

Colin Wilson

# The Outsider

(1956–2001)

—a poem—

Compiled by Simo Sakari Aaltonen (2008)



Imagination is the instrument of self-knowledge

It would be a different matter if the film had shown you things about yourself that you had never realized before told you that you were capable of things that you

wouldn't have dreamed of attempting pointed out that all your conceptions of yourself and everybody else were based on misunderstandings and that you had only to shake off these conceptions to begin to live for the first time

the artist's  
miraculous power of  
surviving a mental  
earthquake

THE INTENSITY OF WAGNER'S TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
THE ECSTASY OF AN ANCIENT GREEK FESTIVAL OF DIONYSUS  
OR THE EGYPTIAN PHALDIC GOD MENU  
WHEN WINE AND DANCING BRING ABOUT A TEMPORARY LOSS OF  
IDENTITY OF INDIVIDUAL WORSHIPPERS IN THE IDENTITY OF THE GOD

*positive philosophy*  
*intuitions*  
*the idea of great health*

The life of everybody is a road to himself

BYZANTINE ART

# Super-prophet

# Super-hero

# truly

our misery proceeds ten times more from the outward bondage of opinion and custom than from any inward corruption or depravation of Nature  
it is not our parents' loins so much as our parents' lives  
that enthralls and blinds us

Μη φιλτιετη ψεαρ ηαδ χομε ανδ γονε  
I σατ, α σολιταρψ μαν  
Iv α χρωωδεδ Λονδον σηοπ  
Av οπεν βοοκ ανδ εμπτηψ χυπ  
Ov τηε μαρβλε ταβλε-τοπ

Ωηιλε ον τηε σηοπ ανδ στρεετ I γαζεδ  
Μψ βοδψ οφ α συδδεν βλαζεδ  
Ανδ τωεντηψ μινυτεσ μορε ορ λεσσ  
Iτ σεεμεδ, σο γρεατ μη ηαππινεσσ  
Τηατ I ωασ βλεσσεδ, ανδ χουλδ βλεσσ. . . .

My fiftieth year had come and gone  
I sat, a solitary man  
In a crowded London shop  
An open book and empty cup  
On the marble table-top

While on the shop and street I gazed  
My body of a sudden blazed  
And twenty minutes more or less  
It seemed, so great my happiness  
That I was blessed, and could bless

appetite for fruitful activity and a high quality of life

## **He does not want to set up another idol**

nature

the life force

the mother figure

Lilith

in whom all opposites are resolved

Nature reflects what he sees inside him

When he sees nothing

the canvases are realistic studies that might be curiously brilliant photographs

At other times

they express a vision that is inexpressible in words because it runs in a different  
direction

words are horizontal

this is vertical

The point of intersection of the two planes can  
be called Is-ness  
(to borrow a phrase from Eckhart)

Compare Van Gogh's copy of the prison yard with Doré's original  
Van Gogh's is more 'visionary'  
there is more light  
at the same time it is more real than Doré's  
Van Gogh's chair is more than other chairs  
his sunflowers are more than other sunflowers

When he saw a tree full of leaves  
it existed so much for him that he could not paint it as a tree  
(as Constable would)

or give the general impression of a tree with colours  
(as Monet and the Impressionists did)

it explodes into life and looks more like a tree burning with Bengal fires  
This is no literary trick  
(any fool could paint a tree to look like a flame)

it is a way of seeing  
it is built into his vision  
and the proof of its sincerity lies in watching the development of the vision  
through his painting

Or compare his canvas called 'Landscape near Auvers' with Cézanne's canvas of  
the same name  
(any of them)

the difference is more than a difference of technique  
it is a completely different way of seeing

Cézanne rendered painstakingly  
as Henry James rendered his pictures of European society  
with innumerable small brush strokes

The final result has an orderliness that springs out of discipline  
From Cézanne's painting  
we learn a great deal about the surface of the object painted and its distance  
from the eye  
and a great deal about the will of the man who was determined to render it fully

We learn nothing of Cézanne's emotion  
This is precisely what we do learn from Van Gogh's canvases  
and the emotion is important

it is not just a sentimental gushing about nature  
but an emotion that could only correspond to some recognized awareness of the  
nature of life itself

great health

Yet while hanging  
waiting for death  
he notices some drops  
of honey on the leaves  
of the shrub

and reaches out and  
licks them

**basic universal benevolence**

complete health  
free of the stupidity of personality and  
thought

our language has become a tired and inefficient thing in the hands of journalists and writers who have nothing  
to say

**And so**

**at the age of twenty-eight**

**Nietzsche stood alone**

**except for the two men for whom he still felt respect**

**Schopenhauer and Wagner**

the moon

the earth

the planetary bodies are living beings

*an act of assimilation*



towards the woods  
the corn was ripe and I only had a summer dress and sandals on  
I was able to touch the ears of corn and watched them swaying in the faint breeze  
I looked to the end of the field  
– it had a hedge then –  
and beyond that to some tall trees towards the village  
The sun was over to my left  
Everywhere surrounding me was this white  
brilliant  
sparkling light  
like sun on frosty snow  
light was everywhere

While he is the ordinary  
once-born human being  
he is not free but does not realize it

# The static personality is a prison

the human soul?

shining ocean

night sky

IN THE KABBALA  
CHAOS  
—TOHU BOHU—  
IS SIMPLY A  
STATE IN WHICH  
ORDER IS LATENT  
THE EGG IS THE  
'CHAOS' OF THE  
BIRD

A refreshing laughter rose in me  
It soared aloft like a soapbubble  
                                and then softly burst  
The golden trail was blazed and I  
                                was reminded of the eternal  
  and of Mozart  
  and the stars  
I could breathe once more

William James has observed that 'the power of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably due to its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature usually crushed to earth by the cold facts and dry criticisms of the sober hour'

'Mystical faculties' here refers to that flood-tide of inner warmth and vital energy that human beings regard as the most desirable state to live in

The sober hour carries continuous demands on the energy  
                                sense-impressions

                                thoughts

                                uncertainties

suck away the vital powers minute by minute

Alcohol seems to paralyse these leeches of the energies  
the vital warmth is left to accumulate and form a sort of  
                                inner reservoir

This concentration of the energies is undoubtedly one of  
the most important conditions of the state the saints call

                                'Innigkeit'

                                inwardness

The saint achieves inwardness by a deliberate policing of

the vital energies  
He comes to recognize the energy-stealing emotions  
all the emotions that do not make for inwardness  
and he sets out to exterminate them in himself  
As he moves towards his objective  
he increases steadily his supply of surplus vital power  
and so increases his powers of foresight and hind-sight  
the sense of other times and other places  
there is a breaking-free of the body's sense of  
imprisonment in time and a rising warmth of life-energy  
that is spoken of in the Gospel as 'to have life more  
abundantly'

## he was no longer the same person

One day towards the close of May  
having eaten a comfortable dinner  
I remained sitting at the table after the  
family had dispersed  
idly gazing into the embers of the grate  
thinking of nothing and feeling only the  
exhilaration incident to a good digestion  
some damned shape  
squatting invisible to me within the  
precincts of the room  
and raying out from his fetid personality  
influences fatal to life

The  
'way of salvation'  
is plainly implied  
moments of insight into direction and

purpose must be grasped tightly  
in these moments  
formulate laws that will enable to move  
towards  
goal

# love of the earth

Each man is in his spectre's power  
Until the arrival of that hour  
When his humanity awakes  
And casts his spectre into the lake

The dogma of Original Sin insists that man lost his visionary faculty  
because he spends all his energy thinking about practical things  
At least  
that is the interpretation that the great religious teachers seem to put on it  
Jesus telling the Jews not to waste so much time getting and spending  
but to observe the lilies of the field

It seems to be written in the  
language of a thawing wind  
Gratitude continually flows  
as if the most unexpected thing  
had happened  
—the gratitude of a  
convalescent—  
for convalescence was that most  
unexpected thing  
The whole book is  
a long revel  
the frolicking of returning energy

# of newly awakened belief in a tomorrow after tomorrow

Nietzsche was not an atheist, any more than the Buddha was

The centre that I cannot find  
Is known to my unconscious mind.  
I have no reason to despair  
Because I am already there.

I wish to be at all times hereafter only a Yea-sayer

Calm and peace spread over the mountains and  
the forests

The idea of the  
Superman is a  
response to the need  
for salvation

I would hear of your master-thought

Free from what?

Free for what?

he dismisses all previous Western philosophers  
whose 'systems' reveal at every turn their  
limitations

These men exalted thought as if it could be separated from  
life and instated in a superior order

Consequently  
they de-valued life  
failed to recognize that thought is only an instrument to  
'more abundant life'

Man's way is the way of affirmation  
Yea-saying  
praise

These mere thinkers were poisoners  
cheapeners of life  
( 'professors of what another man has suffered'  
Kierkegaard called them)

The greatest act man is capable of is to 'praise in spite of'  
to become aware of the worst forms of the Eternal No and to  
make the gigantic effort of digesting them and still finding  
life positive

Suddenly this thought came into my head  
What would happen if I were to take off my boots  
and fling one at Mr  
and one at Miss  
?

Could I give my future life such settled purpose  
that the act would take its place  
not among whims



but among forms of intensity?  
'You have not the courage,'  
I said  
speaking in a low voice  
'I have,'  
said I  
and began unlacing my boots

What should we do with our lives?  
(The phrase is the property of H. G. Wells.)  
How must it be lived to bring the greatest  
self-realization?

a flock of white cranes against a black thundercloud

**other means  
beside  
reason**

he lived too close to his  
instincts to wander into such a  
thinker's dilemma

He didn't think his existence  
necessary with the complacent  
conscious certainty of a public  
benefactor

he felt it

Lack of appetite for life  
that is his problem

Other people are the trouble

stand for truth

All great men are play  
actors of their own ideal

self-realization  
a sudden ecstasy  
a 'timeless moment'

enthusiasm and life

raising earth up to heaven

When relaxed enough  
every leaf of every tree in the world  
every speck of dust  
is a  
world capable of producing infinite  
pleasure

**a beam of sunlight  
came in through the  
window**

Nijinsky has his own terminology  
 there are 'feeling'  
         'wisdom'  
             'God'  
 and these are roughly synonymous  
                 and then there are 'mind'  
                                 'death'  
   'stupidity'

the rhythmic  
 violent Dionysian  
 upsurge of the  
 vital energies

there is a higher power than  
 man in the universe  
         and man reaches his highest  
             purpose in serving it

At the same time  
 it is necessary to bear in mind  
 that  
         strictly speaking  
         there is no such thing as man

the cold dawn  
the thin drizzle  
the smell of wet garments in  
the schoolroom

the difference between a religious concept and a superstition  
is that one corresponds to psychological reality and the other doesn't

It does not deny the ideal  
provided the ideal comes second and the will first  
But if their roles get reversed  
if the will to more abundant life is made the slave of  
the ideal  
(or if it becomes non-existent  
as in most professors and professional philosophers)  
then Nietzsche will have no more of it

body itself is vital and good

metaphysics

should be no more than glorified common sense  
just as higher mathematics is only glorified arithmetic  
to achieve glorified common sense

one would need to develop the 'glorified' sensitivity  
All religious teaching is a plea for such development

## more sensitive

one of those clear dawns that wake up the senses  
with the sun  
while the intellect  
was yet abed

For an hour or two  
on such a morning  
the sounds  
scents and colours of the world struck man  
individually and directly  
they seemed to exist sufficiently by themselves

the feeling I used to get as a child if I was on a day-trip to the  
seaside

and the coach went over a river or past a lake  
a curious  
deep longing for the water

In the same way

C. S. Lewis has spoken of how he used to be convulsed with desire by  
the idea of Autumn  
—the brown leaves and the smell of smoke from garden bonfires  
and that strange wet smell about the grass

# selflessness

intimations of immortality

# the sound of approaching hoofbeats

a hot summer day

felt something that opened up new possibilities  
vision

## **aspiration to life**

unless a man lives by a belief  
then it is no more material to him than whether he believes that Mount Everest or Mount Meru is the highest mountain in the world

# called 'back to earth' by the Easter bells and memories of pure physical well-being in childhood

she questions a lily  
a cloud and a worm

certain Christian saints were concerned about the same  
metaphysical problems that Sartre has produced  
with the air of a conjurer flourishing a rabbit  
as the latest development of twentieth-century thought

the universe is  
    making sense again  
        and he has a glimpse of purpose  
that sense of accord is  
    a blazing of all the senses  
        and a realization of a condition of consciousness  
The Christian might call it a sense of the Fatherhood of God  
    a Hindu would probably prefer to call it a sense of the Motherhood of God  
        and his symbolism would be more congenial to the artist  
            who can  
                find comparison for the feeling in a child's confidence in its mother  
In any case  
    these are only symbols of a state  
        too little known to human beings for their descriptions of it to be accurate



When we turn to Van Gogh's canvases  
we find attempts to express this sense in another medium than language  
these attempts completely transcend most of their critics' knowledge of reality  
and express an insight  
In approaching the work of such a man as Van Gogh  
an attitude of  
uncritical acceptance  
may be more rewarding than the intellectual-critical approach  
What we are most aware of in Van Gogh is that the 'thought-riddled nature' has been very  
decisively kicked-out  
and the result achieved is Lawrence's 'immediacy of sense perception'  
with the senses awakened  
it becomes nonsense to talk about  
misery  
The canvases try to express it with light and form  
fields of corn with colour that almost hurts the eyes  
a starry night with the sky looking like water full of cross-currents  
and the stars no longer pinpoints  
but rings and circles of light  
cypresses like green flames  
This interior vision transfigured a chair  
an old boot  
a few onions

question of self-realization

It is not enough to accept a  
concept of order and live by it  
that is cowardice  
and such cowardice cannot  
result in freedom

Chaos must be faced

Real order must be preceded by  
a descent into chaos

There exists a painting from the  
last year of his life called  
'Memory of the North'

A red winter sun sinks behind  
masses of sludgy green-grey cloud  
all the sky is full of dirty  
twisted scraps of cloud  
tinted with the sun

In the foreground  
small grimy houses  
trees and bushes  
repeat the twisting  
red-tinted lines of the sky  
The whole picture is overcast with  
a sulphurous light

life aims at more life

shooting

stars

the kinetic

nature of

the world

# the kinetic nature of soul

mystical experiences  
an exaltation of Life  
In Blake's phrase  
Energy is eternal delight

**Those who follow that part of themselves  
which is great are great men  
those who follow that part of themselves  
which is little are little men**

they have no idea of their own real identities  
nor of their possibilities  
'I am God in a body  
Everyone has this feeling  
but no one uses it.'  
'God is fire in the head.'

## *a drawing-room at the bottom of a lake*

There is a way forward and a way back

cold water

If the end became to love other people and practical charity  
its result could easily be a new form of self-love

# 'something about him'

They are not long, the days of wine and roses  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges  
Within a dream.

breathes the air

hears music of the spheres

the eternal vine

Flourishes that he may receive the

grapes

look

And see

pass out

The Outsider wants to be free

he doesn't want to become a healthy-minded

once-born person because

such a person is not free

He is an Outsider because he wants to be free

And what characterizes the 'bondage' of the once-born?

Unreality

whatever the Outsider wants to become

that new condition of being will be characterized by a perception of

reality

intellectual discipline is not enough

intellectual

poet

nature mystic

a lover of the physical

the power of exciting  
to direct sensation

The child's world is altogether cleaner  
the air tastes of expectation

A big store at Christmas time is a new world

Its ground is the same as that of the universe

life - denial

This is the essential Van Gogh

All his faculties are exerted in a search for the Pro

for instinctive

absolute Yea-saying

Like all artists

he has moments when he seems to be in complete accord with the universe and himself

when

he feels that the universe and himself are of the same nature

then all life seems purposive

that insight

must be seeable

touchable

their minds are in bondage

love of the earth  
love of life

affirmation of life

The last words of Nijinsky's Diary are an affirmation

My little girl is singing

'Ah ah ah ah.'

I do not understand its meaning

but I feel what she wants to say

She wants to say that everything

is not horror

but joy.

sings the body electric

**Lightning and tempest are  
different worlds  
free powers  
without the confusions of intellect  
—how happy  
how free**

healthy and cheerful



The civilized man and the wolf-man  
sometimes  
make peace  
and then a strange state ensues  
a combination of the two makes him akin to the gods  
moments of vision  
suffering  
reconciled  
manifested as 'more abundant life'  
When the Outsider becomes aware of his strength  
he is unified and happy

possible development  
looking at a canvas by Van Gogh  
first business is self-knowledge

a grove with a reputation for being haunted

how to 'live more abundantly'

*As a boy and adolescent he read a great deal  
took lonely walks  
wrote poetry  
thought about himself and his possible destiny*

the dynamic

His canvases were no longer realistic landscapes and interiors  
influenced by Millet and the Dutch school  
The colours and lines are bolder  
and in some of them  
a strange technique of distortion makes it appear that trees  
cornfields  
houses are all burning upwards like flames  
In contrast to these 'brainstorm' canvases  
others are calm  
relaxed  
full of light and silence

nothing is more natural than that the mind that has tired of its  
reasoning faculty should turn to the areas of the being that lie  
below consciousness  
to the instincts and intuitions  
self-revelation

they do great things for the world by subordinating themselves to that which they put above man

the cool shade of  
the roseapple tree

having been completely taken 'out of himself'

Yeats even made preliminary steps to put the idea into practice  
with his plans for a brotherhood of poets who would live in a 'Castle on the Rock' at  
Lough Kay in Roscommon

I planned a mystical order that should buy or hire the castle  
and keep it as a place where its members could retire for a while for contemplation  
and where we might establish mysteries like those of Eleusis or Samothrace  
I had an unshakeable conviction that invisible gates would open  
as they opened for Blake  
as they opened for Swedenborg  
as they opened for Boehme  
and that this philosophy would find its manuals of devotion in all imaginative literature

the 'Yellow Chair'  
of which Gauguin exclaimed delightedly  
'No one ever painted a chair like that before!'

mountains

a sense of harmony

discovered in some moment of insight a source from which these supplies of 'more abundant life' flowed  
imaginative relief  
sense impressions  
the scent of the almond tree  
the hot July wind  
the tension in the air of a rising storm

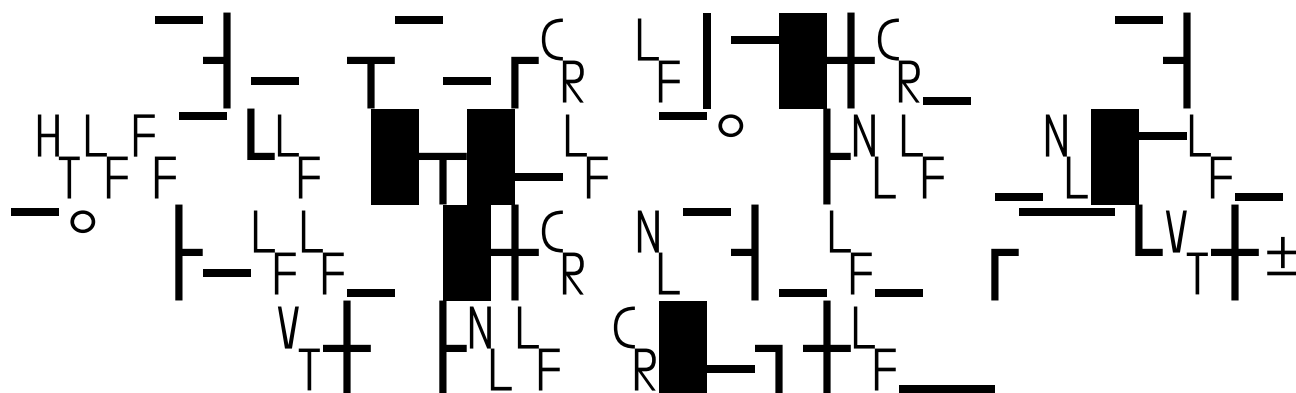
he was brilliant at subjects he cared about  
and had no energy to spare for the others

In his early teens  
he  
cycled around Oxfordshire taking rubbings of church brasses  
He cycled around in France looking at castles and cathedrals  
later  
he accompanied Leonard Woolley and the British Museum Archaeological  
mission to Egypt

he  
made plans to buy a disused windmill when he returned to England  
and use its power to drive a printing press which would print books  
on hand-made paper

they would then be bound with vellum that would be stained with  
Tyrrian dye

To believe your existence  
necessary after some immense spiritual labour  
is only common sense



Your world expands  
You become aware of the shapes of trees and  
houses looming in the darkness

For moments together my heart stood still between delight and sorrow to find how rich was the gallery of my life  
and how thronged the soul  
with high eternal stars and constellations

My life  
had laid up riches  
riches to be proud of  
It had been  
a princely life  
Let the little way to death be as it might  
—the kernel of this life of mine was noble  
It came of high descent  
and turned  
not on trifles  
but on the stars

But if we choose dishonesty  
what happens to our philosophers' desire to get at fact?

creative ecstasy

I want people to understand  
I will tell the whole truth  
and others will continue what I have begun  
Novels prevent one from understanding feeling  
I want to say so much and cannot find the words  
I write in a trance  
and that trance is called wisdom  
I am not afraid of anything except the death of wisdom  
wisdom is God

**it is a realization that has come to  
him many times while dancing  
the self-transcendence  
the  
glimpse of a 'power within him'**

start from grounds all can  
understand and accept  
the world and  
life

If you don't like your life you can change it

the human race is implicated in some terrible  
aboriginal calamity

not simply a will to truth  
but a will to life  
to consciousness

a pleasant forest grove and a  
river of clear water flowing by

the intuitional thinker

immediacy of perception

detachment from himself which is the first condition of self-knowledge

the desperate clinging to the self  
and the desperate clinging to life are the surest way to eternal death



The divided kingdom must be unified

distant horizons and water ribbed sand

not terms of doing but simply of being  
pure possibility  
The personality temporarily disappears

The body can be made drunk with its own vitality far more easily than the intellect or the emotions with theirs

beyond a certain point  
problems will not submit to mere thought  
they must be lived

Very few writers treat writing  
as an instrument for living  
not as an aim in itself

He was like a fine string that could resound sympathetically to the slightest vibrations of beauty or harmony in his surroundings

recognize  
purpose  
follow it with  
whole being

I am a disciple of the  
philosopher Dionysus

mental relaxation

His last canvas is the 'Cornfield with Crows'  
the sky blue-black with a coming storm  
a road that runs in from the left of the canvas  
and shoots away through the middle of the ripe corn like a fast stream  
There is a curious atmosphere of strain and foreboding

In proportion as an ideal has been falsely worshipped  
reality has been robbed of its value  
its meaning and its truthfulness

Hitherto the lie of the ideal has been the curse of reality  
by means of it

the very source of mankind's instincts has become mendacious and false  
so that the very values have come to be worshipped that are the exact opposite of  
the one that would assure man's prosperity  
his future and his great right to a future

Τηρε ωασ α φεελινγ λικε λεαπινγ ηαρβουρ.

There was a feeling like leaving harbour

the creak of a lumbering cart  
splashing the wintry mould

The intellect climbed to great heights in his periods of good health and well-being

his sedentary way of life encouraged headaches  
indigestion  
mental and physical exhaustion

Freemason

the Buddhist idea of Nirvana is not simply negative

Sanity lay in creation

Ultimate Yes  
being  
Eternal life  
triumph

**fired**  
**by youth and life**





the vision of things as 'infinite ...' is  
the perfectly normal emotional state

it is  
our parents' lives that enralls and blinds us

Blake

found no body-contempt in Christ

go out and do  
something

Everything that lives is Holy  
life delights in life

βιταλ ιμπυλσεσ  
vital impulses

*All appeared new and strange  
inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful  
The corn was orient and immortal wheat  
The dust and stones of the streets were as precious as gold  
And young men  
were  
glittering and sparkling angels  
and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty*

There were moments

a London bus on a rainy evening  
its windows steamy with the breath  
of its crowded passengers  
splashing its way through the dark  
space around Trafalgar Square

Well my dear friend  
the sun of August shines on us  
the year slips on  
calm and peace spread over the mountains and forests  
The intensity of my emotion makes me  
burst out laughing  
I was full of a new vision

the blissful ecstasy that arises from the innermost depths of man  
ay

of nature

at this same collapse of the principium individuationis  
and we shall gain an insight into the Dionysian

which is brought into closest ken

perhaps

by the analogy of drunkenness

It is either under the influence of the narcotic draught

of which the hymns of all primitive men and peoples tell us

or by the powerful approach of Spring penetrating all nature with joy  
that those Dionysian emotions awake

in which the subject vanishes to complete forgetfulness

# shining ocean

## the universe is full of life is nothing but life

infinite

corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away and displaying the infinite that was hid.

If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' chinks of his cavern.

intuition

free of the troubles and perplexities of intellect

an intuition which was release from the 'thought-riddled nature'

a man great enough to affirm

the prophet

the saint

the man of genius

the man of action

or

perhaps

a combination of all four?

without creation

the balance is gone

'If the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise'

Blake wrote

It has always seemed to me that man has some sixth sense

or some faculty apart from sense

that must be satisfied before he can be completely happy

Clear is his eye

nor lurketh any loathing about his mouth

Goeth he not his way like a dancer?

**He goes out**

**and**

**under the night sky**

**he is overwhelmed with 'universal consciousness'**

**The stars inspire him**

**'there seemed to be threads from all those innumerable**

**worlds**  
**linking his souls to them**  
**It was as if some idea had seized sovereignty in his mind.'**

warm friendship  
sat up talking until the early hours of the morning

optimism  
tends to be self-perpetuating

a continually healthy ecstasy of praise for being alive

# most alive beings

The way to innocence  
to the uncreated and to God  
leads on  
not  
back to  
the child  
but  
ever deeper into  
life

Instead of narrowing your world  
to take the whole world into your soul

# a cleansing of the senses

the striving to live more abundantly which is the ultimate aim of religion

Search for

strength

—which is not to be borrowed or bargained for

—it must spring from the secret life

it would not be so difficult after all

*conception of themselves*

Between two or three notes of the piano  
the door opened suddenly to the other world  
I sped through heaven and saw God at work  
I affirmed all things and to all things I gave up my heart

Søren Kierkegaard

Put me in a System and you negate me  
—I am not just a mathematical symbol—  
I am

the ideal combination

a compound of

powerful intellect

mystical nature-love and

realization of

body's potentialities

life is far too full of exciting possibilities to narrow it down

appetite for a purpose and a direction

bird  
sky  
trees  
ground

the emotion you get from it is not a pleasure in the reproduction of  
human life

**The times are ended  
shadows pass  
the morning 'gins to break  
The fiery joy that Urizen perverted to ten commands  
What night he led the starry host through the wide wilderness  
That stony law I stamp to dust  
and scatter religion abroad  
To the four winds as a torn book  
and none shall gather the leaves**

What must I do to be saved?

**a series of 'flats'  
a Greek vase design**

the 'pagan Existentialist' philosopher  
Nietzsche

You are on a long train journey  
at the beginning of the journey you watch the fields passing with interest  
the new sights stimulate all kinds of thoughts and impressions

his conception of religion was always elastic  
a tradition tells how he and his sister once built a makeshift altar on the site of an old pagan sacrificial altar in a churchyard  
and then paced gravely around it  
intoning 'Odin hear us' into the rising smoke

In Hindu and Buddhist scriptures

the word 'bondage' is the equivalent of the word 'sin' in the Christian  
or at least bondage is regarded as an absolute and inevitable consequence of sin

The necessary basis for religion is the belief that freedom can be attained

James's vision

with its implication of absolute

final and irrevocable bondage can be called the essence of evil

# a sense of purpose

His sanest and best-argued books provoked Germany's guardians of culture to accuse him of extravagant self-worship or insanity  
Thoughts that seemed to him gigantic  
world-shaking  
were received without interest  
The continued optimism of his letters is an amazing feat

Tat Tvam Asi

—That Thou Art—\*

the formula from the Upanishads that denotes that in the heart of his own being man discovers the godhead

\*

Chandogya Upanishad

VI

ii

3



# Death is finished.

the Outsider's chief desire is to cease to be an Outsider  
He cannot cease to be an Outsider simply to become an ordinary bourgeois  
that would be a way back  
'back into the wolf or the child'  
this way is impracticable  
is no true solution of the Outsider's problems  
His problem is therefore how to go forward

They are not component parts of a system  
they are rather parts of a continual self-revelation of Nietzsche the man

conscious direction where his own unusual powers are concerned

## fresh

Greek culture

its apex had been the earlier worship of Bacchus  
the god of raw  
upsurging vitality

he  
the young Count Axel  
lives in his lonely castle on the Rhine  
and studies the Kabbala and Hermetic philosophy in his oak-panelled study  
'As for living  
our servants can do that for us.'

most of these poets of the late nineteenth century were only 'half in love with easeful death'  
the other half clung very firmly to life and complained about its futility  
But follow their pessimism further  
press it to the limits of complete sincerity  
and the result is a completely life-denying nihilism that is actually a danger to life  
When Van Gogh's 'Misery will never end' is combined with Evan Strowde's 'Nothing is worth doing'  
the result is a kind of spiritual syphilis that can hardly stop short of death or insanity

Freedom posits free-will  
that is self-evident  
But Will can only operate when there is first a motive  
No motive  
no willing  
But motive is a matter of belief  
you would not want to do anything unless you believed it possible and meaningful  
And belief must be belief in the existence of something  
that is to say  
it concerns what is real  
So ultimately  
freedom depends upon the real  
It is as impossible to exercise freedom in an unreal world as it is to jump while  
you are falling

an intellectual who discovers that he has neglected the body and the emotions

in love with life

## instinctive certainty



meaning and purpose

# Magic Theatre: Not for everybody

drawing mountains

water and sky to his heart with outstretched arms

he knelt down and seemed to pay homage to the earth-mother and the wisp of mountain lake

offering as a ceremonious sacrifice to the powers his youth

freedom

and the life instinct that burned within him

This experience

a type of

affirmation

One day in June or July

I was walking along a narrow path separating the paddy fields

eating some puffed rice

which I was carrying in a basket

Looking up at the sky

I saw a beautiful

sombre thundercloud

As it spread rapidly over the whole sky

a flight of snow-white cranes flew overhead in front of it

It presented such a beautiful contrast that my mind wandered to far-off regions

every man is potentially hero and genius

only inertia keeps men mediocre

# wellspring

seated among silent trees and meads and hills

He bought the piano score of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde and learnt it by heart

Maslow told me that he had got tired of  
studying sick people because they  
talked about nothing but their sickness  
So he had the  
idea of studying healthy people instead



**Colin Wilson**  
Hermann Hesse  
**Thomas Traherne**  
William Butler Yeats  
**George Bernard Shaw**  
Meg Maxwell and Verena  
Tschudin (eds.)  
**Anonymous**  
William James

**Henry James, Sr.**  
William Blake  
**Friedrich Nietzsche**  
Wystan Hugh Auden  
**Herbert George Wells**  
Henri Barbusse  
**Thomas Edward Lawrence**  
Mencius  
**Vaslav Nijinsky**

**Arthur Rimbaud**  
Ernest Dowson  
**George Fox**  
Walt Whitman  
**Buddha**  
John Henry Newman  
**John William Navin Sullivan**  
Ramakrishna  
**Dr. Samuel Johnson**

**Fiodor Dostoevsky**  
Harley Granville-Barker  
**Søren Kierkegaard**  
Thomas Ernest Hulme  
**Alexei Tolstoy**  
Auguste, comte de Villiers  
de L'Isle-Adam

