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Sommario/riassunto	Throughout his career A.M. Klein was concerned primarily with his relationship to his community, seeing himself, and all serious artists, as necessarily shaping and being shaped by the community in which they are rooted. Yet Klein's vision of this relationship was profoundly ambivalent, and this ambivalence is reflected most clearly in his troubled attitude to the two dominant strains in his work, Jewishness and modernism. In this study of A.M. Klein's work, Zailig Pollock focuses on 'the story of the poet,' which Klein retells again and again at major turning points in his career. Pollock argues that the story reflects Klein's attempt to mediate between his dual Jewish and modernist ambitions. While Klein's Jewishness gave him a sense of rootedness and vocation, it placed constraints on his personal and artistic freedom.

Modernism offered Klein freedom for personal exploration and artistic expression, but the rootlessness implicit in modernism repelled him. The story of the poet who engages in a strategic inner retreat from a hostile or, at best, indifferent society, eventually returning as a redeemer of the society which spurned him, was first formulated in 'Out of the Pulver and the Polished Lens.' It was most fully articulated in 'Portrait of the Poet as Landscape' and The Second Scroll, and abandoned only in the despairing works which immediately preceded Klein's final breakdown and silence. This is the first book to survey all of Klein's poetry, prose, and journalism, published and unpublished, and place it in the context of its times.
