



Poetry and Mysticism

Colin Wilson

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The mystic's moment of illumination shares with great poetry the liberating power of the deepest levels of consciousness. In the words of William Blake, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to a man as it is, infinite."

Poetry, Wilson argues, is a contradiction of the habitual prison of daily life and shows the way to transcend the ordinary world through an act of intense attention-and intention. The poet, like the mystic, is subject to sudden ""peak experiences"" when ""everything we look upon is blessed."" W.B. Yeats, Dostoevsky, Gautama Buddha, Kazantzakis, Van Gogh, Rupert Brooke, Arunja, Nietzsche, A.L. Rouse, Jacob Boehme, Suzuki, Edgar Allan Poe: their visionary understanding can generate an awareness in each of us of our potential to open the floodgates of inner energy that creates mystic experience.

Colin Wilson first received international acclaim in 1956 for *The Outsider*. ""Ever since I was thirteen, I have been obsessed by the question of the nature of mystical experience,"" he writes, and from that time he has been on a quest of the mystical in poetry, religion, and psychology.

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