

Aleister Crowley and Coprophagy: The Limits of Transgression.

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10th June 2015

Submitted for: MA Religious Studies (Occult Trajectories I)

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A Night of Coprophagy

Aleister Crowley is infamous for his obscene, transgressive acts. Many of the horrors attributed to him are false; many more are true. Perhaps the most viscerally disgusting to the everyday man is Crowley's "coprophagous habit."¹ John Symonds, Crowley's literary executor and thus the biographer with the most access to unpublished papers and materials, claims that this habit was "revealed in [Crowley's] first published work, *Aceldama*, 1898, [and] remained with him to the end of his life."² It is easy to regard Crowley's fascination with coprophagy as being 'mere' perversity, or the result of a libido that needed increasingly transgressive stimuli in order to function. However, this paper will argue that Crowley's coprophagy is a neglected and fruitful area in which to explore his ideas about physicality, human limits and will.

The consumption of various bodily substances occupied Crowley's imagination throughout his life; however it is not clear that he made a particular habit of coprophagy. In fact, there appears to be only one recorded instance of his consuming human feces. This took place at the Abbey of Thelema at Cefalù in Sicily, some time in July 1920. The night began, Symonds tells us, with Crowley and Leah Hirsig³ smoking opium and leading each other through visions of small dark figures and Tibetan mandalas⁴ in 'La Chambre des Cauchemars'.⁵ This was followed by some sadomasochistic games and a "sex act which began at 5.20 and lasted 'a bare half-hour.'"⁶ Crowley then describes how, at 6.30 a.m., Leah "discovered the physical cowardice and dread of pain which I had sunk so deep by means of daring death-mountains, wild beasts, poison, and disease," and burnt him repeatedly with a lighted cigarette until he "tightened lip and thrust my breast against it."⁷

¹ John Symonds, *The King of the Shadow Realm* (London: Duckworth, 1989), viii.

² *Ibid.*, viii.

³ *The Great Beast's Scarlet Woman from 1918-1924*.

⁴ Symonds, 264-265.

⁵ *The Chamber of Nightmares*, which served as Crowley and Leah's bedroom.

⁶ Symonds, 267.

⁷ Aleister Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 267. Symonds rarely notes from which source he is quoting.

That the act of coprophagy took place within a sadomasochistic context is the first clue to understanding its manifold implications. To begin with, one must be aware of Crowley's enjoyment throughout his life of passive sodomy. In *The Scented Garden of Abdullah the Satirist of Shiraz* he claims that the "pleasure of the pathic" is one of two pleasures "a man can afford to a man... which a woman cannot give him."⁸ Pathic as a noun means the passive partner in homosexual anal intercourse; as an adjective it can mean both passive and suffering. Georges Bataille's innovative work on taboo and sensuality, first published as *L'Erotisme* in French in 1957, can provide some interesting philosophical insight into Crowley's transgressive eroticism. Bataille claims "the lover strips the beloved of her identity no less than the blood-stained priest his human or animal victim... she loses the firm barrier that once separated her from others and made her impenetrable."⁹ An act of sexual violence, whether unsolicited or actively sought, "deprives the creature of its limited particularity and bestows on it the limitless, infinite nature of sacred things."¹⁰ Through pathic anal intercourse and masochistic experiences, and particularly in coprophagy, one can experience oneself as being unlimited; having the line between self and other systematically crossed belies the sense of discontinuity the civilized world so intensely promotes.

Crucial to sadomasochistic acts is the awareness of both parties that it is all ultimately a game. Crowley did not give himself up entirely in as much as he had given permission for these actions to take place. Symonds states that Crowley

had taken a vow of Holy Obedience to [Leah]; he would do whatever she commanded him to do; but there is no evidence in what happened that summer night that he was obeying *her* commands. And he is far too interested in his own thoughts and feelings to tell us how she reacted to the events recorded, and in which she played a vital part. He put words

⁸ Aleister Crowley, *The Scented Garden of Abdullah the Satirist of Shiraz* (Paris: Probsthain & Company, 1910), 26.

⁹ Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death & Sensuality*, trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights, 1986), 90.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 90.

into her mouth but they do not ring true: he was carried away by his own rhetoric and by his desire for a strong stimulus....¹¹

Symonds complains that Crowley does not record Leah's reaction to the evening's exploits, as if angry that her part was ignored; however it is Symonds who refuses to recognize Leah's role (and dehumanizing her in the process) by claiming Crowley to be the sole initiator. While it may be true that Crowley did not give himself up entirely to the ministrations of his partner, it was Leah who took the sadistic role. She clearly had a taste for the more visceral of life's pleasures, and seems to have relished these sadistic aspects of her role as Scarlet Woman and Crowley's lover. In fact, Crowley claims at times to have been frightened by her sadism and her appetites, and she was the longest serving of his Scarlet Women. With regards to Crowley's rhetoric, or rather the words he puts in Leah's mouth, they appear to be precisely the words of a Scarlet Woman. Leah was powerful and passionate about the magical aspects of her role; she was clearly playing a part, but that does not mean she didn't embrace the part she had to play.

'High Priest!' she cried, 'I crave the Eucharist!' Then as I tricked: 'Not so!' Her eyes flamed; her voice thrilled. 'Doubt not thyself! In sooth thou art High Priest; thy God and thou and I are One in Three. Thou hast performed thy miracle of the Mass, all this is very God, God of Our Godhead, Our own Substance, as on the Paten it gleams. My faith suffices; I will eat; to the last crumb. I will consume it. Doubtest thou? That is hunger – thou shalt devour this Body of God, yea, save one morsel for my own greed's pleasure. Yet even that will I make honey for thee that to thy meat thou mayest add sweet – Fall to!'¹²

"On the paten," Symonds elaborates, "on this Crowlian altar in the Abbey of Do What Thou Wilt gleamed Leah's turd. Crowley needed perverse stimuli; he could not restrain himself. Unconscious forces were playing with him."¹³ Again I am immediately inclined to question Symonds' interpretation. Why precisely does he think that it is Crowley who is in control, who demands 'perverse stimuli'? It is Leah who is the dominant partner in this scenario. She had only recently

¹¹ Symonds, 267.

¹² Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 267.

¹³ Symonds, 267.

recovered from a serious bout of dysentery; might she not have wanted Crowley to suffer as she had? Symonds suggests that the motivation for this coprophagic act was Crowley's uncontrollable and perverse sexuality. However such a view is exceedingly simplistic in this context, and neglects to engage with the way Crowley devoted much of his life to working out his philosophy and Law through sexual magical acts.

Then I obeyed. My mouth burned; my throat choked; my belly retched; my blood fled wither who knows, and my skin sweated. She stood above me, hideous in contempt... She ate the Body of God, and with Her soul's compulsion made me eat. But in my mouth that lied when it sneered '*Ecce Corpus*' it turned back to its first nature; my doubt black-clouded God's sun-face. My teeth grew rotten, my tongue ulcered; raw was my throat, spasm-torn my belly; and all my Doubt of that which to Her teeth was moonlight, and to her tongue ambrosia; to her throat nectar, in Her Belly the One God of whose Pure Body She should fresh Her Blood. So with my body shuddering, retching, fainting, and convulsed; with my mind tempest, my heart crater, my will earthquake, I obeyed Her lash.

"In view of what he did," Symonds states, "I suppose this is the only way to write about it, although the rhetoric is overdone."¹⁴ Crowley could have described this evening far more remotely or crudely, as indeed he does in 'Leah Sublime'. His rhetoric is a clear indication that something more than sexual perversity is being explored. I will return to the question of what Crowley was exploring shortly; first, I would like to consider some of the antecedent events that may have influenced this coprophagic act.

The Children

Crowley had clearly been interested in the transgressive potentials of excrement for some time. His early poem collections are filled with images of feces and other bodily productions. At Cefalù it was Crowley's aim to explore and push the boundaries of the Rabelaisian formula 'Do What Thou Wilt'; it is thus unsurprising that it would be at this point he would put his coprophagic ideas into practice. However, Crowley's time at Cefalù was also marked by the

¹⁴ Ibid., 268.

presence of several young children and of much sickness and disease, and it is worth considering what influence these facts may have had in Crowley's experiments with dirt and excreta. In the lead-up up to July 1920 Crowley had been sharing the abbey with two young children, Hansi (Leah's son to a previous lover) and Howard (Ninette Shumway's son to her deceased husband), as well as his sick infant daughter Anne Leah, nicknamed Poupée. Disgust at excrement, human or otherwise, is not an instinctual reaction. Left to its own devices, a child will happily play in a pile of such; Freud notes that the control of and disgust at excrement is the first taboo we learn. Bataille makes the point well. He is talking in the following passage about rotting human flesh (something Crowley also fantasized about consuming, most notably in the poem 'Necrophilia' in *White Stains*), however his words apply equally to excrement.

We imagine that it is the stink of excrement that makes us feel sick. But would it stink if we had not thought it was disgusting in the first place? We do not take long to forget what trouble we go to to pass on to our children the aversions that make us what we are, which make us human beings to begin with. Our children do not spontaneously have our reactions... we have to teach them by pantomime or failing that, by violence, that curious aberration called disgust...¹⁵

We find this understanding of the inessential nature of disgust in *The Scented Garden*, where Crowley complains, with regards to pederasty, that "to-day no man can bring forward either the population nonsense or the heresy nonsense, so he brings up his dinner instead, under the equally absurd delusion that the process is physically dirty."¹⁶ It is not unlikely that noticing one of the children playing in dirt or excrement might have enforced for Crowley what seemed to him to be the arbitrary nature of yet another taboo, and motivated his decision to experiment with his own limits during his night of coprophagy.

¹⁵ Bataille, 58.

¹⁶ Crowley, *The Scented Garden*, 32.

Sickness

It is clear that Crowley saw and experienced a huge amount of sickness throughout his life. At times he seems to have reveled in the unhealthy, viewing this as another aspect of his transgression of social norms, and wearing sickness as a badge of pride. His time at Cefalù in particular was marked by ill health both for him and for many of those who joined him there. Towards the end of May 1920

Leah fell ill with a fever; Crowley described her remarks in this condition as quite delirious, said that she vomited, had diarrhea. Diagnosis: dysentery. Three days later, while the Beast was writing poetry in the middle of the night, Alostrael's illness reached the acute stage. For an hour she screamed horribly.¹⁷

Unable to bear the screaming, Crowley "gave her an eighth of a grain of heroin under the tongue."¹⁸ Later that night he glimpsed her reposed in bed through the temple door, and sketched 'Leah with enteritis'; her illness seems not to have made Crowley cease work, or turn away in disgust, but rather inspired him and stimulated his creativity. After Leah had recovered Crowley travelled to Tunis, where he spent a few days searching for Jane Wolfe, an ageing Hollywood actress and potential disciple whom he was supposed to meet there, as well as engaging in sexual magic acts with Mohammed Tsaida. Crowley grew sick as a result of this tryst, although he refused to recognize the cause, ascribing it to a perverted spiritual affinity:

24 June. A most unpleasant day of severe illness. I think I may have been poisoned by reading Conan Doyle. My nose-tip got inflamed; my bowels hideously loose and their excrements dark and stinking like his [Conan Doyle's] soul.¹⁹

Crowley appears to revel in his symptoms, imaginatively engaging with them and describing them with glee. Crowley returned to the Abbey at Cefalù shortly after this incident. His diary entry for 28 June reads

¹⁷ Symonds, 259.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 259.

¹⁹ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 261.

5.25 p.m. to 5.15 a.m. Against all principles, and in breach of two promises, I have sat up all night in the snows [cocaine], writing a poem to Leah. 7.00 a.m. I think I'll collect all my filth in one poem and mark it Leah in plain figures.²⁰

'All my filth' is quite a potent statement considering the amount of filth and excrement he had seen (and expressed) in the past months. The poem in question is 'Leah Sublime', which Symonds claims is "the very opposite of sublime;"²¹ however sublime suggests an awe, or even horror, that elevates one's thoughts. In this philosophical sense the poem can indeed be characterized as sublime. What is most significant about this series of events is the relationship between illness and coprophagy in Crowley's mind – an association reminiscent of the syphilitic cunnilingus so prominent in the 1898 poetry collection *White Stains*. Crowley does not seem to be disgusted by Leah's disease, despite the unpleasant symptoms; rather he is "moved by her luminous eyes,"²² and sketches her.²³ Crowley had clearly overcome much of the learnt disgust at excremental things; that he might attempt to overcome the final, more instinctual levels of this taboo is natural.

It is worth noting in relation to this Crowley's preference for gaunt, even emaciated women. He describes his beloved Scarlet Woman thus:

... so I pierced through the painted ape's face, the live Death of her loose skin on her grim skeleton, and came to a great Goddess, strange, perverse, hungry, implacable, and offered up my Soul... I must love even Her mask, the painted simper, the lewd doll-monkey face, the haggard shamelessness of her flat breast... the insolence of Death pushing through flesh's flimsy curtain...²⁴

This passage suggests that in loving such a woman Crowley was testing the inbred disgust for the diseased and near death. Not for him was the voluptuous mother-goddess; Crowley's Holy Whore was loose skinned, syphilitic, and thin. Crowley had no problem with Leah appearing, even in public, filthy and

²⁰ Ibid., 261.

²¹ Symonds, 261.

²² Ibid., 260.

²³ Ibid., 259.

²⁴ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 263.

unwashed. Symonds claims that the above passage “may be the language of poetry, but it is not the language of truth.”²⁵ Yet the evidence suggests this to have been a genuine preference on Crowley’s part; none of his mistresses are described as full-bodied or healthy. Further, he does not emphasize their waifishness, fashionable figure, or any of the complimentary terms applied to thin women. It is the sickness that interests him. He seems to have been exclusively drawn to women already on the path of decline. This is a fundamentally transgressive approach to sexuality, rejecting all the usual values by which a woman is judged, which ultimately can be reduced to fertility. It is not, in fact, a transgression of mere social taboo, but of a more instinctual, animal aversion. To love a disgusting woman, to love her, moreover, precisely for her sickness and her filth, suggests that Crowley had managed to detach his sexuality very thoroughly from his animal instincts.

The Theology of Coprophagy

As noted above Symonds argues that Crowley’s interest in coprophagy is motivated purely by his sexual perversity. This argument is sufficiently important to Symonds that it appears as a constant motif throughout *The King of the Shadow Realm*. He first makes this point in the preface, claiming that the Great Beast “went to fantastic lengths to be stimulated. He was not turned on by music... or paintings or literature or any other ordinary things; he needed perverse stimuli – human excreta, menstrual blood and especially drugs – to make the message come through.”²⁶As demonstrated above Crowley’s approach to coprophagy was far more complex than this. For Crowley feces were not simply animal matter; such a substance was capable of carrying messages, and had a magical and theological potency. This is demonstrated in his diary entry for 29 June: “12.15 a.m. Locust shit on my table: pal of John Baptist: pal of Jane. He wished to say she would come by the next boat....”²⁷

²⁵ Symonds, 263.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, viii.

²⁷ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 262.

In *The Scented Garden* Crowley creates an extended analogy between the sodomite and the magician. Undoubtedly sodomy was something that interested Crowley on a sexual level, and which he practiced throughout his life; however in *The Scented Garden* pederasty is also used on a symbolic level, as a literary device and an image, in order to explore metaphysical truths. The book thus represents an early example of how Crowley might engage physically and emotionally with transgressive practices which were at the same time symbolic. It is an example of how the physical and metaphysical could intertwine as he worked through the implications of his philosophy as well as his magical theory and practice.

In... Christianity and Buddhism terror and nausea are a prelude to bursts of burning spiritual activity... ecstasy begins where horror is sloughed off. A sense of union with the irresistible powers that bear all things before them is frequently more acute in those religions where the pangs of terror and nausea are felt most deeply.²⁸

Although Crowley identified himself with the Beast of Revelations, taking pride in calling himself the Great Beast 666, it is precisely when he is at his most transgressive that he shows the greatest resemblance to the saint of traditional religion. Mary Douglas, in her influential anthropological work *Purity and Danger* (first published 1966), notes, "St Catherine of Sienna, when she felt revulsion from the wounds she was tending, is said to have bitterly reproached herself. Sound hygiene was incompatible with charity, so she deliberately drank a bowl of pus."²⁹ The self-proscribed magical ordeals that were Crowley's focus in the summer of 1920 were motivated by a similar impulse, and were designed to have a similar effect. Bataille notes that "the underlying affinity between sanctity and transgression has never ceased to be felt. Even in the eyes of believers, the libertine is nearer to the saint than the man without desire." As flagellation, starvation and the dark night of the soul are the mystic's prelude to the experience of God, so Crowley's experiences at Cefalù, including the proliferous

²⁸ Bataille, 69.

²⁹ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966), 7.

sickness, his coprophagy, the affair with the goat, his daughter's death, and the extreme financial trouble he found himself in, were the prelude to his attaining the grade Ipsissimus (the highest possible Grade in the Great White Brotherhood of Light) and experiencing Samadhi.³⁰ There is a relationship between the lowest physical degradation and the highest spiritual attainment. The horror must be experienced that one may rise above it; indeed the horrific and nauseating are the most potent ways of accessing the divine. Crowley himself saw the process as parallel to psychoanalysis. In the tourist brochure he produced for the Abbey at Cefalù, Crowley wrote the following description for La Chambre des Cauchemars, the very room in which he performed his night of coprophagy, and many of the other sex magical acts in which he engaged in the summer of 1920.

Those who have come successfully through the trial say that they have become immunized from all possible infection by those ideas of evil which interfere between the soul and its divine Self... they have attained permanent mastery of their minds. The process is similar to that of "Psycho-analysis"; it releases the subject from fear of reality and the phantasms and neuroses thereby caused...³¹

The experiments in the chamber were thus an attempt to free his soul of all the last vestiges of fears and inhibitions – the ones he had "sunk so deep," for he believed that only through this process could one actualize the divine self.

For Crowley, the excesses and abysses into which he plunged himself served in particular one key process; the mastery of mind over matter. Crowley wished to free himself from natural physiological reactions to physical matter, to prove that his will was stronger than his animal self. Crowley, the paradigmatic figure of libertine excess, was in fact pursuing the ascetic ideal. "Thou strives ever; even in thy yielding thou strives to yield and lo! Thou yieldest not. Go thou unto the outermost places and subdue all things, subdue thy fear and thy disgust. Then – yield!"³² Crowley felt himself flawed by the sense of sin and disgust, so did all he could to evoke these feelings that he might overcome them. He thus

³⁰ Symonds, 281.

³¹ Crowley, quoted in Lawrence Sutin, *Do What Thou Wilt: a Life of Aleister Crowley* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2000), 282.

³² Crowley, *The Book of the Heart Girt with a Serpent*, quoted in Sutin, 287.

describes how playing Leah's lesbian slave "revolted even my own body, and made me free forever of my preference for matter, made me Pure Spirit."³³ The summer's magical ordeals were Crowley's experiments with different ways of bringing to the surface that which had been repressed, laying bare the most insidious of his negative emotions, the deepest of his hidden weaknesses. They also represented his attempts to cross the line of the animal, and prove his will stronger than his own physicality; to uncover the places where instinct and physiology were still stronger than his theology, faith or will. Although Crowley is popularly portrayed as the poster-boy of physical excess, his description of the coprophagic act does not suggest a celebration of the physical world but a refusal to acknowledge its power and further shows a resentment of humanity as a physiological existence. Crowley understood that the thin air at high altitudes imposed physical restrictions upon the mountaineer; however he refused to accept that coprophagy similarly imposes physiological conditions upon the body. Although disgust at feces is a learnt (or rather taught) reaction, it is not an arbitrary one, and when one does force oneself to break this taboo there will be physiological consequences.

Crowley believed that it was his doubt and his spiritual failure that caused the coprophagic act, about which he had fantasized so lengthily and waxed so eloquently, to remain so horrific. He refused to recognize the naturalness – and practical necessity – of the physiological reaction to coprophagy. He conceived of the coprophagic act as a sacrament; thus the consuming of feces would be an outward sign of his elevated inward grace. In his *Magical Record of the Beast*, in an entry for 5 July 1920, Crowley declares "In my Mass the Host is of excrement, that I can consume in awe and adoration."³⁴ It would be easy to declare such statements simply the ultimate form of sacrilege, but Crowley's concept of the excremental host has far more significance than this. It is not, in fact, a matter of taboo or sacrilege, but the taking to its logical end The Gnostic Mass's claim that 'There is no part of me that is not of the gods.' The Eucharistic host is the body of god; excrement may bear this title as much as any other physical thing. Thus we

³³ Crowley, quoted in Sutin 283.

³⁴ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 284.

can understand Crowley's frustration when his non-divinity was proven; he was unable to understand why that which appeared to be ambrosia to Leah's tongue burnt and ulcered his. It could only be through the failure of his will.

In this context it is interesting to consider Crowley's classification of the majority of sexual acts that he engaged in at this period (and indeed throughout his life) as sex magic. While Crowley's often-grotesque sex life, seemingly ruled only by his own impulses, would at first glance suggest that he had accepted himself as an animal, this is far from the case. Sex magic had to have an outside object, or else it would be merely sex. The object of much of his sexual magic was simply to establish the Law of Do What Thou Wilt, a suspiciously circular argument. In considering all his sexual acts to be acts of sex magic, even if they were with prostitutes who had no awareness of what was taking place, Crowley was demanding that sex was, for him, always more than purely animal, and was thus effectively refusing his animal nature. "The Body's curse/ Is bitter"³⁵ he complains in an early poem; one must wonder if here was an effect of his Plymouth Brethren upbringing that Crowley was never able to break free from.

In Retrospect

On 24 July 1920 Jane Wolfe arrived at the abbey of Thelema; "it was physically filthy, and as the day wore on, I became aware of the foul miasma enveloping the place; it steamed to high heaven. I could not breathe."³⁶ Wolfe later broached the topic to Norman Mudd, another of Crowley's disciples, "who explained that Crowley was experimenting with the 'mystery of filth.'"³⁷ Perhaps Crowley had truly convinced himself that this was another transgressive experiment; however it clearly had physical consequences. Throughout this experimental period Crowley and Leah's daughter was suffering an unknown illness, from which the infant subsequently died. Crowley was distraught at this development. He blamed the children's nurse (and his mistress) Ninette,

³⁵ Poem IV of 'The Initiation', *Clouds Without Water*, 120.

³⁶ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 284.

³⁷ Information attributed to Thelemic historian Phyllis Seckler in Sutin, 287.

claiming that it had been her evil intentions that had killed the child; much in the same way as he had blamed Conan Doyle for his earlier sickness. He believed the offence to be one of spiritual impurity, and did not see it as having a physical cause. Sutin suggests that Crowley's quick forgiveness of Ninette for this dramatic offence may have been motivated by practical need.³⁸ I am inclined to wonder whether Crowley might have on some level been aware of the part the filthy abbey may have had to play in the infant's demise, although in his pride he would never admit it. Crowley rarely admitted his failures in his contemporary writing. His records of the night of coprophagy are ceremonial and imaginative. However in his subsequent warnings to others we are able to see that Crowley did in fact recognize the negative effects of his actions. Symonds records that on the day following the night of coprophagy, "after a long sleep, Crowley said that his throat and tongue were still sore, and that Leah was 'unwell', and that Hansi had a fever."³⁹ Four years later, on 23 September 1924, he wrote to Norman Mudd

I am extremely anxious that my diaries should be preserved. They contain the results of years of research undertaken at the most serious peril to health and reason. They are in their present form quite unintelligible to any but students trained in a particular way. I can assure you that when worked over and the results given to the world the intimate knowledge of the human constitution disclosed will prove of immense value in social progress.⁴⁰

What intimate knowledge did Crowley discover? The evidence suggests that some of it, at least, was that one can eat feces, and survive, but that such an act is inadvisable because it has a severely negative effect upon the health. This conclusion is supported by an entry in Crowley's diary regarding his German lover Hanni Jaeger: "Anu has been playing a very foolish sexual game all the week. This A.M. she insisted on my using her as a W.C. in spite of the warnings I have given her as to the appalling results of such behavior. She will soon be taught by punishment."⁴¹ Crowley's interest in and experimentation with

³⁸ Sutin, 285.

³⁹ Symonds, 268.

⁴⁰ Crowley, quoted in Symonds, 268

⁴¹ Sutin, 356.

coprophagy is certainly one of the more colorful aspects of his career. While Symonds' assessment of this interest as being simply another aspect of Crowley's perverse eroticism is a huge simplification, it is clear that experimenting with coprophagy is not the wisest of ideas, and even the Great Beast himself seems to have ultimately recognized this.

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