the goddess of fertility to facilitate child birth. Accordingly her symbol, the magic square of three was used as charm to facilitate child birth. On this account it went even to China, where a variant is mentioned on p. 231 in Hakim Mohammad Said (1982) book on Medicine in China. India also imported it. Thite (1982) quotes on p. 62 a text of classical Indian medicine according to which when a pregnant woman looks at the design she experiences easy delivery. That the magic square of three and its variants can function as charm and further cure of diseases is mentioned in compilation of such designs by Osmani (of Deoband) and Thanvi (1974). These books in Urdu give many designs similar to magic square of three with their therapeutic uses. No doubt there are many more of such books. Now Stapleton (1953) writes that Kraus has made a special study of Jabir's writings and finds his mentioning in more than one place that the magic square of 3 possesses talismanic efficacy of facilitating child birth and it appears that being assured of this virtue he selected the design to base his alchemical system. The magic square of three contains among other numbers 1,3,5 and 8 to which Jabir attached most importance. The question arises here what has a symbol which facilitates child-birth to do with the transformation of base-metals into gold and what is the significance of the 4 numbers in the magic square. In (1986, 1986a) I have shown that when Venus was depicted as a six-cornered star, the above 4 numbers constituted her body. But the more

important problem still remained unsolved and it is the active principle in the magic square which must be such that it can facilitate child birth as also facilitate transformation of a base metals into gold. The design magic square of three must point its own content the active principle which appealed to Jabir and was responsible for his selecting it (1988). We are expected to discuss it. But before we do that it can be shown that the magic square of three, (Fig. 1) here can easily represent cosmogony. The cosmic elements are on the four sides, and cosmic qualities at four corners. These 8 entities constitute creation. But the source of existence here, occupying the centre, is Aether.

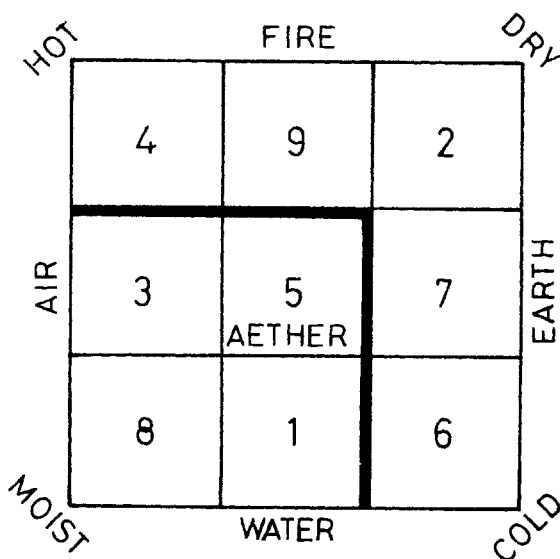


FIG. 1. Magic square of Three as symbol of Cosmogony.

This is what Greek alchemy believes. It is supposed to be matter of very fine nature charged with creative energy. It is almost identical with the Chinese Chhi, which is also matter-cum-energy. Our purposes has been served by showing that the magic square of three is also the symbol of cosmogony.

Now alchemy is based on the conception of union of opposites. Even, alchemical symbols are supposed to represent union of opposite geometrical designs. In the article on Ideal Magic Square (1988, 1988a) I have tried to show that the magic square of three results on union of two squares are bearing even numbers, 2,4,6 and 8 and the other odd numbers 1,3,5,7 and 9. I have now changed my mind. The symbol can be conceived as representing Heaven and Earth, the highest powers man knows. Earth is supposed to be square shaped and thus in fig. 2 here, the corners of the square bear even numbers and can symbolize Earth. Heaven is different to symbolize. But it is the container of Cosmic Soul as its content and soul can be symbolized as a cross has been shown in 1986. Then Heaven gave into Cosmic Soul and Soul was symbolized as the cross with only odd

numbers, as shown in Fig. 2 here. Thus the magic square of 3 can be interpreted as symbolizing Heaven and Earth and this leaves no doubt that it functions as the source of auspicious-cum-creative energy and can help the alchemist in his attempts of transforming a base metal into gold.

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

FIG. 2. Magic square of Three as cross within a square as symbol of Heaven and Earth.

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