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❖ MONGOLIAN TRIAD

The Mongolian triad refers to the Mongolian traditional preference for and symbolism surrounding the number three. This triad is expressed in oral literature in ways that are very unique to Mongolia. The cosmos is often portrayed as existing in three parts: the upper, middle and lower realms or organic and inorganic life.

In the three levels of the universe,

The sky is the level of pillars (*the upper realm*),
The mountain is the level of the girdle (*the middle realm*), and
The ocean is the level of the lid (*the spiritual realm*).

In the three rich realms of the universe,

The sky is rich in stars (*upper realm*),
The earth is rich in roots (*middle realm*), and
The ocean is rich in water (*nymphic realm*).

In the three beauties of the universe,

The full moon is lovely (*inorganic universe*),
The flowers are lovely (*organic universe*), and
The maxims of one's parents are lovely (*human universe*).

In the three sacredness of the universe,

The growing juniper is sacred,
The burning incense is sacred, and
The flowing water is sacred.

In the three swiftness of the universe,

The clouds of the windy sky is swift,
The thinking of a witty person is swift, and
The gait of a good horse is swift.

In the three provenances of the universe,

Tea is the provenance of food,
The khadag scarf is the provenance of material, and
Fish is the provenance of animals.