

# Binding Intentions: *The Art of Rope Magic*

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Fiber magic has been a part of sacred mysteries for ages, the Fates measuring our lives, weaving them into the tapestry of life, and then cutting our cords when our time has run out. Let's discuss the applications of this magical form, from intention setting to connection building, blessings to curses, weaving lives together and relaying the strands of our own lives into the patterns we desire. Cingulums, dream catchers, restraint ordeals, laying astral cords, and creating "haunted" rope, rope and fiber magic comes in a thousand forms and we'll touch on as many as we can.

## ***Rope and Fiber Magic in Mythology and History***

**Grandmother Spider/Spider Woman:** Hopi, Pueblo, Choktaw, Cherokee, Navajo: Creator of the world, stars in sky as dew web, earth goddess, steals fire, trickster

**Fates (Moirai):** daughters of Themis (Necessity) and Zeue, Klotho (spins), Lakhesis (measures) and Atropos (cuts)

**Druidic Cingulum:** 9ft or inch cords, consecrated to one practitioner, that were tied around the waist to identify craft specialty, rank, and used as a dedicated tool for a variety of magical working

## ***Before you begin***

Setting Intention, clear, concise, repeated, resonating- time limits, how much of YOU in the work

Safe, Sane & Spooky?

Informed consent? With Magic

Dedication to deities, spirits, or specific workings

Did you really want to do \*that\*?

Solo work

Partnered work

Community work

Freeform vs. formal rituals

## ***The right fiber for your work***

❖ Natural materials: wool (sheep, goat common in Mesopotamia), cotton, coconut, hemp, jute

❖ Artificial fibers: nylon, climbing rope, parachute cord, mfp

❖ Non-fiber options applied to this work: plastic, leather cording

Harvesting, purchase, creation

Spinning (Having second magic worker create adds power, esp if priestess makes and sorcerer uses- Mesopotamia)

Dying, Treating or Transforming (writing on, painting, power of color choices)

Specific colors in some traditions

❖ Maiden, Mother, Crone work with rope (white, red, black), or Warrior, Father, Sage (red, black, white) or Youth, Warrior, Sage (black, red, white)

❖ White as marriage, white as mourning? – Cultural context

Cleansing, Blessing, imbuing, anointing and Consecrating (how permanent? Haunted props)

Physical work or Astral work (silver cords, shapeshifting, working with grandmother spider, spirit binding, re-laying cords)

## ***Weaving***

Braiding

Types of weaving and braiding, weaving and braiding spells

Loom work- types of looms, friendship bracelets, weaving onto or into object/flesh (piercing)

Magical/Sacred carpets in Middle East

Basket weaving (Native traditions)

Hair braiding (promise braids Norse, Italian hair magic, Women's hair forbidden in many cultures)

Human weaving (weaving dances)

Adorned weaving (beads, bells, shamanic belts in Northern traditions)

Gods Eyes (Pennsylvania Dutch)

Shell decorated nets for bringing prosperity

Wedding veils were once nets to catch bad energy and keep them out

## Sacred Clothing/Objects

- ❖ Ghost Dance shirts (bullet stopping, North America)
- ❖ Tzitzith, tassel/ fringe on the four corners of the Jewish Tallit or prayer shawl, wrapped and knotted uneven numbers of white virgin wool
- ❖ Arabic head-scarf knotted tassels in each of its four corners
- ❖ Non-fire poi by some modern magi (not original intent)

## Unweaving

### ***Knots as encoding information***

Quipos/Kipos (Inca/Quetchua)

Yong-ching (Chinese)

In literature, Madame Defarge in Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities used a knitted cypher to record the names of royalists and aristocrats

### ***Knottng***

Types of knot spells and types of knots and what they can mean

The power of different types of knots

- ❖ Slip knots
- ❖ Simple overhand
- ❖ Figure eight knots
- ❖ Tying pieces together
- ❖ Complex visual patterns
- ❖ Other knots

Spark visualization for tying a concept or energy “into” a knot (Sprints, anger, any emotion or energetic power)

Storing specific types of energy in advance (need new moon energy 2 weeks later? Bind it!)

Hair knotting: protection from evil eye via beard knotting (Islamic)

Spirit binding/saint binding via knot magic, release knots to release spirits (early Catholic magic)

Captured and kept knot series/cord as rosaries (Greek Orthodox)

Affirmations of oaths to deities while tying knot- knot as reminder of oath (Roman)

Hand fasting cords and love oaths “Tying the Knot” tying folks together (Roman, Greek, Druidic), Wiccan; tying cords representing individuals or families together- E. European, Celtic; forbidden to tie other knots at a wedding for fear it would prevent a true union (dark ages to 18th century Europe and England) – as well as “Untying the Knot.”

Tying Socks together and burying them to ensure happy marriage (Druid, Wiccan, English)

To knot a cloth that had touched a man's penis to bring impotence. Also tying a knot into a man's pubic hair and burying it in the earth. (Italian Witchcraft, Country English)

Dream/Spirit catchers (Native American esp Lakota dream catchers are said to work by trapping nightmares in the webbing while letting good dreams pass through the center hole.)

A cord with 40 knots might be kept as an amulet for protection against thieves. (Russian)

Witches' Ladder: A cord with 40 knots in it or a string of 40 beads, a meditation device or aid to concentration.

Knots of 9 (working from one end and adding power, untying order same as tying order (release #1, then two) while to “deactivate” untie from end that you ended with; other options, releasing one day at a time over 9 days; releasing all at once; leaving tied until work needs to end or goal has been achieved; tying far left, far right, and working way towards center in which case, note which end is the start end)

- ❖ Knots of Nine (Druidic)
  - By knot of ONE, the spell's begun ; By knot of TWO, it cometh true ; By knot of THREE, so mote it be
  - By knot of FOUR, this power I store ; By knot of FIVE, the spell's alive ; By knot of SIX, this spell I fix
  - By knot of SEVEN, events I'll leaven ; By knot of EIGHT, it will be Fate ; By knot of NINE, what's done is mine
- ❖ Or to Bind from harm: 9 knots in a cord while saying each time: "I bind you, (name), from harming yourself and from harming others." When finished: "Three times three, I bind you, (name), from harming yourself and from harming others." Then burn the cord so that the knots may never come undone.
- ❖ Other Cingulum spells: Healing (9 knotted cord around body part), Prevent bad dreams (hanging cord over bed), Protection (hang in home or use while walking around area being protected)

- ❖ Red wool thread with nine knots was sometimes worn by children to protect them from getting a fever. (Russian)

Knots of 8; 8 double knots to curse an enemy: "1. I go out onto the road, 2. I throw into the open field, 3. into the distance, 4. between the homesteads, 5. into the fields, 6. into the seas, 7. into the forest, 8. into the quaking bag." Leave this somewhere the victim will step on it. (Russian, wool yarn)

7 knots: commonly used in Voudon Wanga/Gris Gris, especially using fiber from target's clothing or using hair

5 knots were tied in a cord and kept about the body, protection from harm by a gun or other weapon (Russian)

### ***Bondage***

Knots around a body part can stop magically stop blood flow (Greek)

Tie cord around client's head/hands/feet (or a clay representation of the client before laying the clay figure on the prone body of the client before doing Incantation of Ea and turning patient to the West), then cut off the cord to release the problem. (Mesopotamia)

Rope/straps as a tool for Yoga

Nihliomancy

Ordeal Path Work: Suspension Bondage, sacred ropes for hook suspension, challenge bondage

Three color maiden/mother/crone dedication bondage

Forced meditation

Two person bondage: sexuality, hand fasting, warrior ordeals, friendship oaths

### ***Unknotting***

Visualization/reaffirmation of ritual of tying if knots of 9/8 in releasing knots

Unknotting knots (slip knots) at key points of ritual (Mesopotamia)

Wind Magic/Knot Blowers (Blowers of Knots)

- ❖ Wind knots sold to sailors- one knot makes moderate wind, 2 knots gale force, 3 knots hurricane
- ❖ Untying knots in clothes to end violent winds (Islam)
- ❖ Bag of wind in Odyssey

Untie all knots in house to ease labor pains (many cultures); reverse concepts- In black magic, knots to hinder or stop the birth of a child, killing both the mother and infant or cause a painful and difficult delivery

When someone dying, untie all knots in room to not keep the dying person bound to life/suffering (Russia, Italian)

Some magical lodges and circles advised that members not wear neckties, shoes with laces or braided hair in ritual for fear that the magic might get "caught" in the bindings.

No knots in clothing on way to Mecca (Islam)

Becoming Kala (untangling cords of life)

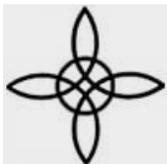
Buddhist "process of liberation" (releasing attachment, impermanence)

### ***Cutting/Destruction of Fiber***

Does it end the work, or does it send it physical to astral to reaffirm work?

The concerns of cutting silver cords/astral cords/aka threads (v. binding, unweaving, ripping out)

***Images of Knots*** – Meditation on or creating Yantras (India, Tibetan), spider webs, quabalistic tree of life



Witches' Knot: sympathetic charm AGAINST witchcraft in middle ages, scratched over doorways, best if drawn in one continuous motion. While the symbol appears to be made of intertwined vesica pisces, it does not represent feminine power, but in fact is four radiating half circles reflecting malefic winds.



Valknut: a knot of 9 angles made of 3 interlocking triangles, can effectively symbolize the Seiðr magician. Though a symbol of Odin, it is more associated with the processes he undertakes. Also known as the knot of the slain. The three triangles can be said to represent the three Nornir: Urda, Werdandi and Skuld, the goddesses determining past, present and that which is necessitated by the present. The nine points represent the nine worlds which the Seiðr sorcerer is at liberty to visit.