

= Aleister Crowley =

Aleister Crowley (/ ˈkroʊli / ; born Edward Alexander Crowley ; 12 October 1875 ? 1 December 1947) was an English occultist , ceremonial magician , poet , painter , novelist , and mountaineer . He founded the religion and philosophy of Thelema , identifying himself as the prophet entrusted with guiding humanity into the Æon of Horus in the early 20th century .

Born to a wealthy Plymouth Brethren family in Royal Leamington Spa , Warwickshire , Crowley rejected this fundamentalist Christian faith to pursue an interest in Western esotericism . He was educated at the University of Cambridge , where he focused his attentions on mountaineering and poetry , resulting in several publications . Some biographers allege that here he was recruited into a British intelligence agency , further suggesting that he remained a spy throughout his life . In 1898 he joined the esoteric Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn , where he was trained in ceremonial magic by Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers and Allan Bennett . Moving to Boleskine House by Loch Ness in Scotland , he went mountaineering in Mexico with Oscar Eckenstein , before studying Hindu and Buddhist practices in India . He married Rose Edith Kelly and in 1904 they honeymooned in Cairo , Egypt , where Crowley claimed to have been contacted by a supernatural entity named Aiwass , who provided him with The Book of the Law , a sacred text that served as the basis for Thelema . Announcing the start of the Æon of Horus , The Book declared that its followers should adhere to the code of " Do what thou wilt " and seek to align themselves with their Will through the practice of magick .

After an unsuccessful attempt to climb Kanchenjunga and a visit to India and China , Crowley returned to Britain , where he attracted attention as a prolific author of poetry , novels , and occult literature . In 1907 , he and George Cecil Jones co @-@ founded a Thelemite order , the A ? A ? , through which they propagated the religion . After spending time in Algeria , in 1912 he was initiated into another esoteric order , the German @-@ based Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) , rising to become the leader of its British branch , which he reformulated in accordance with his Thelemite beliefs . Through the O.T.O. , Thelemite groups were established in Britain , Australia , and North America . Crowley spent the First World War in the United States , where he took up painting and campaigned for the German war effort against Britain , later revealing that he had infiltrated the pro @-@ German movement to assist the British intelligence services . In 1920 he established the Abbey of Thelema , a religious commune in Cefalù , Sicily where he lived with various followers . His libertine lifestyle led to denunciations in the British press , and the Italian government evicted him in 1923 . He divided the following two decades between France , Germany , and England , and continued to promote Thelema until his death .

Crowley gained widespread notoriety during his lifetime , being a recreational drug experimenter , bisexual and an individualist social critic . He was denounced in the popular press as " the wickedest man in the world " and a Satanist . Crowley has remained a highly influential figure over Western esotericism and the counter @-@ culture , and continues to be considered a prophet in Thelema . In 2002 , a BBC poll ranked him as the seventy @-@ third greatest Briton of all time .

= = Early life = =

= = = Youth : 1875 ? 94 = = =

Crowley was born as Edward Alexander Crowley at 30 Clarendon Square in Royal Leamington Spa , Warwickshire , on 12 October 1875 . His father , Edward Crowley (1834 ? 87) , was trained as an engineer , but his share in a lucrative family brewing business , Crowley 's Alton Ales , had allowed him to retire before his son was born . His mother , Emily Bertha Bishop (1848 ? 1917) , came from a Devonshire @-@ Somerset family and had a strained relationship with her son ; she described him as " the Beast " , a name that he revelled in . The couple had been married at London 's Kensington Registry Office in November 1874 , and were evangelical Christians . Crowley 's father had been born a Quaker , but had converted to the Exclusive Brethren , a faction of a Christian

fundamentalist group known as the Plymouth Brethren , with Emily joining him upon marriage . Crowley 's father was particularly devout , spending his time as a travelling preacher for the sect and reading a chapter from the Bible to his wife and son after breakfast every day . Following the death of their baby daughter in 1880 , in 1881 the Crowleys moved to Redhill , Surrey . At the age of 8 , Crowley was sent to H.T. Habershon 's evangelical Christian boarding school in Hastings , and then to Ebor preparatory school in Cambridge , run by the Reverend Henry d 'Arcy Champney , whom Crowley considered a sadist .

In March 1887 , when Crowley was 11 , his father died of tongue cancer . Crowley described this as a turning point in his life , and he always maintained an admiration of his father , describing him as " his hero and his friend " . Inheriting a third of his father 's wealth , he began misbehaving at school and was harshly punished by Champney ; Crowley 's family removed him from the school when he developed albuminuria . He then attended Malvern College and Tonbridge School , both of which he despised and left after a few terms . He became increasingly sceptical regarding Christianity , pointing out inconsistencies in the Bible to his religious teachers , and went against the Christian morality of his upbringing by smoking , masturbating , and having sex with prostitutes from whom he contracted gonorrhea . Sent to live with a Brethren tutor in Eastbourne , he undertook chemistry courses at Eastbourne College . Crowley developed interests in chess , poetry , and mountain climbing , and in 1894 climbed Beachy Head before visiting the Alps and joining the Scottish Mountaineering Club . The following year he returned to the Bernese Alps , climbing the Eiger , Trift , Jungfrau , Mönch , and Wetterhorn .

= = = Cambridge University : 1895 ? 98 = = =

Having adopted the name of Aleister over Edward , in October 1895 Crowley began a three @-@ year course at Trinity College , Cambridge , where he was entered for the Moral Science Tripos studying philosophy . With approval from his personal tutor , he changed to English literature , which was not then part of the curriculum offered . Crowley spent much of his time at university engaged in his pastimes , becoming president of the chess club and practising the game for two hours a day ; he briefly considered a professional career as a chess player . Crowley also embraced his love of literature and poetry , particularly the works of Richard Francis Burton and Percy Bysshe Shelley . Many of his own poems appeared in student publications such as The Granta , Cambridge Magazine , and Cantab . He continued his mountaineering , going on holiday to the Alps to climb every year from 1894 to 1898 , often with his friend Oscar Eckenstein , and in 1897 he made the first ascent of the Mönch without a guide . These feats led to his recognition in the Alpine mountaineering community .

Crowley had his first significant mystical experience while on holiday in Stockholm in December 1896 . Several biographers , including Lawrence Sutin , Richard Kaczynski , and Tobias Churton , believed that this was the result of Crowley 's first same @-@ sex sexual experience , which enabled him to recognise his bisexuality . At Cambridge , Crowley maintained a vigorous sex life , largely with female prostitutes , from one of whom he caught syphilis , but eventually he took part in same @-@ sex activities , despite their illegality . In October 1897 , Crowley met Herbert Charles Pollitt , president of the Cambridge University Footlights Dramatic Club , and the two entered into a relationship . They broke apart because Pollitt did not share Crowley 's increasing interest in Western esotericism , a breakup that Crowley would regret for many years .

In 1897 , Crowley travelled to St Petersburg in Russia , later claiming that he was trying to learn Russian as he was considering a future diplomatic career there . Biographers Richard Spence and Tobias Churton suggested that Crowley had done so as an intelligence agent under the employ of the British secret service , speculating that he had been enlisted while at Cambridge .

In October 1897 , a brief illness triggered considerations of mortality and " the futility of all human endeavour " , and Crowley abandoned all thoughts of a diplomatic career in favour of pursuing an interest in the occult . In March 1898 , he obtained A.E. Waite 's The Book of Black Magic and of Pacts (1898) , and then Karl von Eckartshausen 's The Cloud Upon the Sanctuary (1896) , furthering his occult interests . In 1898 Crowley privately published 100 copies of his poem

Aceldama : A Place to Bury Strangers In , but it was not a particular success . That same year he published a string of other poems , including White Stains , a Decadent collection of erotic poetry that was printed abroad lest its publication be prohibited by the British authorities . In July 1898 , he left Cambridge , not having taken any degree at all despite a " first class " showing in his 1897 exams and consistent " second class honours " results before that .

= = = The Golden Dawn : 1898 ? 99 = = =

In August 1898 , Crowley was in Zermatt , Switzerland , where he met the chemist Julian L. Baker , and the two began discussing their common interest in alchemy . Back in London , Baker introduced Crowley to George Cecil Jones , Baker 's brother in @-@ law , and a fellow member of the occult society known as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn , which had been founded in 1888 . Crowley was initiated into the Outer Order of the Golden Dawn on 18 November 1898 by the group 's leader , Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers . The ceremony took place in the Golden Dawn 's Isis @-@ Urania Temple held at London 's Mark Masons Hall , where Crowley took the magical motto and name " Frater Perdurabo " , which he interpreted as " I shall endure to the end " . Biographers Richard Spence and Tobias Churton have suggested that Crowley joined the Order under the command of the British secret services to monitor the activities of Mathers , who was known to be a Carlist .

Crowley moved into his own luxury flat at 67 ? 69 Chancery Lane and soon invited a senior Golden Dawn member , Allan Bennett , to live with him as his personal magical tutor . Bennett taught Crowley more about ceremonial magic and the ritual use of drugs , and together they performed the rituals of the Goetia , until Bennett left for South Asia to study Buddhism . In November 1899 , Crowley purchased Boleskine House in Foyers on the shore of Loch Ness in Scotland . He developed a love of Scottish culture , describing himself as the " Laird of Boleskine " , and took to wearing traditional highland dress , even during visits to London . He continued writing poetry , publishing Jezebel and Other Tragic Poems , Tales of Archais , Songs of the Spirit , Appeal to the American Republic , and Jephthah in 1898 ? 99 ; most gained mixed reviews from literary critics , although Jephthah was considered a particular critical success .

Crowley soon progressed through the lower grades of the Golden Dawn , and was ready to enter the group 's inner Second Order . He was unpopular in the group ; his bisexuality and libertine lifestyle had gained him a bad reputation , and he had developed feuds with some of the members , including W.B. Yeats . When the Golden Dawn 's London lodge refused to initiate Crowley into the Second Order , he visited Mathers in Paris , who personally admitted him into the Adeptus Minor Grade . A schism had developed between Mathers and the London members of the Golden Dawn , who were unhappy with his autocratic rule . Acting under Mathers ' orders , Crowley ? with the help of his mistress and fellow initiate Elaine Simpson ? attempted to seize the Vault of the Adepts , a temple space at 36 Blythe Road in West Kensington , from the London lodge members . When the case was taken to court , the judge ruled in favour of the London lodge , as they had paid for the space 's rent , leaving both Crowley and Mathers isolated from the group . Spence suggested that the entire scenario was part of an intelligence operation to undermine Mathers ' authority .

= = = Mexico , India , Paris , and marriage : 1900 ? 03 = = =

In 1900 , Crowley travelled to Mexico via the United States , settling in Mexico City and taking a local woman as his mistress . Developing a love of the country , he continued experimenting with ceremonial magic , working with John Dee 's Enochian invocations . He later claimed to have been initiated into Freemasonry while there , and he wrote a play based on Richard Wagner 's Tannhäuser as well as a series of poems , published as Oracles (1905) . Eckenstein joined him later that year , and together they climbed several mountains , including Iztaccihuatl , Popocatepetl , and Colima , the latter of which they had to abandon owing to a volcanic eruption . Spence has suggested that the purpose of the trip might have been to explore Mexican oil prospects for British intelligence . Leaving Mexico , Crowley headed to San Francisco before sailing for Hawaii aboard

the Nippon Maru . On the ship he had a brief affair with a married woman named Mary Alice Rogers ; saying he had fallen in love with her , he wrote a series of poems about the romance , published as Alice : An Adultery (1903) .

Briefly stopping in Japan and Hong Kong , Crowley reached Ceylon , where he met with Allan Bennett , who was there studying Shaivism . The pair spent some time in Kandy before Bennett decided to become a Buddhist monk in the Theravada tradition , travelling to Burma to do so . Crowley decided to tour India , devoting himself to the Hindu practice of raja yoga , from which he claimed to have achieved the spiritual state of dhyana . He spent much of this time studying at the Meenakshi Amman Temple in Madura . At this time he also composed and also wrote poetry which was published as The Sword of Song (1904) . He contracted malaria , and had to recuperate from the disease in Calcutta and Rangoon . In 1902 , he was joined in India by Eckenstein and several other mountaineers : Guy Knowles , H. Pfannl , V. Wesseley , and Jules Jacot @-@ Guillaumod . Together the Eckenstein @-@ Crowley expedition attempted K2 , which had never been climbed . On the journey , Crowley was afflicted with influenza , malaria , and snow blindness , and other expedition members were also struck with illness . They reached an altitude of 20 @,@ 000 feet (6 @,@ 100 m) before turning back .

Having arrived in Paris in November 1902 he socialised with friend and future brother @-@ in @-@ law , the painter Gerald Kelly , and through him became a fixture of the Parisian arts scene . Whilst there , Crowley authored a series of poems on the work of an acquaintance , the sculptor Auguste Rodin . These poems were later published as Rodin in Rime (1907) . One of those frequenting this milieu was W. Somerset Maugham , who after briefly meeting Crowley later used him as a model for the character of Oliver Haddo in his novel The Magician (1908) . Returning to Boleskine in April 1903 , in August Crowley wed Gerald 's sister Rose Edith Kelly in a " marriage of convenience " to prevent her entering an arranged marriage ; the marriage appalled the Kelly family and damaged his friendship with Gerald . Heading on a honeymoon to Paris , Cairo , and then Ceylon , Crowley fell in love with Rose and worked to prove his affections . While on his honeymoon , he wrote her a series of love poems , published as Rosa Mundi and other Love Songs (1906) , as well as authoring the religious satire Why Jesus Wept (1904) .

= = Developing Thelema = =

= = = Egypt and The Book of the Law : 1904 = = =

In February 1904 , Crowley and Rose arrived in Cairo . Claiming to be a prince and princess , they rented an apartment in which Crowley set up a temple room and began invoking ancient Egyptian deities , while studying Islamic mysticism and Arabic . According to Crowley 's later account , Rose regularly became delirious and informed him " they are waiting for you " . On 18 March , she explained that " they " were the god Horus , and on 20 March proclaimed that " the Equinox of the Gods has come " . She led him to a nearby museum , where she showed him a seventh @-@ century BCE mortuary stele known as the Stele of Ankh @-@ ef @-@ en @-@ Khonsu ; Crowley thought it important that the exhibit 's number was 666 , the number of the beast in Christian belief , and in later years termed the artefact the " Stele of Revealing . "

According to Crowley 's later statements , on 8 April he heard a disembodied voice that claimed to be that of Aiwass , the messenger of Horus , or Hoor @-@ Paar @-@ Kraat . Crowley said that he wrote down everything the voice told him over the course of the next three days , and titled it Liber L vel Legis or The Book of the Law . The book proclaimed that humanity was entering a new Aeon , and that Crowley would serve as its prophet . It stated that a supreme moral law was to be introduced in this Aeon , " Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law , " and that people should learn to live in tune with their Will . This book , and the philosophy that it espoused , became the cornerstone of Crowley 's religion , Thelema . Crowley said that at the time he had been unsure what to do with The Book of the Law . Often resenting it , he said that he ignored the instructions which the text commanded him to perform , which included taking the Stele of Revealing from the

museum , fortifying his own island , and translating the book into all the world 's languages . According to his account , he instead sent typescripts of the work to several occultists he knew , putting the manuscript away and ignoring it .

= = = Kangchenjunga and China : 1905 ? 06 = = =

Returning to Boleskine , Crowley came to believe that Mathers had begun using magic against him , and the relationship between the two broke down . On 28 July 1905 , Rose gave birth to Crowley 's first child , a daughter named Lilith , with Crowley authoring the pornographic *Snowdrops From a Curate 's Garden* to entertain his recuperating wife . He also founded a publishing company through which to publish his poetry , naming it the Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth in parody of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge . Among its first publications were Crowley 's *Collected Works* , edited by Ivor Back . His poetry often received strong reviews (either positive or negative) , but never sold well . In an attempt to gain more publicity , he issued a reward of £ 100 for the best essay on his work . The winner of this was J. F. C. Fuller , a British Army officer and military historian , whose essay , *The Star in the West* (1907) , heralded Crowley 's poetry as some of the greatest ever written .

Crowley decided to climb Kangchenjunga in the Himalayas of Nepal , widely recognised as the world 's most treacherous mountain . Assembling a team consisting of Jacot @-@ Guillaumod , Charles Adolphe Reymond , Alexis Pache , and Alceste C. Rigo de Righi , the expedition was marred by much argument between Crowley and the others , who thought that he was reckless . They eventually mutinied against Crowley 's control , with the other climbers heading back down the mountain as nightfall approached despite Crowley 's warnings that it was too dangerous . Subsequently , Pache and several porters were killed in an accident , something for which Crowley was widely blamed by the mountaineering community .

Spending time in Moharbhaj , where he took part in big game hunting and wrote the homoerotic work *The Scented Garden* , Crowley met up with Rose and Lilith in Calcutta before being forced to leave India after shooting dead a native man who tried to mug him . Briefly visiting Bennett in Burma , Crowley and his family decided to tour Southern China , hiring porters and a nanny for the purpose . Spence has suggested that this trip to China was orchestrated as part of a British intelligence scheme to monitor the region 's opium trade . Crowley smoked opium throughout the journey , which took the family from Tengyueh through to Yungchang , Tali , Yunnanfu , and then Hanoi . On the way he spent much time on spiritual and magical work , reciting the " Bornless Ritual " , an invocation to his Holy Guardian Angel , on a daily basis .

While Rose and Lilith returned to Europe , Crowley headed to Shanghai to meet old friend Elaine Simpson , who was fascinated by *The Book of the Law* ; together they performed rituals in an attempt to contact Aiwass . Crowley then sailed to Japan and Canada , before continuing to New York City , where he unsuccessfully solicited support for a second expedition up Kangchenjunga . Upon arrival in Britain , Crowley learned that his daughter Lilith had died of typhoid in Rangoon , something he later blamed on Rose 's increasing alcoholism . Under emotional distress , his health began to suffer , and he underwent a series of surgical operations . He began short @-@ lived romances with actress Vera " Lola " Neville (née Snepp) and author Ada Leverson , while Rose gave birth to Crowley 's second daughter , Lola Zaza , in February 1907 .

= = = The A ? A ? and the Holy Books of Thelema : 1907 ? 09 = = =

With his old mentor George Cecil Jones , Crowley continued performing the Abramelin rituals at the Ashdown Park Hotel in Coulsdon , Surrey . Crowley claimed that in doing so he attained samadhi , or union with Godhead , thereby marking a turning point in his life . Making heavy use of hashish during these rituals , he wrote an essay on " The Psychology of Hashish " (1909) in which he championed the drug as an aid to mysticism . He also claimed to have been contacted once again by Aiwass in late October and November 1907 , adding that Aiwass dictated two further texts to him , " Liber VII " and " Liber Cordis Cincti Serpente " , both of which were later classified in the corpus

of Holy Books of Thelema . Crowley wrote down more Thelemic Holy Books during the last two months of the year , including " Liber LXVI " , " Liber Arcanorum " , " Liber Porta Lucis , Sub Figura X " , " Liber Tau " , " Liber Trigrammaton " and " Liber DCCCXIII vel Ararita " , which he again claimed to have received from a preternatural source . Crowley stated that in June 1909 , when the manuscript of The Book of the Law was rediscovered at Boleskine , he developed the opinion that Thelema represented objective truth .

Crowley 's inheritance was running out . Trying to earn money , he was hired by George Montagu Bennett , the Earl of Tankerville , to help protect him from witchcraft ; recognising Bennett 's paranoia as being based in his cocaine addiction , Crowley took him on holiday to France and Morocco to recuperate . In 1907 , he also began taking in paying students , whom he instructed in occult and magical practice . Victor Neuburg , whom Crowley met in February 1907 , became his sexual partner and closest disciple ; in 1908 the pair toured northern Spain before heading to Tangier , Morocco . The following year Neuburg stayed at Boleskine , where he and Crowley engaged in sadomasochism . Crowley continued to write prolifically , producing such works of poetry as Ambergris , Clouds Without Water , and Konx Om Pax , as well as his first attempt at an autobiography , The World 's Tragedy . Recognising the popularity of short horror stories , Crowley wrote his own , some of which were published , and he also published several articles in Vanity Fair , a magazine edited by his friend Frank Harris . He also wrote Liber 777 , a book of magical and Qabalistic correspondences that borrowed from Mathers and Bennett .

In November 1907 , Crowley and Jones decided to found an occult order to act as a successor to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn , being aided in doing so by Fuller . The result was the A ? A ? . The group 's headquarters and temple were situated at 124 Victoria Street in central London , and their rites borrowed much from those of the Golden Dawn , but with an added Thelemic basis . Its earliest members included solicitor Richard Noel Warren , artist Austin Osman Spare , Horace Sheridan @-@ Bickers , author George Raffalovich , Francis Henry Everard Joseph Feilding , engineer Herbert Edward Inman , Kenneth Ward , and Charles Stansfeld Jones . In March 1909 , Crowley began production of a biannual periodical titled The Equinox . He billed this periodical , which was to become the " Official Organ " of the A ? A ? , as " The Review of Scientific Illuminism " .

Crowley had become increasingly frustrated with Rose 's alcoholism , and in November 1909 he divorced her on the grounds of his own adultery . Lola was entrusted to Rose 's care ; the couple remained friends and Rose continued to live at Boleskine . Her alcoholism worsened , and as a result she was institutionalised in September 1911 .

= = = Algeria and the Rites of Eleusis : 1909 ? 11 = = =

In November 1909 , Crowley and Neuburg travelled to Algeria , touring the desert from El Arba to Aumale , Bou Saâda , and then D? 'leh Addin , with Crowley reciting the Quran on a daily basis . During the trip he invoked the thirty aethyrs of Enochian magic , with Neuburg recording the results , later published in The Equinox as The Vision and the Voice . Following a mountaintop sex magic ritual , Crowley also performed an invocation to the demon Choronzon involving blood sacrifice , considering the results to be a watershed in his magical career . Returning to London in January 1910 , Crowley found that Mathers was suing him for publishing Golden Dawn secrets in The Equinox ; the court found in favour of Crowley . The case was widely reported in the press , with Crowley gaining wider fame . Crowley enjoyed this , and played up to the sensationalist stereotype of being a Satanist and advocate of human sacrifice , despite being neither .

The publicity attracted new members to the A ? A ? , among them Frank Bennett , James Bayley , Herbert Close , and James Windram . The Australian violinist Leila Waddell soon became Crowley 's lover . Deciding to expand his teachings to a wider audience , Crowley developed the Rites of Artemis , a public performance of magic and symbolism featuring A ? A ? members personifying various deities . It was first performed at the A ? A ? headquarters , with attendees given a fruit punch containing peyote to enhance their experience . Various members of the press attended , and reported largely positively on it . In October and November 1910 , Crowley decided to stage

something similar , the Rites of Eleusis , at Caxton Hall , Westminster ; this time press reviews were mixed . Crowley came under particular criticism from West de Wend Fenton , editor of The Looking Glass newspaper , who called him " one of the most blasphemous and cold @-@ blooded villains of modern times " . Fenton 's articles suggested that Crowley and Jones were involved in homosexual activity ; Crowley did not mind , but Jones unsuccessfully sued for libel . Fuller broke off his friendship and involvement with Crowley over the scandal , and Crowley and Neuburg returned to Algeria for further magical workings .

The Equinox continued publishing , and various books of literature and poetry were also published under its imprint , like Crowley 's Ambergris , The Winged Beetle , and The Scented Garden , as well as Neuburg 's The Triumph of Pan and Ethel Archer 's The Whirlpool . In 1911 , Crowley and Waddell holidayed in Montigny @-@ sur @-@ Loing , where he wrote prolifically , producing poems , short stories , plays , and 19 works on magic and mysticism , including the two final Holy Books of Thelema . In Paris , he met Mary Desti , who became his next " Scarlet Woman " , with the two undertaking magical workings in St. Moritz ; Crowley believed that one of the Secret Chiefs , Ab @-@ ul @-@ Diz , was speaking through her . Based on Desti 's statements when in trance , Crowley wrote the two @-@ volume Book 4 (1912 ? 13) and at the time developed the spelling " magick " in reference to the paranormal phenomenon as a means of distinguishing it from the stage magic of illusionists .

= = = Ordo Templi Orientis and the Paris Working : 1912 ? 14 = = =

In early 1912 , Crowley published The Book of Lies , a work of mysticism that biographer Lawrence Sutin described as " his greatest success in merging his talents as poet , scholar , and magus " . The German occultist Theodor Reuss later accused him of publishing some of the secrets of his own occult order , the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) , within The Book . Crowley convinced Reuss that the similarities were coincidental , and the two became friends . Reuss appointed Crowley as head of the O.T.O 's British branch , the Mystera Mystica Maxima (MMM) , and at a ceremony in Berlin Crowley adopted the magical name of Baphomet and was proclaimed " X ° Supreme Rex and Sovereign Grand Master General of Ireland , Iona , and all the Britons " . With Reuss ' permission , Crowley set about advertising the MMM and re @-@ writing many O.T.O. rituals , which were then based largely on Freemasonry ; his incorporation of Thelemite elements proved controversial in the group . Fascinated by the O.T.O 's emphasis on sex magic , Crowley devised a magical working based on anal sex and incorporated it into the syllabus for those O.T.O. members who had been initiated into the eleventh degree .

In March 1913 Crowley acted as producer for The Ragged Ragtime Girls , a group of female violinists led by Waddell , as they performed at London 's Old Tivoli theatre . They subsequently performed in Moscow for six weeks , where Crowley had a sadomasochistic relationship with the Hungarian Anny Ringler . In Moscow , Crowley continued to write plays and poetry , including " Hymn to Pan " , and the Gnostic Mass , a Thelemic ritual that became a key part of O.T.O. liturgy . Churton suggested that Crowley had travelled to Moscow on the orders of British intelligence to spy on revolutionary elements in the city . In January 1914 Crowley and Neuburg settled in to an apartment in Paris , where the former was involved in the controversy surrounding Jacob Epstein 's new monument to Oscar Wilde . Together Crowley and Neuburg performed the six @-@ week " Paris Working " , a period of intense ritual involving strong drug use in which they invoked the gods Mercury and Jupiter . As part of the ritual , the couple performed acts of sex magic together , at times being joined by journalist Walter Duranty . Inspired by the results of the Working , Crowley authored Liber Agapé , a treatise on sex magic . Following the Paris Working , Neuburg began to distance himself from Crowley , resulting in an argument in which Crowley cursed him .

= = = United States : 1914 ? 19 = = =

By 1914 Crowley was living a hand @-@ to @-@ mouth existence , relying largely on donations from A ? A ? members and dues payments made to O.T.O. In May he transferred ownership of

Boleskine House to the MMM for financial reasons , and in July he went mountaineering in the Swiss Alps . During this time the First World War broke out . After recuperating from a bout of phlebitis , Crowley set sail for the United States aboard the RMS Lusitania in October 1914 . Arriving in New York City , he moved into a hotel and began earning money writing for the American edition of Vanity Fair and undertaking freelance work for the famed astrologer Evangeline Adams . In the city , he continued experimenting with sex magic , through the use of masturbation , female prostitutes , and male clients of a Turkish bathhouse ; all of these encounters were documented in his diaries .

Professing to be of Irish ancestry and a supporter of Irish independence from Great Britain , Crowley began to espouse support for Germany in their war against Britain . He became involved in New York 's pro @-@ German movement , and in January 1915 German spy George Sylvester Viereck employed him as a writer for his propagandist paper , The Fatherland , which was dedicated to keeping the US neutral in the conflict . In later years , detractors denounced Crowley as a traitor to Britain for this action . In reality , Crowley was a double agent , working for the British intelligence services to infiltrate and undermine Germany 's operation in New York . Many of his articles in The Fatherland were hyperbolic , for instance comparing Kaiser Wilhelm II to Jesus Christ ; in July 1915 he orchestrated a publicity stunt ? reported on by The New York Times ? in which he declared independence for Ireland in front of the Statue of Liberty ; the real intention was to make the German lobby appear ridiculous in the eyes of the American public . It has been argued that he encouraged the German Navy to destroy the Lusitania , informing them that it would ensure the US stayed out of the war , while in reality hoping that it would bring the US into the war on Britain 's side .

Crowley entered into a relationship with Jeanne Robert Foster , with whom he toured the West Coast . In Vancouver , headquarters of the North American O.T.O. , he met with Charles Stansfeld Jones and Wilfred Talbot Smith to discuss the propagation of Thelema on the continent . In Detroit he experimented with anhalonium at Parke @-@ Davis , then visited Seattle , San Francisco , Santa Cruz , Los Angeles , San Diego , Tijuana , and the Grand Canyon , before returning to New York . There he befriended Ananda Coomaraswamy and his wife Alice Richardson ; Crowley and Richardson performed sex magic in April 1916 , following which she became pregnant and then miscarried . Later that year he took a " magical retirement " to a cabin by Lake Pasquaney owned by Evangeline Adams . There , he made heavy use of drugs and undertook a ritual after which he proclaimed himself " Master Therion " . He also wrote several short stories based on J.G. Frazer 's The Golden Bough and a work of literary criticism , The Gospel According to Bernard Shaw .

In December he moved to New Orleans , his favourite US city , before spending February 1917 with evangelical Christian relatives in Titusville , Florida . Returning to New York , he moved in with artist and A ? A ? member Leon Engers Kennedy , in May learning of his mother 's death . After the collapse of The Fatherland , Crowley continued his association with Viereck , who appointed him contributing editor of arts journal The International . Crowley used it to promote Thelema , but it soon ceased publication . He then moved to the studio apartment of Roddie Minor , who became his partner and Scarlet Woman . Through their rituals , Crowley believed that they were contacted by a preternatural entity named Alamantrah . The relationship soon ended .

In 1918 , Crowley went on a magical retreat in the wilderness of Esopus Island on the Hudson River . Here , he began a translation of the Tao Te Ching , painted Thelemic slogans on the riverside cliffs , and ? he later claimed ? experienced past life memories of being Ge Xuan , Pope Alexander VI , Alessandro Cagliostro , and Eliphas Levi . Back in New York , he moved to Greenwich Village , where he took Leah Hirsig as his lover and next Scarlet Woman . He took up painting as a hobby , exhibiting his work at the Greenwich Village Liberal Club and attracting the attention of the New York Evening World . With the financial assistance of sympathetic Freemasons , Crowley revived The Equinox with the first issue of volume III , known as " The Blue Equinox " . He spent mid @-@ 1919 on a climbing holiday in Montauk before returning to London in December .

= = = Abbey of Thelema : 1920 ? 23 = = =

Now destitute and back in London , Crowley came under attack from the tabloid John Bull , which labelled him traitorous " scum " for his work with the German war effort ; several friends aware of his intelligence work urged him to sue , but he decided not to . When he was suffering from asthma , a doctor prescribed him heroin , to which he soon became addicted . In January 1920 , he moved to Paris , renting a house in Fontainebleau with Leah Hirsig ; they were soon joined in a ménage à trois by Ninette Shumway , and also by Leah 's newborn daughter Anne " Poupée " Leah . Crowley had ideas of forming a community of Thelemites , which he called the Abbey of Thelema after the Abbaye de Thélème in François Rabelais ' satire Gargantua and Pantagruel . After consulting the I Ching , he chose Cefalù (on Sicily , Italy) as a location , and after arriving there , began renting the old Villa Santa Barbara as his Abbey on 2 April .

Moving to the commune with Hirsig , Shumway , and their children Hansi , Howard , and Poupée , Crowley described the scenario as " perfectly happy ... my idea of heaven . " They wore robes , and performed rituals to the sun god Ra at set times during the day , also occasionally performing the Gnostic Mass ; the rest of the day they were left to follow their own interests . Undertaking widespread correspondences , Crowley continued to paint , wrote a commentary on The Book of the Law , and revised the third part of Book 4 . He offered a libertine education for the children , allowing them to play all day and witness acts of sex magic . He occasionally travelled to Palermo to visit rent boys and buy supplies , including drugs ; his heroin addiction came to dominate his life , and cocaine began to erode his nasal cavity . There was no cleaning rota , and wild dogs and cats wandered throughout the building , which soon became unsanitary . Poupée died in October 1920 , and Ninette gave birth to a daughter , Astarte Lulu Panthea , soon afterwards .

New followers continued to arrive at the Abbey to be taught by Crowley . Among them was film star Jane Wolfe , who arrived in July 1920 , where she was initiated into the A ? A ? and became Crowley 's secretary . Another was Cecil Frederick Russell , who often argued with Crowley , disliking the same @-@ sex sexual magic that he was required to perform , and left after a year . More conducive was the Australian Thelemite Frank Bennett , who also spent several months at the Abbey . In February 1922 , Crowley returned to Paris for a retreat in an unsuccessful attempt to kick his heroin addiction . He then went to London in search of money , where he published articles in The English Review criticising the Dangerous Drugs Act 1920 and wrote a novel , Diary of a Drug Fiend , completed in July . On publication , it received mixed reviews ; he was lambasted by the Sunday Express , which called for its burning and used its influence to prevent further reprints .

Subsequently , a young Thelemite named Raoul Loveday moved to the Abbey with his wife Betty May ; while Loveday was devoted to Crowley , May detested him and life at the commune . She later said that Loveday was made to drink the blood of a sacrificed cat , and that they were required to cut themselves with razors every time they used the pronoun " I " . Loveday drank from a local polluted stream , soon developing a liver infection resulting in his death in February 1923 . Returning to London , May told her story to the press . John Bull proclaimed Crowley " the wickedest man in the world " and " a man we 'd like to hang " , and although Crowley deemed many of their accusations against him to be slanderous , he was unable to afford the legal fees to sue them . As a result , John Bull continued its attack , with its stories being repeated in newspapers throughout Europe and in North America . The Fascist government of Benito Mussolini learned of Crowley 's activities and in April 1923 he was given a deportation notice forcing him to leave Italy ; without him , the Abbey closed .

= = Later life = =

= = Tunisia , Paris , and London : 1923 ? 29 = =

Crowley and Hirsig went to Tunis , where , dogged by continuing poor health , he unsuccessfully tried again to give up heroin , and began writing what he termed his " autohagiography " , The Confessions of Aleister Crowley . They were joined in Tunis by the Thelemite Norman Mudd , who became Crowley 's public relations consultant . Employing a local boy , Mohammad ben Brahim , as

his servant , Crowley went with him on a retreat to Nefta , where they performed sex magic together . In January 1924 , Crowley travelled to Nice , France , where he met with Frank Harris , underwent a series of nasal operations , and visited the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man , and had a positive opinion of its founder , George Gurdjieff . Destitute , he took on a wealthy student , Alexander Zu Zolar , before taking on another American follower , Dorothy Olsen . Crowley took Olsen back to Tunisia for a magical retreat in Nefta , where he also wrote To Man (1924) , a declaration of his own status as a prophet entrusted with bringing Thelema to humanity . After spending the winter in Paris , in early 1925 Crowley and Olsen returned to Tunis , where he wrote The Heart of the Master (1938) as an account of a vision he experienced in a trance . In March Olsen became pregnant , and Hirsig was called to take care of her ; she miscarried , following which Crowley took Olsen back to France . Hirsig later distanced herself from Crowley , who then denounced her .

According to Crowley , Reuss had named him head of the O.T.O. upon his death , but this was challenged by a leader of the German O.T.O. , Heinrich Tränker . Tränker called the Hohenleuben Conference in Thuringia , Germany , which Crowley attended . There , prominent members like Karl Germer and Martha Kuntzel championed Crowley 's leadership , but other key figures like Albin Grau , Oskar Hopfer , and Henri Birven backed Tränker by opposing it , resulting in a split in the O.T.O. Moving to Paris , where he broke with Olsen in 1926 , Crowley went through a large number of lovers over the following years , with whom he experimented in sex magic . Throughout , he was dogged by poor health , largely caused by his heroin and cocaine addictions . In 1928 , Crowley was introduced to young Englishman Israel Regardie , who embraced Thelema and became Crowley 's secretary for the next three years . That year , Crowley also met Gerald Yorke , who began organising Crowley 's finances but never became a Thelemite ! He also befriended Thomas Driberg ; Driberg did not accept Thelema either . It was here that Crowley also published one of his most significant works , Magick in Theory and Practice , which received little attention at the time .

In December 1929 Crowley met the Nicaraguan Maria Teresa Sanchez . Crowley was deported from France by the authorities , who disliked his reputation and feared that he was a German agent . So that she could join him in Britain , Crowley married Sanchez in August 1929 . Now based in London , Mandrake Press agreed to publish his autobiography in a limited edition six @-@ volume set , also publishing his novel Moonchild and book of short stories The Stratagem . Mandrake went into liquidation in November 1930 , before the entirety of Crowley 's Confessions could be published . Mandrake 's owner P.R. Stephenson meanwhile wrote The Legend of Aleister Crowley , an analysis of the media coverage surrounding him .

= = = Berlin and London : 1930 ? 38 = = =

In April 1930 , Crowley moved to Berlin , where he took Hanni Jaegar as his magical partner ; the relationship was troubled . In September he went to Lisbon in Portugal to meet the poet Fernando Pessoa . There , he decided to fake his own death , doing so with Pessoa 's help at the Boca do Inferno rock formation . He then returned to Berlin , where he reappeared three weeks later at the opening of his art exhibition at the Gallery Neumann @-@ Nierendorf . Crowley 's paintings fitted with the fashion for German Expressionism ; few of them sold , but the press reports were largely favourable . In August 1931 , he took Bertha Busch as his new lover ; they had a violent relationship , and often physically assaulted one another . He continued to have affairs with both men and women while in the city , and met with famous people like Aldous Huxley and Alfred Adler . After befriending him , in January 1932 he took the communist Gerald Hamilton as a lodger , through whom he was introduced to many figures within the Berlin far left ; it is possible that he was operating as a spy for British intelligence at this time , monitoring the communist movement .

Crowley left Busch and returned to London , where he took Pearl Brooksmith as his new Scarlet Woman . Undergoing further nasal surgery , it was here in 1932 that he was invited to be guest of honour at Foyles ' Literary Luncheon , also being invited by Harry Price to speak at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research . In need of money , he launched a series of court cases against people whom he believed had libelled him , some of which proved successful . He gained much

publicity for his lawsuit against Constable and Co for publishing Nina Hamnett 's Laughing Torso (1932) ? a book he thought libelled him ? but lost the case . The court case added to Crowley 's financial problems , and in February 1935 he was declared bankrupt . During the hearing , it was revealed that Crowley had been spending three times his income for several years .

Crowley developed a platonic friendship with Deidre Patricia O 'Doherty ; she offered to bear his child , who was born in May 1937 . Named Randall Gair , Crowley nicknamed him Aleister Atatürk . Crowley continued to socialise with friends , holding curry parties in which he cooked particularly spicy food for them . In 1936 , he published his first book in six years , The Equinox of the Gods , which contained a facsimile of The Book of the Law and was considered to be volume III , number 3 , of The Equinox periodical . The work sold well , resulting in a second print run . In 1937 he gave a series of public lectures on yoga in Soho . Crowley was now living largely off contributions supplied by the O.T.O. ' s Agape Lodge in California , led by rocket scientist John Whiteside " Jack " Parsons . Crowley was intrigued by the rise of Nazism in Germany , and influenced by his friend Martha Kuntzel believed that Adolf Hitler might convert to Thelema ; when the Nazis abolished the German O.T.O. and imprisoned Germer , who fled to the US , Crowley then lambasted Hitler as a black magician .

= = = Second World War and death : 1939 ? 47 = = =

When the Second World War broke out , Crowley wrote to the Naval Intelligence Division offering his services , but they declined . He associated with a variety of figures in Britain 's intelligence community at the time , including Dennis Wheatley , Roald Dahl , Ian Fleming , and Maxwell Knight , and claimed to have been behind the " V for Victory " sign first used by the BBC ; this has never been proven . In 1940 , his asthma worsened , and with his German @-@ produced medication unavailable , he returned to using heroin , once again becoming addicted . As the Blitz hit London , Crowley relocated to Torquay , where he was briefly hospitalised with asthma , and entertained himself with visits to the local chess club . Tiring of Torquay , he returned to London , where he was visited by American Thelemite Grady McMurtry , to whom Crowley awarded the title of " Hymenaeus Alpha " . He stipulated that though Germer would be his immediate successor , McMurtry should succeed Germer as head of the O.T.O. after the latter 's death . With O.T.O. initiate Lady Frieda Harris , Crowley developed plans to produce a tarot card set , designed by him and painted by Harris . Accompanying this was a book , published in a limited edition as The Book of Thoth by Chiswick Press in 1944 . To aid the war effort , he wrote a proclamation on the rights of humanity , Liber Oz , and a poem for the liberation of France , Le Gauloise . Crowley 's final publication during his lifetime was a book of poetry , Olla : An Anthology of Sixty Years of Song . Another of his projects , Aleister Explains Everything , was posthumously published as Magick Without Tears .

In April 1944 Crowley briefly moved to Aston Clinton in Buckinghamshire , where he was visited by the poet Nancy Cunard , before relocating to Hastings in Sussex , where he took up residence at the Netherwood boarding house . He took a young man named Kenneth Grant as his secretary , paying him in magical teaching rather than wages . He was also introduced to John Symonds , whom he appointed to be his literary executor ; Symonds thought little of Crowley , later publishing negative biographies of him . Corresponding with the illusionist Arnold Crowther , it was through him that Crowley was introduced to Gerald Gardner , the future founder of Gardnerian Wicca . They became friends , with Crowley authorising Gardner to revive Britain 's ailing O.T.O. Another visitor was Eliza Marian Butler , who interviewed Crowley for her book The Myth of the Magus . Other friends and family also spent time with him , among them Doherty and Crowley 's son Aleister Atatürk . On 1 December 1947 , Crowley died at Netherwood of chronic bronchitis aggravated by pleurisy and myocardial degeneration , aged 72 . His funeral was held at a Brighton crematorium on 5 December ; about a dozen people attended , and Louis Wilkinson read excerpts from the Gnostic Mass , The Book of the Law , and " Hymn to Pan " . The funeral generated press controversy , and was labelled a Black Mass by the tabloids . Crowley 's ashes were sent to Germer in the US , who buried them in his garden in Hampton , New Jersey .

= = Beliefs and thought = =

Crowley 's thought was not always cohesive , and was influenced by a variety of sources , ranging from eastern religious movements and practices like Hindu yoga and Buddhism , scientific naturalism , and various currents within Western esotericism , among them ceremonial magic , alchemy , astrology , Rosicrucianism , Kabbalah , and the Tarot . Philosopher John Moore opined that Crowley 's thought was rooted in Romanticism and the Decadent movement , an assessment shared by historian Alex Owen , who noted that Crowley adhered to the " modus operandi " of the decadent movement throughout his life .

Crowley believed that the twentieth century marked humanity 's entry to the Aeon of Horus , a new era in which humans would take increasing control of their destiny . He believed that this Aeon follows on from the Aeon of Osiris , in which paternalistic religions like Christianity , Islam , and Buddhism dominated the world , and that this in turn had followed the Aeon of Isis , which had been maternalistic and dominated by goddess worship . Thelema revolves around the idea that human beings each have their own True Will that they should discover and pursue , and that this exists in harmony with the Cosmic Will that pervades the universe . The moral code of " Do What Thou Wilt " is believed by Thelemites to be the faith 's ethical law , although academic Marco Pasi noted that this was not anarchistic or libertarian in structure , as Crowley saw individuals as part of a wider societal organism .

Crowley believed in the objective existence of magic , which he chose to spell " Magick " . In his book *Magick in Theory and Practice* , Crowley defined Magick as " the Science and Art of causing change to occur in conformity with Will " . He also told his disciple Karl Germer that " Magick is getting into communication with individuals who exist on a higher plane than ours . Mysticism is the raising of oneself to their level . " Crowley saw Magick as a third way between religion and science , giving *The Equinox* the subtitle of " The Method of Science ; the Aim of Religion " .

Both during his life and after it , Crowley has been widely described as a Satanist , usually by detractors . Crowley stated he did not consider himself a Satanist , nor did he worship Satan , as he did not accept the Christian world view in which Satan was believed to exist . He was also accused of advocating human sacrifice , largely because of a passage in Book 4 in which he stated that " A male child of perfect innocence and high intelligence is the most satisfactory victim " . This was intended as a veiled reference to male masturbation .

= = Personal life = =

Crowley biographer Martin Booth asserted that Crowley was " self @-@ confident , brash , eccentric , egotistic , highly intelligent , arrogant , witty , wealthy , and , when it suited him , cruel " . Similarly , Richard Spence noted that Crowley was " capable of immense physical and emotional cruelty " . Biographer Lawrence Sutin noted that Crowley exhibited " courage , skill , dauntless energy , and remarkable focus of will " while at the same time showing a " blind arrogance , petty fits of bile , [and] contempt for the abilities of his fellow men " . The Thelemite Lon Milo DuQuette noted that Crowley " was by no means perfect " and " often alienated those who loved him dearest . "

Crowley enjoyed being outrageous and flouting conventional morality , with John Symonds noting that he " was in revolt against the moral and religious values of his time " . Crowley 's political thought was subjected to an in @-@ depth study by academic Marco Pasi , who noted that for Crowley , socio @-@ political concerns were subordinate to metaphysical and spiritual ones . Pasi argued that it was difficult to classify Crowley as being either on the political left or right , but he was perhaps best categorised as a " conservative revolutionary " despite not being affiliated with the German @-@ based conservative revolutionary movement . Pasi noted that Crowley sympathised with extreme ideologies like Nazism and Marxism @-@ Leninism , in that they wished to violently overturn society , and hoped that both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union might adopt Thelema . Crowley described democracy as an " imbecile and nauseating cult of weakness " , and commented that *The Book of the Law* proclaimed that " there is the master and there is the slave ; the noble and the serf ; the ' lone wolf ' and the herd " . In this attitude he was influenced by the work of Friedrich

Nietzsche and by Social Darwinism . Crowley also saw himself as an aristocrat , describing himself as Laird Boleskine ; he had contempt for most of the British aristocracy , and once described his ideology as " aristocratic communism " .

Crowley was bisexual , and exhibited a sexual preference for women . In particular he had an attraction toward " exotic women " , and claimed to have fallen in love on multiple occasions ; Kaczynski stated that " when he loved , he did so with his whole being , but the passion was typically short @-@ lived " . Even in later life , he was able to attract young bohemian women to be his lovers , largely due to his charisma . During same @-@ sex anal intercourse , he usually played the passive role , which Booth believed " appealed to his masochistic side " . Crowley argued that gay and bisexual people should not suppress their sexual orientation , commenting that a person " must not be ashamed or afraid of being homosexual if he happens to be so at heart ; he must not attempt to violate his own true nature because of public opinion , or medieval morality , or religious prejudice which would wish he were otherwise . " On other issues he adopted a more conservative attitude ; he opposed abortion on moral grounds , believing that no woman following her True Will would ever desire one .

= = = Views on race and gender = = =

Biographer Lawrence Sutin stated that " blatant bigotry is a persistent minor element in Crowley 's writings " . Sutin thought Crowley " a spoiled scion of a wealthy Victorian family who embodied many of the worst John Bull racial and social prejudices of his upper @-@ class contemporaries " , noting that he " embodied the contradiction that writhed within many Western intellectuals of the time : deeply held racist viewpoints courtesy of their culture , coupled with a fascination with people of colour " . Crowley insulted his close Jewish friend Victor Neuburg using anti @-@ Semitic slurs , and he had mixed opinions about Jews as a group . Although he praised their " sublime " poetry and stated that they exhibited " imagination , romance , loyalty , probity and humanity " , he also thought that centuries of persecution had led some Jews to exhibit " avarice , servility , falseness , cunning and the rest " . He was also known to praise various ethnic and cultural groups , for instance he thought that the Chinese people exhibited a " spiritual superiority " to the English , and praised Muslims for exhibiting " manliness , straightforwardness , subtlety , and self @-@ respect " .

Crowley also exhibited a " general misogyny " that Booth believed arose from his bad relationship with his mother . Sutin noted that Crowley " largely accepted the notion , implicitly embodied in Victorian sexology , of women as secondary social beings in terms of intellect and sensibility " . Crowley described women as " moral inferiors " who had to be treated with " firmness , kindness and justice " .

= = Legacy and influence = =

Crowley has remained an influential figure , both amongst occultists and in popular culture , particularly that of Britain , but also of other parts of the world . In 2002 , a BBC poll placed Crowley seventy @-@ third in a list of the 100 Greatest Britons . Richard Cavendish has written of him that " In native talent , penetrating intelligence and determination , Aleister Crowley was the best @-@ equipped magician to emerge since the seventeenth century . " Wouter Hanegraaff asserted that Crowley was an extreme representation of " the dark side of the occult " , while philosopher John Moore opined that Crowley stood out as a " Modern Master " when compared with other prominent occult figures like George Gurdjieff , P.D. Ouspensky , Rudolf Steiner , or Helena Blavatsky , also describing him as a " living embodiment " of Oswald Spengler 's " Faustian Man " . Biographer Tobias Churton considered Crowley " a pioneer of consciousness research " , and Sutin thought that he had made " distinctly original contributions " to the study of yoga in the West .

Thelema continued to develop and spread following Crowley 's death . In 1969 , the O.T.O. was reactivated in California under the leadership of Grady Louis McMurtry ; in 1985 its right to the title was unsuccessfully challenged in court by a rival group , the Society Ordo Templi Orientis , led by Brazilian Thelemite Marcelo Ramos Motta . Another American Thelemite was the filmmaker Kenneth

Anger , who had been influenced by Crowley 's writings from a young age . In the United Kingdom , Kenneth Grant propagated a tradition known as Typhonian Thelema through his organisation , the Typhonian O.T.O. , later renamed the Typhonian Order . Also in Britain , an occultist known as Amado Crowley claimed to be Crowley 's son ; this has been refuted by academic investigation . Amado argued that Thelema was a false religion created by Crowley to hide his true esoteric teachings , which Amado claimed to be propagating .

Several Western esoteric traditions other than Thelema were also influenced by Crowley . Gerald Gardner , founder of Gardnerian Wicca , made use of much of Crowley 's published material when composing the Gardnerian ritual liturgy , and the Australian witch Rosaleen Norton was also heavily influenced by Crowley 's ideas . L. Ron Hubbard , the American founder of Scientology , was involved in Thelema in the early 1940s (with Jack Parsons) , and it has been argued that Crowley 's ideas influenced some of Hubbard 's work . Two prominent figures in religious Satanism , Anton LaVey and Michael Aquino , were also influenced by Crowley 's work .

Crowley also had a wider influence in British popular culture . He was included as one of the figures on the cover art of The Beatles ' album Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967) , and his motto of " Do What Thou Wilt " was inscribed on the vinyl of Led Zeppelin 's album Led Zeppelin III (1970) . Led Zeppelin co-founder Jimmy Page bought Boleskine in 1971 , and part of the band 's film The Song Remains the Same was filmed in the grounds . He sold it in 1992 . David Bowie made reference to Crowley in the lyrics of his song " Quicksand " (1971) , while Ozzy Osbourne and his lyricist Bob Daisley wrote a song titled " Mr Crowley " (1980) .