

# the cosmogram

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The Bryce House in Annapolis Maryland has been excavated to reveal the presence of the only dry, perfectly preserved 'cosmogram' in existence in Anglo-America. Cosmograms are geometric designs superimposed on domestic space and reinforced by objects placed inside floors, walls, and fixtures. Charms and verbal formulas were used with respect to the diagram's intersection with the domestic activities of the household. The ideal geometry of the cosmogram was thought to concentrate force in specific places. Oaths, curses, blessings, and other verbal devices required this spatial reinforcement to be effective and authoritative.



## 1. Yoruba hoo-doo and vodoun

Every culture maintains practices that combine medicine and religion. It would be derogatory to relegate hoo-doo, the medical practices of African slaves, to magic; as a form of homeopathic treatments, it was both effective and well grounded in the study of the medicinal value of plants and other substances. As a psychologically effective treatment it excels modern practices. In ancient Greece, mythological traditions had it that the gods themselves were required to straddle the River Styx in order to make sacred oaths. Punishment for breaking an oath was paralysis for a 'great year'. ...

## 2. Comparable traditions: Fêng-Shui, Lay Lines

At the scale of the landscape and even globe, systems of lines, force-fields, geometric designs, and terrain relations have influenced the locations of human activities. ...

## 3. Asklepius and the Medusa

The story of Asklepius, the 'first physician', accords the him the same prominence that the West African hoodoo tradition accords to Moses.



[This article is to be completed by members of the seminar collaborative.]

