

# Magick

In the early seventies, I had read several books on spirituality; *The Adventure of Consciousness*, by Satprem (the most important, recounting the experience of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother), as well as many others, including those by Carlos Castañeda, describing the teachings of a Yaqui sorcerer named Don Juan.

I had concluded that these many readings teach the same thing: the need to live at the top of one's consciousness and to surrender to a higher force. Only the mythology and the rituals were different, they are just reminders.

Among these books, *Magick* by Aleister Crowley had caught my attention (although each time Crowley is mentioned, one adds: "this author is controversial").

Here is how Wikipedia describes Magick:

"The term Magick refers to a magical system used by Aleister Crowley. In its broadest sense, it can be any act done intentionally to bring about change. The addition of the "k" at the end of the word was popularized during the first half of the 20th century by Crowley when he made it the centerpiece of his mystical system, called Thelema. (...) Crowley saw Magick (magic) as the essential method to achieve true self-understanding and to act according to one's true will. Magic can be defined as any act aimed at achieving a desired effect. He differentiates between two complementary and indivisible systems, the mystical which allows Man to raise his consciousness to the level of spiritual entities; and Magick, which is the art of coming into contact with these said entities. But without mystic, there is no magic. For Crowley, the practice of Magick must essentially be used in order to achieve knowledge and conversation with its holy guardian angel, the Daemon of the Neoplatonists, the divine part which is above us, our God — what the Golden Dawn names the "superior genius".

In the summer of 1973, I acquired *Jean-du-Sud* and in the fall, sailed to the West Indies. On my return the following spring, stopping in a cay in the Exumas, while having a beer in a watering hole, I had seen at the next table someone showing his friends how to weave a fish and a bird from a coconut palm. Fascinated, I observed him discreetly and when he left, he left them on the table. I immediately grabbed them. Back on board, I managed to undo and redo the bird, but never managed to redo the fish, though much simpler. I hung the bird below the handrail inside the boat (as a reminder) and decided to surrender to its Magick power.

Shortly after my return from the West Indies, this Magick power manifested itself in a very tangible way: this six-month cruise had left me with an urge to leave again. But I still owed a good part of the money that the bank had lent me to purchase *Jean-du-Sud*. The bank manager made a small error and I found I could not have to repay whole amount.

Until then I had been quite honest and I had a bad conscience; I still hesitated. Having heard of a person who had just come back from the Sri Aurobindo ashram and had known the Mother, I sought her advice, assured that her opinion would be well inspired. During the conversation, it appeared that if I really wanted to take care of my soul, I could very well do it on my boat, and that the sum of the advantages far exceeded that of the disadvantages. To be sure of this, she suggested that we use this ancient

Chinese technique called Yi King, which "*allows man to penetrate the enigma of his destiny and takes one beyond any theology or any philosophical system, to a degree of limpid depth where the eye of the heart contemplates the evidence of the truth*" (Etienne Perrot - author of the preface -, *Yi King, Le Livre des transformations*). To each question asked, the answer provided by the combination of the hexagrams left no ambiguity: Leave! Go ahead! Do not be afraid! This is your way...! »

To leave, I had to take some sort of vow of poverty. However, I have never lacked the essential and have been able to receive my two daughters on board every summer holiday.

After a few years cruising on both sides of the Atlantic, I sensed that *Jean-du-Sud* needed a greater challenge to put under its keel. But to sail alone, I couldn't remain stuck to the helm: I needed a self-steering gear that could keep my boat on course even in the heaviest seas. I had already built two vanes that had served me well, but they would never have resisted in the Southern Ocean. After the equivalent of a year of research on the design, I still had not found an acceptable solution. I then sent a request (thought, prayer) to the *Magick-Byrd*: "I have been searching long enough; it might be time I find something!" Less than an hour later, Eureka! A very simple solution came to me, my problem was solved.

From the top of my consciousness, I felt the urge to go out to sea, alone and for a long time. The hull of my boat would be strong enough to withstand the Southern Ocean, but neither its mast nor its sails, not to mention all the additional equipment that would be needed. Without a penny, how to materialize all this? Simply ask myself, "What can I do today to make this project happen?" As soon as I considered the problem as a whole, taking into account the scale of the project and the limited means at my disposal, I was discouraged and tempted to give up. So I made a conscious effort not to anticipate, to confront problems only when they arose and to solve them as best I could. *Jean-du-Sud and the Magick-Byrd* tells the rest.

Who said: "Help yourself and Heaven will help you"?