

THE CAULDRON OF SUBSERVIENCE

by Jaq D Hawkins

"Extremes of pain or fear or persistence with some energetic physical activity (such as the whirling dervish dance) to the point of exhaustion can be effective, but sexual climax as the ultimate expression of life represents the pinnacle of excitatory gnosis-Eros."

-----Choronzon 999, Kallisti No. 2

Sex magic, in its various forms, is recognised as being one of the most potent forms of advanced magical technique known to Western magicians of this century. Despite this, there are many very experienced magicians who would be hard pressed to explain exactly what methods constitute sex magic. There are many methods which could be considered sexual magical technique, but the most simple explanation of something which would be considered as 'sex magic' is any method which raises the sexual or kundalini energies, whether or not actual sexual activity of any kind actually plays a part.

Gnosis can be achieved through many magical methods, sexual or otherwise. The writings of Austin Osman Spare have focused much attention on sexual methods, yet still many modern magicians are able to see how these methods relate to apparently non-sexual methods such as spinning, deprivation, meditation journeying and others. What draws our attention to sex magic is twofold; it is our natural primitive drive toward the entire subject of sex combined with the knowledge that this form of magic is of particularly intense power. It is our very animal attraction to the sexual drive which gives it the power it has over us and for us. Within this statement lies an essential caution: Sex magic is indeed very powerful, and by its very nature is a form of magic which takes us to the edge where control is an act of conscious will, always in competition with the natural drive to give ourselves over to the intensity and abandon of the performance of the ritual, to the raw power of the experiential crucible of fire and passion.

Austin Spare has become known for autoerotic sex magic. In some ways this can be both simpler and more intense than an act of sex magic performed by a couple which may involve sexual activity, as the act of sex can be very distracting in and of itself from the act of magic, unless both (or all) participants are extremely self-disciplined. Interestingly, discipline in sex magic can be very effectively achieved through methods which bring into play other forms of gnosis fulfilment, such as the fear and pain which are mentioned in the quote at the beginning of this article.

Working with sex, fear and pain together is a journey into the darkest regions of sex magic, and is the purpose behind the increasing popularity of S/M sexual practices within the realm of ritual magic. These practices consist of consensual acts of dominance and submission in a role playing context which gives the apparent 'power' of the situation into the hands of one person, commonly referred to as the 'top', while the other person, often referred to as the 'bottom', submits to the will and actions of the top within boundaries which have been prearranged between them (or among them, in larger group situations).

It is important to remember in these 'scenes' as they are called that the roles are consensual. Despite appearances, nothing happens by force or against the will or chosen parameters of the bottom. The bottom may experience very real fear or pain, possibly as well as pleasure and sexual stimulation of some sort alternately, and it is the very intensity of these experiential perceptions which will take the bottom into ritual gnosis of a very deep nature, known as 'bottom space'. Bottom space may also include psychological reactions, not always of a pleasant nature, and yet these experiences are also desired by those who tread this path.

In *The Topping Book* (San Francisco, Greenery Press, 1995), Catherine Liszt and Dossie Easton tell us that;

"It is within the darkness of the earth, in the cool depths where seeds germinate, that the material of waste and decay is transformed into fertilizer for new life. When we evoke our personal demons in an S/M scene, we dig up the darkest and most difficult of life's journey, and with the magic of erotic energy transform that shit into our rose garden.

"S/M is sex magic, and you are the magician. The bottom is the cauldron in which you perform your miracles. Wave your wand, and make magic happen...as you mix your bottom's energy with your own, heat them up with the fire of passion, and with that potent precious power turn lead into gold, misery into exhalation, bondage into liberation and sex into revelation."

Magic which involves one person utilizing the energy of another is vampiric by nature, and yet despite the often negative connotations given to acts of non-consensual psychic vampirism, consensual psychic vampirism in an act of S/M sex magic is of benefit to both (or all) participants and is no more an act of force than a ritual where a circle of fluffy magicians share their combined energies in a simple act of holding hands in a circle. The magical act is done with an intent and through methods which are agreed by all participants beforehand. Nobody is coerced or forced, nobody is expected to suffer pain or distress unwillingly. Some people even thrive on playing the role of bottom or 'sub', and there are arguments which say that the 'sub' actually has the greater control over the situation as it is this participant who sets the pace, often armed with a 'safe word' in case things begin to go beyond their parameters, and who sets those parameters for the top or 'Dom'.

Directing the magical gnosis of a person who is well into trance as a form of magic is more common than we often consciously realize. When we teach magic to our children, we take their innocent power and direct it in early ritual experiences, just as we would a battery charged with magical power, because their inexperience prevents them from doing so effectively at first and they will learn through observation as much as through instruction. It may at first seem a very different thing to direct the energy of a consenting adult in a sexual situation, and particularly in the dark realms of S/M, yet the act of redirecting raw power is very similar.

The main difference is in intensity and character of that raw power. The energy of the child is innocent and trusting, powered by the very innocence which allows the child to trust the parent to direct them only through ritual experiences suitable for their age and experience. In my own case, I consider very carefully before inviting my daughter to participate in ritual. I discuss the intent with her and have never used methods which should upset any of the social workers. Directing her power in ritual is an act of instruction, as described above.

Redirecting the energy of a consenting adult however, can be very different in method. The way the energy flows through me may be very similar, but the actual methods as well as my own attitude toward the act are entirely unlike anything I would consider performing with a child. The act of stirring the cauldron of a willing 'victim' immersed in the ecstasy of 'bottom space' is wonderfully vampiric, carrying associations with the blood swoon of the vampire novels I have read, passionate and dark, fierce and profound, and yet tender in the knowledge that my 'victim' gives himself to me willingly in the way that the vassals of the fictional vampires offer themselves to their beloved masters, offering their exposed throats to feed the hunger of the predatory demon with complete trust that the vampire will preserve the life of the trusting minion, that it may live to serve the powerful vampire again.

Playing the role of 'Master' in such a scenario brings a heavy responsibility. The magician should be very experienced and competent in a variety of magical practices and techniques to begin with. Both (or all) participants should have worked with S/M methods together before attempting magical ritual with these methods as well. A feeling for the type of energy which is being summoned through this sort of activity is essential for adequate control of magic which is performed on the darkest edges of human experience. Utilizing pleasure and pain and delving into the psychological shadow is obviously no place for beginners or for irresponsible experimentation, yet it is a realm of fundamental power which cannot be ignored, however steadfastly it may be repressed. Working with potentially chaotic energies is an art of balance at any time. Opening one's dark side to the chaos and turbulence of human sensory stimulus is no place for the squeamish or for potential panic. The ability to keep one's head in a crisis and to respond quickly and intelligently to any eventuality, whether magical or physical, is a requisite skill for the magician in this position. Anyone considering experimentation with S/M magic is encouraged to read the books suggested at the end of this article for reference and to experiment with S/M techniques with a consensual partner before delving into the magical possibilities offered by this area of magic.

The methods themselves can be many and varied, as with any magical system. One ritual method suggested in *The Topping Book* is to chant in rhythm to flagellation, both the giver and receiver entering into the ritual space as well as the bottom space of S/M to build up the power of trance in unison to the cadence of the action. It is the responsibility of the top in this situation to retain sufficient conscious awareness of the physical effects of the activity to insure that no unwanted or serious physical harm may come of this practice. The absolute trust which is required of the sub in this situation goes far beyond simple trust of the top to wish to do no harm, but into trust that the top's ability to maintain control on all levels while in ecstatic trance is at least adequate, if not paramount.

Alternatively, the top may wish to perform a very controlled ritual according to other methods, drawing energy from the bottom space of the sub in true vampiric fashion while the sub gives him or herself over completely to generating the trance energy with no responsibility for the direction of the magic. In this situation, the sub need not even be a magician, but should be an experienced sub who is aware of what is to take place and is able to trust the magician to perform to specifications.

Actual sex may or may not play a part in this form of magic. What will or will not occur should definitely be agreed between or among all parties before beginning. The important aspect of the operation is to use the combined powers of deep trance and kundalini excitement, by whatever methods have been agreed beforehand, to produce the requisite energy for a magical act. There is no getting around the efficacy of this method of power raising, although it isn't something which would appeal to everybody or necessarily be appropriate to every situation. Sex magic may take many forms. Not all of them require delving into the dark reaches of pain and fear to be effective. Yet for those who will and dare this path, the potential for acquisition of raw power for use in magic is undeniably immense.

Recommended Reading:

SM 101: A Realistic Introduction by Jay Wiseman

The Topping Book by Dossie Easton and Catherine A. Liszt

The Bottoming Book by Dossie Easton and Catherine A. Liszt

The Sexually Dominant Woman by Lady Green

all above available from Greenery Press, San Francisco or in UK from Amazon.co.uk