Adrian Stokes, Modernism and the Problem of Reparation

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Thesis abstract

This thesis re-evaluates the work of art writer Adrian Stokes through the Kleinian concept he identified as its underlying theme: that of 'reparation', translated from 'Wiedergutmachung', literally 'to make well again'. Stokes's work, it argues, provides new perspectives on what he read as the simultaneously redemptive and dangerous desire to create something newly whole from the 'ruins' of modernity. The project attends to this as both an aspect of his own work and of the aesthetic and ideological developments of the mid-Twentieth Century more generally: it moves through Stokes's own brush with the 'palingenetic' aesthetics of fascism; his attempt to make amends for its destruction through his psychoanalysis with Klein; his reading of the reparative fantasies behind modernity's embrace of machine power; and his later analysis of avant-garde painting and British abstract sculpture as different attempts to salvage the fragments of modernity into a meaningful object. In doing so, the thesis centres around a particular contradiction that Klein brought, controversially, to the forefront of psychoanalytic thought: that the desire for reparation itself can often turn destructive. As such, this thesis also treats Stokes's work as a re-evaluation of Klein's cultural relevance. Her reappraisal of the role of destruction in infantile life, it suggests, offers an insightful reading of the formal and conceptual struggles particular to the Modernist period: the possibility of creating a coherent object out of chaos and fragmentation; the capacity to cope with the failure of such objects to be 'ideal'; and the necessity of destruction and loss for the creation of meaning.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

When addressing the work of Adrian Stokes, it is not unusual to begin with a disclaimer about discipline and style. Between 1923 and his death in 1972, Stokes wrote more than twenty books and numerous essays on the relationship between art, culture and – following his analysis with Melanie Klein from 1929 – psychoanalysis. But much of the commentary surrounding his work has had less to do with the arguments made by these texts than with the difficulty of reading them, and moreover, of placing them in a critical context. This has partly been a problem of genre. Although Stokes is ostensibly known as an art writer, he often merged autobiography, history, phenomenology, aesthetic and psychoanalytic theory into improbably broad cultural critiques that made him hard to situate. To make things more complicated, Stokes also blends his thoughts about the history and art of the Renaissance with psycho-political readings of modernist culture, in a way that makes him alien to scholars of either time. Perhaps even more problematic than his trans-historical, polymathic methods, however, has been his insistence on a language that lies somewhere between evocation and exposition. In a review of Stokes's reissued Renaissance texts from 2002, Julian Bell describes his work as a struggle between these two forces, in which "the urge to categorise keeps overriding the urge to depict" until, finally, "a kind of poetry wins out".[1] The result, as Bell partially acknowledges, is that critical reception of Stokes has been divided along similar lines. On the one hand, his tendency to drown his reader in esoteric language has prevented scholars from extracting a critical framework of use.[2] On the other hand, his remaining champions appreciate the failure of such extraction as central to Stokes's project, which sought to reconcile critical thought with the rich aesthetic and unconscious forces he felt it was necessarily vulnerable to. "Disruptive and difficult in the way that Picasso is"[3] he is said to be a writer "whose work eludes classification": "highly individual and idiosyncratic", with a "studied indeterminacy of approach".[4]

Ironically, the result of Stokes's complexity is that his work has generally been broken down and addressed in its 'parts'. His writing on the Italian Renaissance, for example, is most often taken up by art historians, who situate him as descending from the ekphrastic aesthetic tradition of Walter Pater and John Ruskin. The other major

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[1] Julian Bell, 'Into the Southern Playground', *London Review of Books,* Vol.25 No.16, 21st August 2003, pp.10-12

[2] In a recent article for the Tate, David Carrier admitted that he had become "sceptical of Stokes's relevance to art history" in part because of his resistance to being read: of his description of Verrochio's lavabo, he writes "even after many re-readings over four decades, I do not entirely understand Stokes's interpretation". Similarly, Janet Sayers, in her biography of Stokes from 2015, notes that "many people have complained about the obscurity of Adrian Stokes' psychoanalytic aesthetics. Melanie Klein, for instance, told him: "[W]hile in your writings some parts are of great beauty others are not clearly enough expressed. I have heard this criticism expressed by people who much appreciated your books and seemed to me to belong to the class of 'good' readers." (David Carrier, 'Placing the Early Writings', http://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/art-writers-britain/adrian-stokes/placing-early-writings-adrian-stokes, (Accessed 02/02/2018); Janet Sayers, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes: A Biography*, (London; Karnac Books, 2015), p.198)

[3] Bann, Stephen (ed.), *The Coral Mind: Adrian Stokes's Engagement with Architecture, Art History, Criticism, and Psychoanalysis*, (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), p.8

[4] Paul Tucker, 'Tate Research Workshop', Tate Online, http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/art-writers-britain/adrian-stokes (Accessed 16th November 2016); Meg Harris Williams (ed.), *Art and Analysis: An Adrian Stokes Reader*, (London: Karnac, 2014), p.xi

approach to his work has been as an analysand of Melanie Klein, and thus as a bridge between British psychoanalysis and modernist aesthetics. Elsewhere, Stokes's works have been taken up in unlikely fields: in 2004, Michael O'Pray published his book on the implications of Stokes's work for cinema,[5] and more recently, his two works on the Russian ballet have been incorporated into works on the history and theory of dance.[6] Perhaps the only sustained attempt to look at Stokes's work as an intimidating and difficult whole has been the biography of his early life published by Richard Read in 2002. But it is testament to the scale of such a task that it took Read twenty years to consolidate: "the delay was caused by the need to absorb what I had been shown and told, enough to feel that I had understood its relevance to the many levels of meaning that slowly emerged in Stokes's vivid writing".[7] Even then, Read only addressed the first half of Stokes's life. To look Stokes's work in the eye, then, is to embrace a kind of confusion that it is difficult to dig oneself out of. And while many of his champions regard this as a strength, it also creates a problem when approaching him: if truly apprehending Stokes's work necessitates a loss of clarity, as Bell asks, "is there, now, any way to restore the cogency of his writing?"; "should the task even be attempted?"[8]

The topic of this thesis, in this respect, is appropriate; it attempts to shed some light on the internal logic of Stokes's thought through the psychoanalytic concept that he identified as its driving force – that of 'reparation', the urge to restore destroyed things to a state of wholeness. But in doing so, it is less interested in restoring Stokes's cogency than in asking what his own struggle to achieve it reveals about his engagement with a fragmented and chaotic modern world. As Read has said, "there has been a battle of disciplines over Stokes's work that has obscured the quite different battles from which that work originally emerged".[9] It is counterintuitive, that is, to set about restoring coherence to Stokes without first considering that his life's work began with a loss of faith in that very possibility, and might be read as a lengthy attempt to recover it. Stokes's first book, 1925's *The Thread of Ariadne* was a sustained account of the intellectual chaos of the early 1920s, in which he attempted to grapple with an epistemological and representational crisis that, at age twenty, was beyond him to articulate: a loss of faith in the teleological narratives of the Western philosophical tradition, and the possibility – or not – of recovering meaning beyond them. This book, as Stokes later came to view it, was a youthful, immature (and not well evidenced) attempt to comprehend the enormity of the modern 'situation'. But it is also clear that much of his later work was underpinned by the impasse it described – that in a post-war moment marked by feelings of loss, futility, and disorientation, "origins and purposes and the working into systems, the old problems answered and unanswered, [seem] to have little meaning"; "its pretensions, amid the crowding contrasts of modern life, have become intolerable both in theory and in practice".[10] Such a statement sheds some light on the difficulty of categorising or cohering Stokes. He began his career with a loss of faith in the available methods for making sense of the world. Moreover, in a historical moment characterised by destruction, alienation and chaos, he felt that forms of thought and representation that seemed more focussed on 'coherence' than on reconciling humanity to the decidedly incoherent state of the world only seemed to worsen things.

[5] Michael O'Pray, *Film, Form and Phantasy: Adrian Stokes and Film Aesthetics*, (New York; Palgrace Mcmillan, 2004)
[6] See Peter Stoneley, *A Queer History of the Ballet*, (London; Routledge, 2007)
[7] Read, *Art and Its Discontents*, p. xv
[8] Julian Bell, 'Into the Southern Playground', *London Review of Books,* Vol.25 No.16, 21st August 2003, pp.10-12
[9] Read, Richard, *Art and its Discontents: The Early Life of Adrian Stokes,* (Ashgate, 2002), xxii
[10] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, (London; Faber & Faber, 1925), p. xiv; Ibid. p.xvi

Stokes began to write *Ariadne* just after his graduation from Oxford in 1923, where he had become keenly aware of the divisive culture that was emerging from the fissure between philosophical frameworks and material life. The book identified as a central problem of early modernism the conflict between "systematisation and its denial" – that is, a growing divide between what Stokes called "The Common Heritage" – an inherited "method of dealing with meaning" which "leads us to seek coherency, causes and purposes" – and new movements that sought to contradict it, by emphasising the destructive, irrational, and ambiguous aspects of experience.[11] Stokes was, in some ways, sympathetic to the latter endeavour. Owing to his open critique of philosophical "system and coherency" – that "impossible obsession of thought" – Stokes was situated in his time as part of a larger post-war emphasis on forms of 'undoing' in thought and language.[12] In John Middleton Murray's introduction to the first edition of *Ariadne*, he described the book as

> symptomatic of a movement of thought, or a movement beyond thought, which will have many repercussions in the coming years. […] To formulate against formulation may seem a fantastic and chimerical task. [But] Mr Stokes's book is a clinical record of the birth pangs of a new consciousness in the English, and perhaps in the European mind.[13]

Indeed, *Ariadne* was published in the same year as Virginia Woolf's digressive novel *Mrs Dalloway* – which dealt with the physical and mental unmooring inflicted by war – and close after Freud's *Beyond The Pleasure Principle*, in which he made the case for an inherent human drive towards destruction. Despite Stokes's fit of resistance to the intellectual confusion of the 1920s, he managed to find rare common ground with these thinkers. Like him, they attempted to account for something in us that muddied, even worked against, the aims of constructive thought. It is for this reason that Lyndsey Stonebridge includes Stokes in her account of the destructive drive in modernist aesthetics: "turning against culture with the resources of culture itself"[14], Stokes was part of a project, which Christine Froula attributes to Freud and Woolf, of re-imagining the self for "a civilization that must manage, but can never eradicate, the aggression that imperils from within".[15] In a rare moment of reference to other writing of the time, Stokes remarks, while reading Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, that whilst "the older writers had to point characters so as to describe them with the definiteness of words, the modern novel, relying on the art of suggestion, is the beginning of the getting behind the words".[16] Woolf's writing was admirable to him because it was at once coherent and equivocal; it hinted at something messy within language that disturbed its descriptive stability.

But despite Stokes's insistence on finding a language beyond the logical – one that could cope with "the mass of half spoken meanings which official thinking cannot recognise" — *Ariadne* was also deeply skeptical of movements that sought to fully embrace ambiguity, chaos or destruction.[17] Though it was read as an anti-institutional

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[11] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, 1925, p.17
[12] Ibid. p.63
[13] Introduction to *The Thread of Ariadne*, 1925, p.vi
[14] Lyndsey Stonebridge, *The Destructive Element: British Psychoanalysis and Modernism*, (London; Macmillan Press, 1998), p.viii
[15] Christine Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-garde: War, Civilisation, Modernity*, (New York; Columbia University Press, 2007), p.88
[16] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, pp. 175-176
[17] Ibid. p.7

text – arguing, as Paul Keegan put it, that "mathematical or standard thought [...] leads us into difficulties because we exaggerate its power" – *Ariadne* was equally concerned about an emerging faith in the 'revolutionary' act of abandoning thought in order to embrace dissolution. This was something that would become clearer in Stokes's later critique of Surrealism (whose purpose, André Breton had claimed, was to access truth via "the disinterested play of thought" in "the absence of any control exercised by reason").[18] In his later writing, Stokes would be openly critical about movements in which "non-representation itself is considered an almost mystic virtue" – a position taken up by "a host of artists who have in common little more than a word and a fetish and an otherwise thoughtless sense of protest".[19] Such movements seemed to live by the idiom that Stokes had mocked in *Ariadne*'s preface – that in the face of modernity, "it is only sane to be mad".[20] Such a position, he felt, failed to meet the demands of modernity, simply rebounding from the perception of inadequate frameworks into an unhelpful and equally untenable state of thought-rejection.

   Ironically, Stokes's perception of such a dichotomy was occasionally vindicated by the way his own work was interpreted. *Ariadne*'s fervent critique of academic constraints led the book to be mistakenly situated as an attack on the possibility of coherent thought. Reviewing *Ariadne* in the year of its publication, Keegan wrote that Stokes would

> have us sacrifice all our certitudes, forgo our satisfaction in harmonies that demand an acceptance of limitations outgrown, and open our spirits to the manifold, the chaotic, the contradictory suggestions of the real. There is nothing more necessary. [...] But the danger of the attempt, especially when made in youth, is that it will be merely destructive, merely revolutionary.[21]

This was in some ways a gross misreading, given that the 'merely destructive' impulse Keegan describes was one of the extremes Stokes had been attempting to identify and resist. Rather, *Ariadne* – which Stokes felt was "sure to be misunderstood" – sought to navigate and transcend what Read refers to as "a vicious circle of competing claims between spontaneity and calculation".[22] Such an intellectual environment, he wrote, "cannot satisfy the lust for meaning" nor can it "contain the inspiration of life".[23] The solution, he felt, was to "leave the arena of recognised philosophy and let my doctrines grow up in more natural surroundings".[24] To that end, the second half of the book was to be a diary – written as he travelled through Asia – that sought to work through the conflicts of modernity whilst deliberately resisting its traps. In dedication to this escape mission, Stokes named the book for the Greek myth he would also name his daughter for, in which Ariadne's thread helps Perseus to find his way out of the labyrinth unscathed.

In previous scholarship on Stokes, this first text has scarcely been commented on, so apparently disconnected it seems from the later themes of his work. Stokes is better

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[18] André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, (University of Michigan Press, 1969), p.26

[19] Adrian Stokes, from a review of Ben Nicholson, 'Mr Ben Nicholson', *The Spectator*, 1937, quoted from: Kite, Stephen, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (MHRA, 2009), p.156

[20] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, 1925, p.xii

[21] Paul Keegan, Review of 'The Thread of Ariadne', T25, 19th March 1925

[22] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne,* 1925, p.17

[23] Ibid. p.8

[24] Ibid. p.73

known for two distinct but overlapping aesthetic projects – between 1925 and 1935, for a reappraisal of Italian Renaissance architecture, and later, for a more developed, psychoanalytic reading of British modernist sculpture, influenced by his analysis with Melanie Klein from 1929. This thesis begins with an account of *Ariadne*, however, because it is where he best expresses the feelings of disillusionment and frustration that served as the catalyst for his art critical writing. Stokes's art writing, as he himself framed it, was his attempt to find a way out of the impasses of modernity, by modelling possible states of synthesis that were able to make new sense of its chaos. Stokes identified this as the aim of his life's work after his seven-year analysis with Melanie Klein, who read his work as a sustained – and often failed – act of 'reparation'. Both his own writing, and the art forms he championed within it, Klein helped him to see, were manifestations of the same aim: "metaphorically to take things to pieces in the outside world and put them together again" in a symbolic attempt to restitute "the barbaric country of the modern world".[25] The thesis that follows re-evaluates Stokes's highly varied works as different and developing expressions of this aim. It traces the contradictions, failures and successes in Stokes's attempts to find newly meaningful forms of expression that could incorporate the disillusionment and destruction that he felt characteristic of his time.

In this respect, Klein's work on reparation became paramount to Stokes's thought. Translated from 'Wiedergutmachung', literally 'to make well again', reparation in her work was a complex term that referred to the process of restoring a destroyed inner world. In her account of child development, acts of reparation emerged from the infant's desire to overcome what she called 'the depressive position' – a state in which the inner world was destroyed by conflict and loss – with the drive to create something whole out of the damage. Crucially, however, for Klein true reparation did not attempt to erase the difficulty it hoped to compensate for; on the contrary, it could only emerge from its acceptance. It was a process by which the child must relinquish ideal objects, enabling a more stable relationship with a not-so-ideal reality. Successful reparation involved the child's capacity to accept loss, to recognise and atone for their own aggression, and to reincorporate what was destroyed into a new and more complex object. An ambivalent drive composed of love, grief and guilt, it thus described a desire for cohesion that was less an antidote to the destructive and chaotic aspects of the world and the self than a confrontation with these aspects, and a willingness to get on terms with them.

Stokes only came to this concept through his analysis with Klein, and as such it doesn't appear explicitly in his work until 1947. But with the publication of *Inside Out* – an autobiographical essay in which he describes his own childhood feelings of idealism and disillusionment – Stokes identified reparation as the subliminal aim of all his prior texts, and of his life since childhood. The impact of Klein's thought on his writing was so great, in fact, that in 1951 he was dropped by his long-time publisher Faber and Faber, and published for the rest of his life with a specialist psychoanalytic publisher, the Tavistock Press. In some ways, it is lucky he was taken up even here, since the difficult nature of Klein's work led her to be as unpopular among her contemporaries as Stokes was among his. During the years that Stokes was in analysis, Klein's theories, and her way of writing them, became the source of a disagreement within the Psychoanalytic Society that eventually led to the 'controversial discussions': a series of formal debates, between 1942 and 1944, that led to a break within the Society that persists to this day. Many of the criticisms levelled at Klein's work during this fractious period are things that could be, and sometimes have been, said about Stokes. As Meira Likierman's contextual

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[25] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.163

account of Klein details, chief among these were her "anarchic reasoning process" and her "inappropriately negative and pessimistic [image of] human nature". [26] Like Stokes, she was also a ghost in the institutional machine, who offered dark intuitions, often without qualifications. Despite this, Klein has had a modest but lasting cultural impact, perhaps because the very emphasis on disillusionment, destruction and ambiguity that made her work unpalatable to a professional body was the aspect that spoke most profoundly to the epistemological and political context of modernism. If the Psychoanalytic Society felt that Klein was a "bringer of an unwelcome message" about the inherent negativity of the world and of the self, Stokes felt that she was one of few thinkers willing to interpret a message that Western modernity had already received, and would continue to receive as the Twentieth Century drew on. In a cultural moment that seemed to be struggling to incorporate the experience of violence, disillusionment and diffusion into a meaningful form, Klein's disruptive intervention, and her emphasis on the possibility of renewal after such collapse, was to him timely. Doing for the psyche what Woolf had done for language, she gave it hope of continuing in the knowledge of its own unravelling. As such, Stokes is a rare champion of the hope to be found in Klein, who was not generally received as a hopeful thinker.

In an aesthetic context, the focus on reparation in Stokes's work is not new. As Klein became so central to his thought, most accounts of his work, even from an art historical perspective, allude to reparation as the drive behind his interest in certain kinds of aesthetic forms. David Carrier placed Stokes as the heir to Walter Pater and John Ruskin's aesthetic traditions, as a figure that, through art, "moves from a fallen land to a place of salvation".[27] Stephen Kite's monograph from 2001 emphasises Stokes's belief in "architecture's restorative role in the environment" – its power to transform the "inner and outer wastelands" of modernity.[28] This thesis hopes to give an account of Stokes's reparative journey that is more firmly rooted in the nuances of Klein's psychic model. In doing so, it also seeks to re-evaluate the complexity of Klein's thinking about the desire for repair and its possible expressions. Contrary to the holistic vision of wholeness it might call to mind, Klein's reparative attitude was borne out of loss, and consisted in a painful process of coming to terms with aspects of reality – such as ambivalence, disillusionment, death – that the subject would rather sublimate or outrun. As such, the kind of salvation Stokes imagines through Klein is a complex one deserving of detailed attention. Such an emphasis made Stokes one of the few adherents of the specifically Kleinian aesthetics that were outlined by his contemporary, Hanna Segal, in 1947. In her paper 'A Psychoanalytic Approach to Aesthetics', Segal gave tragedy as the most symbolic example of the Kleinian approach to art. In tragic narratives, she argues, we find that a coherent form is able to body forth destruction and loss, in a way that solidifies death's necessary relation to life. "Ugliness is the content – the complete ruin and destruction – and beauty is the form".[29] She posited that a Kleinian approach to art was one that sought to make a new and more complex object from struggle.

In redressing the nuances of Klein's work on reparation – and Stokes's cultural repurposing of them – this project also seeks to reconcile Stokes to the wider aesthetic battles of modernism that he has often been dissociated from. With hindsight, it is a testament to Klein's wider relevance that Segal may have inadvertently described a defining feature of literary modernism. In Lawrence Rainey's *Anthology of Modernism*, he

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[26] Meira Likierman, *Melanie Klein: Her Work in Context*, (New York; A&C Black, 2001), p.4

[27] David Carrier, *England and its Aesthetes: Biography and Taste*, (London; Routledge, 2014), p.16

[28] Kite, Stephen, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (MHRA, 2009), p.10

[29] Stonebridge, Lyndsey & Phillips, John (ed.), *Reading Melanie Klein,* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 217

identifies the sublimation of chaos as one of its key formal features, exemplified by "rigorous, difficult, yet coherent forms that were set over and against the chaotic contingencies of the present".[30] As such, Klein's work on the reparative drive, which she was developing in the 1930s, is highly relevant not just to Stokes's work, but to the aims of modernist art and literature at large, insofar as it describes the subject's mechanisms for coping with, and creating something from, the loss of ideal objects. As many commentators on the modernist movement – and on Klein's relevance for it particularly – have noted, modernism was a culture inherently marked by the destruction of both metaphysical and social sources of collective meaning, and thus by a sense of loss. This was the result, as Stephen Spender remarked in his *The Struggle of the Modern*, of ever broadening horizons and merging cultural traditions, which gave the impression of modernity as both "tragedy and overwhelming disaster" and "as an all embracing fatality which is progress".[31] The struggle for new artistic forms in the face of this was an attempt to renew or redeem the search for meaning, primarily through "trying to comprehend the situation itself in a single vision that restores wholeness to the fragmentation, even by realising it as disaster, as the waste-land or night-town".[32] In other words, if the moderns could not do justice to the nature of modernity through any traditional forms of representation, they were faced with the markedly Kleinian task of discovering new ones which were, though riven with the effects of disillusionment, meaningful in their own right.

Though Stokes himself was not overtly concerned with the literature of his time, he was aware of its developments, and was arguably an isolated figure in bringing similar discussions about the symbolic nature of form to more abstract mediums of expression, such as architecture and painting. Indeed, his insistence on the cultural and psychological symbolism of forms is a feature of Stokes's aesthetic thought that distinguishes him from other aesthetes of his time. Beginning his career in the mid 1920s, Stokes was writing against the grain of art criticism in his moment, insofar as he was at work during the high point of the formalist art theory espoused by thinkers such as Roger Fry and Clive Bell. Bell especially had posited that a work of art could and should rightly be severed from its milieu and the intentions of those who made it. "We have no right" he wrote, and "neither is there any necessity, to pry behind the object into the state of the mind who made it".[33] Stokes fundamentally disagreed with such an approach, feeling that a conception of art detached from material and mental life appeared strangely shallow. He believed that "inasmuch as man both physically and psychologically is a structure carefully amassed, a coalescence and a pattern, a balance imposed on opposite drives, building is not only the most common but the most general symbol of our living and breathing".[34] Any human subject, he stresses, is a form, a structure, no less than the architecture that he felt was mother of all our arts. As such, the struggles for coherence that the artist underwent in material form were symbolic of those being played out in the inner life. Pure form, he wrote, was "an introducer making lovely tours but with no-one to introduce", or else, like advertising and political rhetoric, designed to deny the patterns of meaning that forms covertly imparted to those living under them.[35] He believed that forms of art had the capacity to model possible states for

[30] Lawrence Rainey, *Modernism: An Anthology*, (London; John Wiley & Sons,2005), p.xxii.
[31] Spender, Stephen, *The Struggle of the Modern*, (Los Angeles; University of California Press, 1963), p.80
[32] Ibid. p.81
[33] Bell, Clive, *Art,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.11
[34] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.3, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.149
[35] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 1,* ref number TGA 8816.1, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London).

the human mind, and therefore possible futures for its development beyond the nihilism that threatened to overwhelm the cultural discourse of his time. He was a proponent of the unfashionable but sincere belief, as Spender puts it, that "art might revolutionise the environment".[36]

Despite this, however, it is important to note that for Stokes, the struggle for inner coherence through art was not necessarily an inherently redemptive act. Besides a more thorough account of Klein's influence on his work, the other major contribution this thesis makes to an account of both Stokes's work and the reparative impulses of modernism at large, is that it steers away from casting reparation as a wholly positive or therapeutic aim. Rather, it suggests that Stokes's work, through its struggles, excesses, and failures, provides material for a more complex understanding of reparation as both the most redeeming and the most troubling drive of modernism. Even Segal's work on reparative aesthetics presents a misleadingly holistic image, dealing as it does with only one aspect or outcome of the need for reparation as it plays out in Klein's thought. As well as restorative acts of reparation, Klein also introduced to the psychoanalytic model manic and obsessional forms of reparation that, while ostensibly attempting to heal the subject and its objects of concern, transformed into quests for omnipotence, control and appropriation. Indeed, Stokes scholars have worked hard to emphasise the redemptive narrative of reparative aesthetics in his work partially in order to save him from his association with Ezra Pound during Mussolini's rise to power, and the more ominous conceptions of reparative synthesis he espoused during these years. The tendency has been, rightly, to avoid tarring Stokes with Pound's ideological brush, by examining his early texts in the light of his later, explicitly anti-ideological writing. But the early chapters of this thesis resurrect these darker formulations in the belief that they are not a detriment to his thought, but rather, the conditions for its eventual insight. In short, Stokes had to realise what reparation was *not* before he could fully describe what it was. His experiences mean he is uniquely placed to offer an understanding of the crucial distinction Klein made between true reparation and pseudo-reparation, and thus, for the distinction between reparative and totalitarian visions of wholeness.

Although this thesis deals with a Kleinian concept, however, it by no means takes up an explicitly psychoanalytic language. Rather, it brings the insights of Klein's psychoanalysis to bear on diverse aesthetic, cultural and political impulses towards wholeness, restoration and repair. This might be considered a part of its methodology; Stokes's work is important, it suggests, because it is a translation of psychoanalytic structures into an aesthetic and emotional language that sought to illustrate its relevance, not only for aesthetic and representational concerns, but also for everyday life. In his preface to 1951's *Smooth and Rough*, Stokes sought to address the nature of his contentious relationship with the psychoanalytic language, writing that,

> While I might welcome the accusation of being continuously in touch with the *quality* of psychoanalytic thought, I should find it uncomfortable were my abstractions or my method laid at the door of that science; if only because I bring no clinical material to bear […] the kind of mirroring I attempt is unconnected with a scientific procedure; is undivorced from an even longer preoccupation with the arts.[37]

As such, this thesis partakes of what Mary Jacobus terms a 'psychoanalytic poetics' – it does not attempt to map psychoanalysis onto literature and art, nor to use these forms

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[36] Spender, *The Struggle of the Modern*, 1963, p.85

[37] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.215

as a means of reading psychoanalysis, but attends to the "literary elements and aesthetic concerns" of psychoanalysis.[38] Such an approach is in some ways respectful to the insights of Klein's work in itself. In the later chapters of this thesis, I suggest that Klein's thought about the productive role of ambivalence and ambiguity held implications for the flexibility of language that make her work particularly fruitful for thinking about the nature of representation more generally.

Thesis Structure

This thesis takes a broadly chronological approach to Stokes's work, in order to trace the developments in his thought about the nature and possibility of reparation following the cultural and epistemological upheavals of early modernism. Given the trajectory of this project – broadly framed as a journey from ruin to repair – a chronological approach is less a default choice than a deliberate narrative structure. This is partly because of the nature of the history Stokes was writing from within: his career spanned the fractious period from just after the first world war, to the beginnings of the post-modern turn, and as such, his work inhabits several large cultural and epistemological shifts that transformed the focus and perspective of his work. Stokes's early conjectures about reparation, for example, were not yet informed by the rise of totalitarian politics. Similarly, his early conjectures about representation and the creation of meaning were not yet informed by the metaphysical fallout from those events. But secondly and more importantly, this structure is apt because Stokes is a unique writer for the conscious transformation of thought he underwent over the course of his life. As he wrote in a notebook from the mid 1940's, "I have changed much more than is possible for more than a few in history".[39] Especially in the early years of his career, Stokes often went through cycles of idealism and disillusionment, placing his faith in new sources of meaning that he would eventually come to see as illusionary. As such, to look at his perspective as a stable one would be to miss the insights he derived from inner conflicts and their resolutions. And as the last chapter of this thesis addresses at length, Klein's work was very much about the possibility of self-development through increasing complexity.

      The thesis is broadly divided into two parts: the first addresses Stokes's own inner struggle for a sense of 'coherence' – moving through his early, pre-Kleinian work and the changes in perspective enabled by his psychoanalysis – and the second looks at his application of these insights to the wider cultural milieu. It does so on the basis that Stokes's analysis allowed him to see the ways in which his own desire for reparation, and the destructive forms it could take, were playing out on a cultural scale. In his later work, I suggest, Stokes came to understand the ideological and representational extremes of the mid-century as a collective manifestation of the destructive cycles of the Kleinian psyche. And as such, Stokes's achievement of personal equilibrium through Klein in the mid-1930s, later led him to believe in the possibility of new representational and cultural forms, and a collective emergence from the disillusionment characteristic of the modernist period.

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[38] Mary Jacobus, *The Poetics of Psychoanalysis,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. v

[39] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 12,* ref number TGA 8816.12, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

Chapter 1

In 1925, two years after the publication of *Ariadne*, Stokes emerged from the Mount Cenis tunnel in Italy to find himself 'reborn'. After the fragmentation and loss characteristic of post-war London, Stokes found in the Italian landscape a potential model for renewed coherence and purpose. The first chapter of this thesis addresses the texts that emerged from this experience: *Pisanello* (1930) *The Quattro Cento* (1934) and *The Stones of Rimini* (1936), all of which deal with the symbolic and metaphysical underpinnings of Italian Renaissance architecture. Though this chapter deals with a landscape far removed from that of modernism, the struggles underlying these texts, it suggests, were a covert – or perhaps negative – expression of Stokes's concerns about his own time. Stokes's idealistic image of the Renaissance was a culturally and aesthetically cohesive landscape that acted as an antidote to the atomisation of the modern world. As a manifestation of this contrast, this chapter looks at Stokes's concern with 'aggregation' – with the aesthetic appeal of mass, solidity and simultaneity as a means of playing out a fantasy reconciliation of fragments to a whole. Not merely art historical texts, this chapter proposes that his early writings might fruitfully be understood as an expression of Stokes's desire for renewed collective meaning and self-understanding.

Despite attending to these texts as ostensible expressions of hope, however, Chapter 1 charts the ambiguous transition, in Stokes's early work, between his genuine reparative sentiment, and his latent fantasies of totality. Though they were published in the mid 1930s, Stokes's Renaissance texts were largely written in Italy during the 1920s, under the influence of Ezra Pound and during the early years of Mussolini's rise to power. As such, Stokes's conception of reparation in these texts is tangled up with Pound's vision of a 'new synthesis' – a rebirth of the Renaissance for modernity, inaugurated by the transcendent power of the will. Here, I trace the intellectual affinities between Pound and Stokes, not in order to demonstrate his complicity with fascist rhetoric, but in order to highlight Stokes's struggle to separate reparative and totalitarian or 'omnipotent' fantasies of wholeness. These texts are caught, I suggest, between the equal but opposite pull of two forces in his thought – his desire for cultural and metaphysical 'oneness', and his struggle to escape from such fantasies of resolution. As such, these texts paved the way for Stokes's later psychoanalytic understanding, insofar as they reveal how an honest desire for the recovery of collective meaning was able to transform into a narrative of self-transcendence.

Chapter 2

In 1929, Stokes returned from Italy to London, and began the seven-year psychoanalysis with Klein that was to permanently change his aesthetic and theoretical outlook. Chapter two looks particularly at the text that was the result of that analysis – 1947s *Inside Out* – as a base from which to explain Klein's work on reparation, and the effect it had on Stokes's world-view and self-image. *Inside Out* is an ostensibly autobiographical text that recalls Stokes's childhood in the chaotic modernist landscape of Hyde Park – a counter-landscape to the light-filled world of the Italian Renaissance. In this chapter, however, I read said landscape as an implicit attempt by Stokes to map out the cyclical structure of his own attempts to 'repair' modernity, to restore it to a state of wholeness. This chapter attends to the central thesis of Klein's work: that reparation entails an acceptance, by the subject, of contradictions and ambiguities that they cannot resolve. Moreover, this chapter sets up an important distinction for the narrative of the thesis, and one that became central to Stokes's thought about art and psychology: that between 'true'

reparation and manic or obsessional reparation – that is, acts of reparation that left further destruction in their wake.

Such a distinction helped Stokes to make sense of the self-confessed 'fanaticism' of his childhood and young adult years. But perhaps more pressingly, it helped him to understand the increasing fanaticism of Pound, and the drives behind the newly totalising forces of Twentieth Century politics. The result of his new appreciation for this distinction, however, was not only a healthier orientation towards the world, but a new aesthetic model. The last section of this chapter turns towards Stokes's increasing preoccupation with Cézanne as a reparative model to replace the manic or omnipotent figure of Sigismondo. Cézanne, he felt, had cultivated a respect for ambivalence, conflict and uncertainty, particularly that inherent to the relationship between perception and its objects, and as such, was a model for the discovery of meaning in an imperfect world.

Chapters 3 and 4

Following the change of perspective Stokes gained during his analysis, Chapters 3 and 4 turn to his application of these insights to the outside world. These two chapters as a whole deal with a major component of Klein's picture of the psyche, manifested in cultural terms: the attempt to recover a state of wholeness through defensive 'splitting'. Particularly, these two chapters deal with the perceived disjuncture between rational structures and the ambiguous realities of subjective life. In Stokes's work, these chapters argue, this division was being played out respectively by two forms of obsessional reparation – firstly, by the striving of mechanical structures to overcome subjectivity; and secondly, the attempt by avant-garde artists to recover subjective life from the threat of this violence.

Chapter 3 attends to 'the machine' as an aesthetic and psychological category in Stokes's work. Reading Stokes's second autobiographical essay, *Smooth and Rough* (1951) it attends to Stokes's vision of the mechanical age as one presided over by fantasies of omnipotence and perfectability that were themselves destructive to the human spirit. Despite his formulation of a reparative aesthetic through Klein, Stokes felt there was little hope of a culture built on such a perspective when the contemporary environment seemed to project an image of human life at odds with it. In modernity, Stokes felt the landscape itself promoted defensive splitting of the psyche, through its projection of hyper-rational structures, which seemed to outstrip the realities of the human condition.

Chapter 4 deals with an equal and opposite form of reparation that Stokes felt was a response to the one above: that is, the attempted recovery of subjective experience by the art of the avant-garde. Stokes proposes that, as the result of a growing distrust of representation – itself the result of increasingly rigid and dictatorial forms of thought and politics – art had increasingly begun to sequester itself inside a fantasy of 'whole' or untainted subjectivity. This was, to Stokes's mind, a corruption of the subjective element that Cézanne had introduced into art in the early modernist period. Where Cézanne had inhabited the difficult broken middle between the subject and the object – that space in which the healthy Kleinian subject was able to find meaning – art had begun to slowly retreat from the world of objects, into a a state of hermetic absolution. In doing so, Stokes proposes, avant-garde art eventually came to reflect something of the world it claimed to resist.

As such, these two chapters form a dyad, and deal with two particular strands of Stokes's work – his conjectures about the psychological symbolism and effects of the

machine, and his critique of late modernist painting – that might otherwise seem to be disconnected.

Chapter 5
Having moved through the different forms of manic and unsuccessful reparation that Stokes saw in the modernist aesthetic and cultural milieu, chapter 5 returns to the possibility of what Klein considered 'true reparation'. In doing so, this chapter attends to the redemptive potential of Klein's psychic model – that is, the potential for individual and cultural development, but also, for the recovery of collective meaning and purpose after the cultural and epistemological upheavals of modernism. Despite her reputation as a dark and negativistic thinker, I propose that, in Klein, Stokes saw hope for cultural renewal in that did not simply erase personal or historical experiences of loss and disillusionment. This chapter also attends to the aesthetic forms that, to Stokes's mind, modelled such conciliatory attitudes to the world, and which attempted to make new sense out of the divisions wrought by modernity.

The Second Coming: Renaissance Culture and the Promise of Coherence

It has become a commonplace, in accounts of Stokes's life, to take the point at which he emerged from the Mount Cenis tunnel in 1921 as a moment of "rebirth".[40] This narrative is hard to resist; portraying his arrival in Italy as a personal enlightenment period, Stokes narrates it almost as though he were a blind man regaining sight: "there was a revealing of things in the Mediterranean sunlight beyond any previous experience; I had the new sensation that the air was touching things; that the space between things touched them, belonged in common; that space itself was utterly revealed".[41] Aged only twenty at the time, he experienced an unprecedented sense of lucidity, after which he came to see the Italian landscape as the epitome of comprehension, and therefore of life. The first chapter of this thesis looks at the three texts that resulted from this experience, and which are generally considered to be Stokes's first significant works: *Pisanello* (1930), *The Quattro Cento* (1934) and *The Stones of Rimini* (1936), all of which deal with the sculpture and architecture of the Italian Renaissance. Given that this thesis deals with an explicitly Kleinian concept and its implications for modernity, this chapter has an odd status; it is concerned with texts that were conceived before Stokes's analysis with Klein, and also, with texts that deliberately turn their focus away from the chaos of the modern world and towards the coherence of the past. Nonetheless, these texts are important for an understanding of Stoke's insofar as his image of the Renaissance was Stokes's pre-Kleinian attempt to articulate what 'reparation' 'cohesion' or 'synthesis' would mean as a contrast to the incoherent nature of the modern world. Indeed, the purpose of this chapter is to deal with Stokes's pre-Kleinian confusion as to what such a state would entail.

In making claims for a return to coherence, Stokes's idealised image of Italy might seem to a reader of *Ariadne* to be a contradictory return to an ideal he had claimed to be escaping from. In his first book Stokes had mocked his own preoccupation with 'oneness':

> Surely we will return to the complete unknown whole. At present we are the little chips of painted wood scattered about a room, and which, by realizing their uniform natures, can help eachother to walk to the middle of the room, and make up one huge, universal jigsaw puzzle. Such were the thoughts that obsessed me in those days, legitimate and inevitable children of the Common Heritage.[42]

Indeed, Stokes's first book as a whole served as a means of writing off this reparative fantasy as youthful idealism, in the hopes of discovering a language beyond it. However, the Renaissance texts are perhaps better seen, not as a contradiction, but as an evolution of Stokes's thought enabled by *Ariadne*'s protracted reflection on what kind of 'coherence' he was seeking. Stokes had not so much promised to disown the possibility of cohesion as to discover an alternative to the illusory totalities promised by logical maxims, or what he called 'mathematical thinking'. He admits to retaining a high regard

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[40] Stephen Kite, Adrian Stokes: *An Architectonic Eye: Critical Writings on Art and Architecture*, (London: Legenda, 2008), p.2

[41] Gowing, *The Critical Writings Vol II*, 1978, p.157

[42] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p.22

for what he called 'The Great Commonplaces': "God, Immortality, the Whole, Good".[43] But as long as such ideals "stand qualified in the systematic terminology", he argued, "while they are interpreted in the mathematical light, they are dead for all but the very stupid, and those strong in great faith".[44] As such, *Ariadne* had not intended to write off reparative thought – throughout his work, Stokes retained a belief that the pursuit of coherence, whether cultural, theoretical, aesthetic or narrative, was crucial to our sense of wellbeing. Rather, it rejected a certain kind of pseudo-reparative thinking that Stokes felt was detrimental to feeling at home in the world. Logical languages, he argued, were often more concerned with their own conceptual integrity than with fidelity to life: "we quibble and deceive ourselves interminably so as to disguise the artificiality of our abstractions".[45] If there was satisfaction to be found in such 'coherent' thinking, it relied on a detachment from reality that eventually contributed to the feeling of atomisation it sought to resolve. This was as much a critique of himself as of others. Stokes had recognised that his youthful attempts to think himself out of chaos through the power of philosophical reasoning had been a red herring that served to distract from the pursuit of a truly reparative attitude. *Ariadne's* intention, then, contrary to its reception, was not a call to abandon constructive thought, but to "justify Promethean Hope and give it new foundation", to "[clear] a way through that forest sewn throughout the ages, for the Great Commonplaces to take a walk in the world and fill their lungs again".[46]

As the successors to *Ariadne* and its sister text *Sunrise in the West,* Stokes's Renaissance texts might be seen as his attempt to articulate a humanist vision of reparation that became newly possible to him on arrival in Rapallo – one that could only be achieved through reconciling the intellect with instinctual and practical life. In *Ariadne*, Stokes had reflected that his idealistic pursuit of what he called 'the great unity' had prevented him from an engagement with immediate experience that might give way to a genuine sense of 'at oneness' with the world. As such, seeing these texts in light of his earlier work makes new sense of Stokes's swift disciplinary transition to art writing in itself. Turning away from the labyrinthine metaphysical speculation of his early books, the Renaissance texts represent a deliberate new commitment to the material. Indeed, Stokes's skepticism towards abstract thought is reflected in the most cited argument of the Renaissance texts: that is, that the architectural and sculptural forms that best embodied the spirit of the 'Quattro Cento' were those that emerged from an intuitive communion with the material they were made from.[47] This was the basis of Stokes's much discussed carving and modelling distinction, which, as Stephen Kite paraphrases, "stresses the role of materiality and making in the formation of art".[48] The carving and modelling dichotomy was not Stokes's invention, but a long standing one used to distinguish between two traditional sculptural techniques: the latter was an additive technique – the creation of a figure by 'building up' malleable materials, such as clay – while the former described the subtractive cutting away of hard materials, as if to reveal a figure concealed inside. Stokes attempted to turn this into an evaluative distinction. The carving sculptor, he argued, aimed to reveal a material truth through process, unsure of exactly what was there until he had revealed it. 'Plastic' creativity, on the other

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[43] Ibid. p.182
[44] Ibid. p.182
[45] Ibid. p.250
[46] Ibid. p.183
[47] 'Quattro Cento' here is not to be confused with 'quattrocento' as a historical period: Stokes deliberately coined this term to refer not to the period itself but to the specific quality of sculpture and architecture that he felt was the ultimate expression of its culture.
[48] Stephen Kite, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2009), p. 147

hand, began with a predefined form that the material was duly manipulated into. The former was a more admirable kind of making that was concerned with understanding its material, as opposed to that in which the material "appears no more than so much suitable stuff for this creation".[49]

Such categorisation, as Ezra Pound would later point out, was overly simplistic; it is difficult to pinpoint, beyond a sculptural context, exactly where the division between carving and modelling is located. Indeed, Stokes himself struggled to fully articulate it, recognising it as a "vital though confused distinction".[50] Stokes's intuitive groping for the carving and modelling distinction was 'vital' however, because it was not just a template for distinguishing 'good art'. Rather, it described an orientation towards the world that reflected the conclusions of *Ariadne*. Specifically, it drew a distinction between two attitudes to the creation of value, through which he was able to make sense of his distaste for the falsity he perceived in certain modes of thought as well as certain aesthetic forms – for example, between the rubbed stone of Egyptian heads and the "meaningless […] repulsive" plaster casts later made to stand in for them.[51] An article Stokes wrote for the *Criterion* in 1933 expanded the carving and modelling dichotomy into a framework that could be applied to all forms of human activity – framing it as a divide between true engagement with, and manipulative abstraction from, materiality: "the material, earth or stone, exists. Man makes it more significant. To wash, to polish, to sweep, are similar activities. But to weave or to make a shoe, indeed, the processes of most trades, are pre-eminently manufacture, a making, a plastic activity, a moulding of things".[52] It tried to locate the point where appropriation takes over from creation, where human beings ceased engaging with the world, and instead began to manipulate it into the shape of their own ideals. As such, it was a symbolic attempt to describe a qualitative difference that Stokes felt was key to the sensation of detachment or unreality he thought characteristic of modernity. Since "imagination itself is a plastic agency, fashioning its products from fragments", carving was a moral and intellectual imperative through which he was able to distinguish the pursuit of truth from the solipsistic fantasy structures of the mind. In carving, the material served as an anchor to reality, whereas "modelling conception, untrammeled by the restraint that reverence for objects inspires, may run to many kinds of extreme".[53] Of course, Stokes was aware that all acts of sense making, whether intellectual or physical, were in some ways an act of abstraction. But in the low reliefs of the Quattro Cento – in which figures had been carved into the surface of the stone – the forms did not appear to be completely removed from their material. They retained a "tense communion with the plane from which they have been cut".[54] "These ornaments do not give the effect of having been stuck there" he wrote; the surface embodies and recedes into the material "just as the face shows the man".[55] The Quattro Cento forms, then, were a symbolic expression of *Ariadne*'s reparative intellectual imperative. Stokes had not written off the redemptive power of sense-making, but rather, had realised that such a pursuit could only be meaningful if it pertained to something 'real'. Through the carving aesthetic, Stokes projected onto the Renaissance his own protest against the alienation induced by various forms of abstraction, and made an appeal to renewed understanding of 'what was there'.

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[49] Quotes from Meg Harris Williams (ed.), *Art and Analysis: An Adrian Stokes Reader*, (London: Karnac, 2014), p.52
[50] Ibid, p.51
[51] Ibid, p.55
[52] Quote from Kite, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye*, p. 147
[53] Gowing, *The Critical Writings Vol I*, 1978, p. 235
[54] Quote from Meg Harris Williams (ed.), *Art and Analysis: An Adrian Stokes Reader*, p. 52
[55] Ibid, p. 52

Later, Stokes would claim more explicitly that the effect of these forms was due to what Klein called 'reality sense': a collision of the self with the world that "[limited] the boundlessness of one's own omnipotence feeling".[56] He identified the same quality in the sculpture of Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson – their regard for the organic, resistant material, which pushed against the abstract fantasies of the intellect. This was reparative for Stokes insofar as it reconciled the chaos of his mind to the material world. The carving aesthetic, then, was the aspect of Stokes's Renaissance texts that he took forward most clearly into his future work. But as the rest of this chapter argues, the Renaissance texts advance several entangled visions of 'reparation' of which this is only the last and most enduring. It is possible that this last iteration – advanced most clearly in the final Renaissance text, *The Stones of Rimini* – bears greater resemblance to his late work because it was infused with the insights of his analysis. Whilst the Renaissance texts were conceived largely in Italy, the later sections were written up, edited and published in the mid 1930's during his daily sessions with Klein, when Stokes became explicitly concerned with the balance he cites here, between "the demands of reality and the connexions [sic] made by fantasy".[57] In other parts of the these texts, however, there appears to be a tug of war going on, potentially because they straddle two very different phases of his thought, overshadowed by two very different influences: Melanie Klein and Ezra Pound. Stokes wrote, of *The Stones of Rimini*, "I have been told the influence of Ezra's style is less apparent in this book".[58] And in this rare moment of candor about his influences, Stokes hints at the slippage that this chapter is concerned with: that earlier parts of the Renaissance texts, though ostensibly making similar appeals to a new relationship between the mind and the world, advance more fantasistic reparative visions to which the later carving aesthetic would eventually serve as an antidote.

Stokes met Ezra Pound in Rapallo, Rimini, in 1926, when they became tennis partners at the home of Osbert and Edith Sitwell. The biographical details of their collaboration are thin on the ground, and the extent of their friendship only able to be dimly made out through their sparse correspondence to others. As such, the only real means of understanding their intellectual affinities is through the slippery conceptual crossovers in their work. Paramount among these, it seems, was the same protest against 'abstraction' that would eventually give rise to Stokes's carving aesthetic. Pound too believed that inward looking intellectual culture was both a symptom and a cause of modernity's cultural atomisation, and as such, he might have seemed to mirror Stokes's reparative aims. Eventually, in 1938's *Guide to Kulchur*, Pound would explicitly frame his aesthetic and critical aims in similar terms to those through which Stokes had framed his: as the pursuit of 'a New Synthesis', or 'new learning', an alternative form of sense-making that served as an antidote to a "mass of nomenclatures completely unstuck from reality".[59] Much like Stokes's image of London and of Oxford, he saw intellectual culture as a hermetic world made up of still more hermetic worlds, which failed to integrate or connect. And like Stokes, he felt this was a means of maintaining an individual sense of

[56] Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation: and other works 1921-1945,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), P.16
[57] Gowing, *The Critical Writings Vol I*, 1978
[58] Richard Read, 'The unpublished correspondence of Ezra Pound and Adrian Stokes 1927-34: modernist myth-making in sculpture, literature, aesthetics and psychoanalysis', in E. S. Shaffer (ed.), *Comparative Criticism: Myth and Mythologies Vol. 21*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 84
[59] Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*, (London; New Directions, 1938), p.44

coherence or control that was actually detrimental to truth: "many scholars write under terror. They are forced to maintain a pretence of omniscience. This leads to restricting their field of reference. In a developed philological system they have to know "ALL" about their subject [...] With the corollary that any man who knows where the oil well is, is considered superficial".[60] Conversely, Pound supported what D.D. Paige terms "brilliant amateurism" – a more instinctual world-view that dared to address the broader and more pressing concerns of their cultural reality. Stokes's early work, it seems, modelled such a perspective. By the time they met, Pound was already familiar with Stokes's first two books, and had written a friend to express his begrudging admiration: "has a great many mixed metaphors inside, but it is not pifflingly frivolous".[61] Though Pound made it clear in later years that he thought Stokes's writing stylistically excessive (as one reviewer put it, given to "antideluvian loftiness"), it was worth printing, as he wrote in a review of Stokes's *Stones of Rimini*, if only "to unhorse the whole gnat-tribe of ergoteur logic-chopping 'critics'".[62]

Stokes and Pound's mutual irritation with the insular and the abstract also extended to new conceptions of art and of the artist. In particular, they shared a mutual disdain for the aesthetic theories of the Bloomsbury group, about whom they were equally derisive. [63] In a circa 1924 letter to Edward Sackville West, Stokes drew a mocking picture of Bell's term 'significant form', intended to depict his theory as ludicrous in its spectrality.[64] Bell's aesthetics were contemptible, it seems, on two counts: firstly, because he attempted to separate art from other spheres of interest, from the material architecture of every-day life. And secondly, because he used this division between art and life to justify his own abstract approach to its analysis, in which he was able to treat forms and colours as an a-priori logic separate from experience. Such modern attitudes to aesthetics were no different to the logical languages that were the subject of Stokes's first critique. As he writes in the first of his Renaissance texts, Pisanello, we had "learned how to make pictures with little help from life, just as philosophers possess abstractions in retirement".[65] Pound's perception of Bloomsbury – expressed in less delicate terms – was similarly one of "hokum, affectation, snobbism".[66] He spoke of them, dismissively, as a cultural elite bent on protecting art from the grasp of the masses. As far as Stokes and Pound were concerned, such an attitude to art was simply a further embrace of a cultural situation that tended toward increasing abstraction and fragmentation.

In revolt against their shared object of disdain – as Pound put it in the *Guide to Kulchur*, "stuff that has been put into water-tight compartments and hermetically sealed" – much of Stokes and Pound's respective work in the mid 1920s sought to return culture to a 'true' state of synthesis through a reappraisal of the Italian nobleman Sigismondo

[60] Ibid. p.70

[61] Quote from Janet Sayers, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes: A Biography*, (London: Karnac, 2015), p. 41

[62] Ezra Pound, Review of *The Stones of Rimini*, by Adrian Stokes. *Criterion* XIII. 52 (April 1934): 495-97. *P&P* VI: 159-60.

[63] It is worth noting that in these years Stokes seems to homogenise the diverse perspectives of Bloomsbury culture and write them off as an extension of Bell's thought. This was potentially an effect of his friendship with Pound: though Stokes's disagreement with Bell persisted, Stokes later came to see that there were also matters on which they were agreed. The epigraph for his essay *Colour and Form* was a quote from Roger Fry's Vision and Design; and he openly conceded that Virginia Woolf was 'a genius'.

[64] Read, Richard, *Art and its Discontents: The Early Life of Adrian Stokes,* (Ashgate, 2002), p.48

[65] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.

[66] Quotes from Anderson Araujo, *A Companion to Pound's Guide to Kulchur*, (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2018), p.321

Malatesta, a despot and fervent patron of the arts whom they regarded as an ideal of the well-rounded Renaissance man.[67] Such mutual veneration of Sigismondo had largely come from Jacob Burckhardt's book *The Civilization of The Renaissance in Italy*, which, as Lawrence Rainey details, had

> turned Sigismondo into the epitome of "the whole man," a new human "type" who represented a form of historical existence crucial for the course of civilization, the type that had ushered in the age of modernity, a figure equally capable in war and art, in action and contemplation, one whose unfettered individuality united ruthless realism with lofty ideals.[68]

Sigismondo was an important precursor to the later work of both Stokes and Pound: he was the main subject of Pound's Malatesta Cantos, which served as the early keystone to the poem's entire form. And in Stokes's Renaissance texts, the art and architecture created at Sigismondo's court was taken as the ultimate expression of the Quattro Cento aesthetic that was their subject. This was partly because Sigismondo represented the repaired relationship between the mind and the world that Stokes and Pound felt was crucial for the revival of civic life. "The history of culture" Pound wrote, "is the history of ideas going into action"; it was driven by those who were both high minded and grounded, who were capable of anchoring the 'plastic' fantasies of the intellect to the material world.[69] Stokes's early work and Pound's work as a whole share a rhetorical concern with this tug of war between the flight of ideas and the 'massive' gravitational pull of the real. Just as Stokes conceived of a truly humanist art as that which translated the oceanic chaos of the mind into concrete terms, Pound wrote, "the new learning if it comes into being at all will get hold of ideas, in the sense that it will know where they 'weigh in'. It will take the man of ideas when he pulls his weight".[70] In short, they shared an admiration for Sigismondo because they were equally concerned with the urge and capacity to translate ones's ideals into realities.

Sigismondo's humanistic ideal was ultimately realised for both Stokes and Pound in the dense and severe edifice of the Tempio Malatestiano – the landmark redesign of the San Francesco church Sigismondo had commissioned as a preemptive tomb for his lover, Isotta degli Atti (ca. 1433-74). As Rainey details at length, the Tempio became a culturally symbolic monument for the Renaissance revival of the early Twentieth Century on several levels: for one, it was speculated that the Tempio was intended as a pagan monument to the death of God and the birth of humanism. It was not for love of God that Sigismondo had built his 'church', but his physical and inherently more meaningful love for Isotta. In a broad sense, then, a reflection of Stokes and Pound's hopes: Sigismondo had sought to end the worship of unearthly abstractions, in favour of a renewed relationship with material life. What was more, the Tempio was a monument to a moment of ideal cultural synthesis: combining the original gothic architecture with the Roman triumphal arch, and replete with both mathematical and mythological imagery, it was the embodiment of a cultural moment when reason had tempered – but not yet tyrannised – the medieval spirit; when science, art and divinity came together;

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[67] Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*, p.32
Stokes claimed to have come across Sigismondo's Tempio independently of Pound, but, as Read points out, *Sunrise In the West* makes it evident that Stokes had read *The Malatesta Cantos* by the time they met.
[68] Lawrence S. Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture*, (London: Yale University Press, 1998), p.114
[69] Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*, p.44
[70] Ibid. p.44

and when the life of the body acted as an anchor to the life of the mind. Perhaps most important of all, however, the Tempio was a monument to the drive for material self-realisation that had given rise to all the achievements of humankind, a tribute to the act of 'manifesting' or 'form-giving' itself. Stokes's Renaissance texts argue that this was the defining quality of what he called 'Quattro Cento' art; an intensification of the "the translating of subject into object" that was basis of all human civilization, Quattro Cento art was that which conveyed a reverence for our human need to solidify ourselves in the outside world. It is potentially for this reason that Rainey refers to the Tempio (or, as Pound sometimes wrote it, the T E M P I O) as the 'monument of culture' or 'the temple of history': it served as a shrine both to a newly coherent civilization, and to the constructive energy that gave rise to it.

For both Stokes and Pound, it seems that the Tempio was significant for its possession of two qualities that they were respectively interested in, both conceptually and aesthetically: that of solidity and synthesis. Stokes and Pound were kindred spirits in these years insofar as they made a mutual plea for a return to the real, but where the real was also strangely conflated with 'the whole'. Whereas culture seemed to be working itself into ever greater levels of abstraction and thus fragmentation, they were respectively working in the opposite direction – they sought a combination of unity and material significance, or a situation in which a greater sense of unity would lead to the greater material significance of human endeavours – what Stokes would later call "a more down-to-earth vision of living".[71] As such, both Stokes and Pound were symbolically invested in aesthetic forms – whether of criticism, literature or physical works of art – that demonstrated a respect for the pursuit of both 'wholeness' and 'heaviness'. Their respective work in this period is concerned with well-roundedness, density, 'mass' and gravity: aesthetic qualities that symbolised the bringing together of disparate elements into a more solid and more complex object. Before his years in Italy, this was precipitated for Pound in his 'Imagist' aesthetics – a movement precisely concerned with the digestion and compression of information into minimal forms. In his short manifesto for the movement, Pound had written that "an image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time"; "it is the presentation of such a "complex" instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art".[72] Whether Stokes came to similar aesthetic focus on his own or through Pound, he certainly placed a strikingly similar emphasis on the gathering of multitudes into a single object. This was primarily expressed through his Quattro Cento aesthetic – the name he gave to the specific style of Renaissance architecture embodied by Sigismondo's church, as distinguished from the quattrocento period – which had achieved what Stokes called "mass effect": the impression of solidity, unity and complexity given by bare stone surfaces, in which the viewer could perceive the teeming multitudes that made up the material. "Solids afford an effect of mass" he wrote "only when they also allow the *immediate,* the instantaneous synthesis that the eye alone can perform".[73] He argued that the most exemplary forms of the Renaissance, in short, were not set apart by any particular decorative forms or pictorial content, but simply by the impression they gave of things 'coming together' in a single apprehensible object.

[71] Adrian Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost: Collected Papers*, (London; Carcanet, 1973), p.138
[72] Ezra Pound, 'A Few Don'ts', originally published in *Poetry* magazine, 1913, quoted from: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/articles/58900/a-few-donts-by-an-imagiste, last accessed 24th February, 2018
[73] Gowing, *The Critical Writings vol. 1*, 1978, p.134

In this sense, stone had a doubly symbolic reparative role for Stokes, because it was itself the result of 'amassing'. "The nature of stone, its potential mass" he wrote, "preoccupied the undermind of the Quattro Cento mason"[74] not only because it was dense but because "the senses, hardly less than the intellect, can be aware that all minerals, all elements, are contained and concreted within stones".[75] As a substance which gathered together all the detritus of life, stokes proposes that stone itself was symbolically restitutive material, in which the fragments of life and the flow of time were reconciled within a single object. Such an emphasis led Pound, in a later review of Stokes's *The Stones of Rimini*, to imply that Stokes had taken cues from his own influence and friend, Gaudier Brzeska, whose work had stressed the sculptural significance of 'mass' and 'amassing' through the image of the "vortex" – that impulse to bring things to a gravitational centre.[76]

As such, their mutual interest in Sigismondo – and his Tempio – was the culmination of a general aesthetic interest in 'culmination'. Both symbolically and physically, he had gathered all the disparate elements of human living into a singular body. In Pound's short preface to the *Guide to Kulchur*, he includes an image of Sigismondo's 'stamp' or 'emblem', setting the tone for his own attempt to 'synthesise' culture within its pages: "if the Tempio is a jumble and a junkshop" he claimed "it nonetheless registers a concept. There is no other man's effort equally registered."[77] And the Tempio was the embodiment of his composite mind. As Donald Davie writes, the achievement Pound celebrated was the "centripetal" personality Erwin Panofsky had described: "The great man of the Renaissance who swallowed up the world that surrounded him until his whole environment had been absorbed by his own self".[78] In this respect, Sigismondo was a doubly holistic figure in the sense that he had absorbed the totality of a cultural moment that was also itself symbolically synthetical. Sigismondo was the figurehead for Stokes and Pound's respective image of the Renaissance more generally as the matrix – or perhaps, in more Kleinian terms, the ruined mother – of Western culture. Indeed Nietzsche, who was a long-time friend and admirer of Burckhardt's, had portrayed the Renaissance as such:

> The Italian Renaissance contained within it all the positive forces to which we owe modern culture: liberation of thought, disrespect for authorities, victory of education over the arrogance of ancestry, enthusiasm for science and the scientific past of mankind, unfettering of the individual, a passion for truthfulness and an aversion to appearance and mere effect [...] all its blemishes and vices not withstanding, it was the golden age of this millennium[79]

As such, Stokes and Pound's mutual fascination with the Tempio was the manifestation of a desire for reparation, not only between the mind and the world, but also of all things within them, insofar as it was conceived as a kind of container for the disparate elements

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[74] Ibid. p. 134

[75] Ibid. p.190

[76] Indeed, there are moments when Stokes's language is obviously comparable to that of Brzeska: Brzeska had written that "sculptural energy is the mountain. Sculptural feeling is the appreciation of masses in relation" p.66; in Stokes's work, similarly, he wrote that "Never has the feeling for mass been so urgent, mass all at once like mountains in unbroken sunlight" p.20.

[77] Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*, (London; New Directions, 1938), title page.

[78] Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the visual arts*, (New York; Garden City, 1955), p.137

[79] Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. By R.J. Hollingdale, *Human All Too Human*, (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1996) p.113

of human living. When faced with Quattro Cento architecture, Stokes claimed, there was "a feeling that here you witness a concatenation, a simultaneity, that the object is *exposed* to you, all of it at once."[80]

At first glance, there is an apparent continuity between the aims that Stokes had set himself at the end of *Ariadne*, his account of the Tempio, and his account of the carving aesthetic more generally. All of these facets of his work placed a renewed emphasis on the translation of ideals into physical form, on a more instinctual and well-rounded vision of living, and on the relinquishment of superficial logical ideals. But at certain points, and particularly in his early writing on the Tempio, the effect of Pound's 'aggregate' aesthetics on Stokes's Renaissance aesthetic seems to pull his work in the opposite direction to its professed aim: namely, that of recovering from a preoccupation with hallucinatory 'oneness'. Stokes had set out to Italy with the intention of moving *away* from idealistic fantasies of resolution – from the "omnipotence of thought" as he called it after Klein – and towards the grounding effect of particular objects related in space. But although he had managed to pull himself away from mathematical or logical ideals of 'oneness', the image of the material world he embraced in Italy was itself a fantasistic image of 'the great unity' in a different form. It is possible that, under the influence of Pound, and having discovered a new source of inspiration, Stokes lost sight of the humility that self-reflection had previously afforded him. When he set out to Italy, Stokes considered the broad stroke cultural critique of *Ariadne* to be an immature symptom of the relentless need for 'oneness' that he vowed to rid himself of. Indeed, *Ariadne* was in some ways a cathartic text, in which he both confessed, indulged and disavowed this tendency. But in Stokes's earliest Renaissance text – *Pisanello* – for example, he suggests that the man of multitudes exemplified by Sigismondo was to be admired: "woe to the man with projecting unfathomable discords in his being. Parts of his nature outstrip others, and there is war within himself".[81] As such, far from relinquishing his ideals of wholeness, Stokes may have come to view himself as the purveyor of a great unity over and above that conceived by so-called 'logic choppers'. Through Sigismondo, he advanced a new self-image not dissimilar to Nietzsche's ubermensch – "him whose soul is overfull, so that he loses himself and all things are in him".[82]

As such, there is a confusion in Stokes's early work, as to whether the Tempio – and stone as a material – acts as a productive constraint on his "omnipotence feeling", or serves as a symbolic model of it. In his late carving aesthetic, more obviously written in the midst of his analysis with Klein, Stokes identified with the Quattro Cento sculptor's love of stone because it was hard and therefore placed a constructive constraint on the omnipotent fantasies of the sculptor. However, in the early writing, he is also playing out a counteractive fantasy of transcendent or 'total' apprehension, insofar as Stokes implies that what is being repaired, contained and objectified by these forms is *everything*. Sigismondo was able to give form to the chaos of his inner world, but his inner world was also a microcosm of culture and history. Likewise, the sculptor's love of stone was an expression of their respect for constraint and limitation; but as the solidified form of "living process", stone was also the substance from which all life emerged and to which it

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[80] Gowing, *The Critical Writings vol. I,* 1978, p.134
[81] Gowing, *The Critical Writings vol. 1*, 1978, p.89
[82] Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. By Graham Parker, Thus Spake Zarathustra, (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2008), p.14

returned, where the atomised fragments of being were finally reconciled to a whole.[83] As such, they were particular objects that also contained the universal. This is perhaps what Richard Read means when he observes that "when writing about Stokes one gets the feeling that to write about something is to write about everything".[84] Even when looking at particular objects, he could only see meaning in those objects that he felt were microcosmic – objects that managed to contain 'everything' within 'something'. As he wrote of Quattro Cento bas relief, "they flower from the brick, a Whole made up of Ones each as single as the Whole".[85] In the Tempio, and in limestone, he imagined a world in which every particular 'thing' also contained the matrix of existence more generally. We can assume that this is partly what Stokes means when he says that the low reliefs retain a "tense communion with the plane from which they have been cut".[86] In light of the carving aesthetic, it reads as a symbolic expression of the communion between the imposition of the intellect and the limiting agency of the material world. But it might also be read as symbolic of a communion between the universal and the particular: these were individual forms that also contained and receded into the primordial mass from which they emerged.

From a certain perspective, Stokes might seem to be advancing an understandable ideal here: symbolically, both he and Pound were asking for a culture in which every person had some perception of the wider eco-system of which their life and thought was a part. But often, this desire for a well-rounded perspective and for reconciliation with a wider reality transforms into a counterintuitive fantasy of transcendent apprehension. Perhaps without fully understanding the contradictory implications of his rhetoric, Stokes advances an image of impossible sublimation disguised as materialism. Indeed, this contradiction was perhaps the covert basis of Pound and Stokes's intellectual affinity. They respectively combined an aversion to abstraction – an appeal to solidity – with an ironically hallucinatory image of 'complete' understanding, and a culture that could somehow bear it out. In Stokes's terms, they made critical claims against 'plastic' intellectual and aesthetic fantasies that were untrammeled by the demands of reality. But at the same time, they advanced a fantasy vision of unlimited powers of synthesis. Indeed, in his later life, Pound was guilty of obfuscating the significance of particularities, casting specificity as an institutional or technical tyranny on the unified mind: "there is one enemy, ever busy obscuring our terms; ever muddling and muddying terminologies, ever trotting out minor issues to obscure the main and the basic, ever prattling of short range causation for the sake of, or with the result of, obscuring the vital truth".[87] It was as though he had set out to achieve the task of transcendent understanding that Nietzsche had laid out as crucial for the birth of a truly humanist civilization: "overcome for me these Lords of today, O my brothers – these little people: they are the Overhuman's greatest danger! Overcome for me, you superior humans, the little virtues, the little clevernesses, the grain-of-sand considerations".[88] It is this latent preoccupation with transcendental unity, in the work of both Stokes and Pound, that seem to overshadow and contradict their apparent plea for a materialist 'return to the real'. As Lyndsey Stonebridge points out in her essay on Pound and Stokes's mutual fascination with limestone, what they proposed was not a

[83] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.I,*
[84] Richard Read, *Art and its Discontents: The Early Life of Adrian Stokes,* (Ashgate, 2002), p.79
[85] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.I,* p.134
[86] Ibid. p.134
[87] Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*, p. 31
[88] Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human*, 1996, p.251

new attention to 'what was there', but "a trope which dissolves differences in order to propose a new unity".[89]

Even without the influence of Pound, this was a problem of Stokes's work that he himself would repeatedly acknowledge: in his attempts to pull himself away from his abstract preoccupation with 'oneness', he often ended with a compulsive return to that same problem. It was as though, appropriately, the problem of wholeness itself acted as a centre of gravity on his thought. This is what Stokes means when, in *The Thread of Ariadne*, he had described himself as a "fanatic without a creed"; he did not mean to imply that he was an extremist, but as an idealist in an increasingly confused world, he was compulsively drawn to fantasistic visions of revelation or resolution.[90] At one point, Stokes describes the sight of a Quattro Cento façade as equivalent to the moment *Ariadne* had been moving towards, of Perseus's successful escape: "you emerge as from the minotaur's labyrinth on to the vast piazza […] into a world of space where the rigmarole you carry from the calli is now before you, not behind the eyes but before you, superb, immediate, gathered in white stone".[91] It was as though the confusion – of intellectual life, of his own thought, of modernity – now appeared before him as a comprehensible object. But as such, Stokes's escape from the labyrinth did not consist in his freedom from the temptation of omnipotent thought, as he had wanted, but a rediscovery of its image in a different form.

When reading Stokes's notes and diaries from these years, it becomes clear that the early years of Stokes's life and writing are marked by these two contradictory aims: his preoccupation with 'oneness', and his desire to rid himself of that preoccupation. In particular, Stokes's diaries reveal that his abandonment of his preoccupation with 'the great unity' was not out of lost interest, but rather, the melancholic knowledge of its impossibility. Before his arrival in Italy, Stokes described how his thoughts had been dominated by the work of English Idealist philosopher F.H.Bradley, whose *Appearance and Reality* (1893) both defended and complicated "the effort to comprehend the universe, not simply piecemeal or by fragments, but somehow as a whole".[92] Bradley's metaphysics had in some ways preempted postmodern conceptions of meaning, by arguing that particulars gain their identities in human perception through difference. As such, Bradley's philosophy was both a source of hope and despair for Stokes; whilst he reinforced the existence of 'oneness', he also emphasised our necessary inability to perceive it. "What appears must somewhere certainly be one", Bradley wrote; indeed "relations and qualities depend for their being always on a whole".[93] But it was "a whole which they inadequately express".[94] "Severed from this unity, the terms perish by the very stroke that aims to set them up as absolute".[95] This was the crux of Stokes's frustration with the many perspectives he encountered when at Oxford – they seemed as if mere fragments abstracted from a whole, and yet, masquerading as 'totalities'. Bradley thus proposed a metaphysical contradiction: to truly attain a sense of 'wholeness' would require either a false belief in the totality of some fragment, or else, an impossible collapse of the difference that made meaning possible. In other words, he proposed an inherent irreconcilability, in human consciousness, of the part and the whole: "we cannot reach any defensible thought, any intellectual principle, by which it is possible to

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[89] Lyndsey Stonebridge, *The Destructive Element: British Psychoanalysis and Modernism*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.113

[90] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, 1923

[91] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.I*, p.40

[92] F.H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p.1

[93] Ibid. p. 127

[94] Ibid. p.127

[95] Ibid. p.143

understand how diversity can be comprehended in unity".[96] This was both a temporal and a cultural problem – it described the ideological difficulty of recovering 'common purpose' without crushing the individual into its framework; of understanding of the movements of history without losing one's faith in material action; and of finding a critical perspective that had scope without crushing all the world's multiplicities into crude totalities.

As I will explore further in chapter two, Bradley did not intend this to be the simple declaration of an unresolvable contradiction; he used this contradiction to propose a new emphasis on 'interdependence', and a continued commitment to the apprehension of a more complex truth. But the result, for Stokes, was an epistemological crisis: "thought fails us. It tries its hand at higher things. But the systems and ultimate values, whatever be their inspiration, lead to hopeless contradictions".[97] Bradley's work, as Stokes made clear in *Ariadne*, was the basis of Stokes's rejection of philosophical maxims. Through Bradley, he had realised that the pursuit of 'oneness' on such terms was impossible. The world was fated to remain, from within the human mind, in fragments. And if there was a coherent world to which all 'things' and meanings belonged – as proposed through Bradley's ultimate thesis of the meaningful interdependence of 'appearance' and 'reality' – it gained its significance precisely through our failure to attain it. As such, Stokes felt freed from the task of attaining wholeness, but also bereft of its possibility. As a result of this ambivalence, Stokes was caught between his determination to find meaning in the particular, and his overwhelming awareness of the futility of this endeavour. "I find that I must be sincere about the present", he wrote, "but I know it is the laughing stock of history".[98] As Richard Read puts it, "Bradley's theory of interdependence furnished him with a painful personal quandary [...] Preoccupation and awareness, calculation and spontaneity, constantly disabled eachother".[99]

Stokes makes no particular reference to such thoughts in his published works, but in his notebooks from the 1920s – in passages that would eventually seem strange to him – he obsessed about how to "unite the near and the distant", or how to "bring the distant things near".[100] 'The distant', it seems, stood for the abstract, universal questions, the 'great unity' that dwarfed the "puff and grinding" of our close-by, every day lives.[101] In his diary, he ventriloquises the medieval soul: "foul day, why leave me at evening to be disembodied? An abstract constraint then binds my finger tips and eyelids to the universe".[102] This passage, it seems, intended to describe the split nature of the medieval spirit that would eventually be repaired in the fifteenth century by the Renaissance. But it also aptly describes the 'night' and 'day' of Stokes's own perspective on the world: at certain times the small tasks and details of our immediate being seemed full of meaning. But "in the abstract evening light," he writes, "I am a beast squatted beside a wall".[103] How was he to reconcile our historical and metaphysical condition with the details that our daily 'animal' lives were preoccupied with? He could not yet settle, it seems, for the possibility that he could not reconcile them. Stokes describes the pull of such a need as a burden, "a black cloak that smothers personality", a "gloomy cloth [...] extended to hang

[96] Ibid. p.125
[97] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p.68
[98] Ibid. p.67
[99] Read, *Art and its Discontents*, 2002, p.76
[100] Adrian Stokes, *Notebook 15,* ref number TGA 8816.15, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

like a tent over all existence".[104] Rough scribbles contemplate "the futility any attention to detail?" [sic].[105] He asks himself, equally, whether the selfish interest of his desire for success mitigated anything he might write ("I must, then, not bother whether I create or not?").[106] Stokes had, in many different ways, gotten himself into a tangle of philosophical and aesthetic maxims that he was trying to reconcile. He knew that he needed to relinquish them and look at the world in front of him. But "that moment of disembodiment," he writes, "forbids me the near. My fat desire will knock".[107] Though he tried fervently to find something of worth in the particularities of his immediate world, he could not stop himself from asking at the door of absolutes.

It is no coincidence, then, that Pound's holistic image of Sigismondo appealed to Stokes during these years, nor that he began writing about stone at a time when he was preoccupied, against his better judgment, with the reconciliation of the whole and the particular. Sigismondo had managed to apprehend culture as a whole without losing his capacity to act meaningfully in the present. Similarly, limestone surfaces were a physical, material testament to Bradley's assertion that although the world appeared to be granular, "the bewildering mass of phenomenal diversity must somehow be a unity and self consistent, for it cannot be elsewhere than reality, and reality excludes discord".[108] It was a means of physically apprehending what he could previously only sustain through unevidenced faith: that reality "is one in the sense that its positive character embraces all differences in an all inclusive harmony".[109] The impression of 'mass' he was concerned with could only be achieved when multitudes were perceived simultaneously – "only when there are variations in its surface, mostly of colour or tone, that the eye with one flash discovers coherent".[110] In limestone, Stokes could almost make out the eventual unity of the granular.

Stokes's materialism and his concern with the great unity, then, despite their apparent contradiction, are two overlapping concerns of his work that were intimately related. What Stokes's work sought to counteract was the feeling of unresolvable separateness from others that was characteristic of his experience of the modern world. In his early diaries and poems, he describes London as an inherently lonely city, where continuous individual striving forbade the possibility of collective cultural achievement. This was an impression he gained not only from industrial capitalism, but from the intellectual world: he was tired, he wrote, of "the 'all this' and the 'all that' or the 'either this or that'".[111] In a feeling of hopeless isolation, he remembers "finding [his] way to Hyde Park at night and asking for what purpose did we live?".[112] The only honest source of purpose to be found in this environment, Stokes concluded, was in the performance of duty. Seeing a taxi on Bayswater Road, he took comfort in the thought that "another man had gained a step on his environment".[113] Each individual that was rescued from degeneration was a triumph over the possibility of total decline, but Stokes felt that this was a temporary and unsustainable situation – when each person was blindly striving

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[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Stokes, *Notebook 15*, Tate Archive Collection
[108] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality,* 1930, p.140
[109] Ibid. p.140
[110] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.I,* p. 134
[111] Stokes, The Thread of Ariadne, 1925, p.xv
[112] Quote from Kite, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye*, p. 18
[113] Ibid. p. 18

for their own survival or sense of purpose, culture was reduced to an existential jumble of conflicting elements: "In the mist, each brick is in travail; London, like a rough sack, holds everything".[114] As such, Bradley's philosophy was perhaps frightening to Stokes because it had presented this not as a cultural condition but a metaphysical condition whose knowledge we had only just arrived at. Thereafter, he was fated to accept the world as a jostling bag of competing fragments with no hope of reconciliation. But Stokes did hold out hope, as per Bradley's affirmation that the whole was 'out there', of somehow counteracting the sense of disconnectedness. To this end, it seems that Stokes had come to see the material world as the great leveler: whatever their differences, and despite the apparent estrangement from one another's private lives and visions, each individual came up against the constraints of reality, of material need and limitation, and in this sense, it was the place where all individuals were reconciled to an essential sameness. As Stokes would later admit, this fantasy found expression in his idealisation of basic and necessary human rituals like eating and cultivating the land. In a later essay, Stokes recalls that his image of the Renaissance could be traced back to his repetition, at school, of the Latin word 'mensa' or table. Thereafter, the Mediterranean was embodied for him by "a scrubbed, sturdy, deal kitchen table, very bright", an image "the feel of which corresponds with an adult image of a simple table prepared for an al fresco meal"; "with one word" he wrote "I possessed in embryo the Virgilian scene: a robust and gracious mother earth".[115] By reconciling himself to the essential human need for sustenance, he felt that he might recover not only a sense of common humanity, but of reconciliation to the 'stuff' of life. Through stone, this also became a more abstract or mythical fantasy of material reconciliation: ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Indeed, Stokes's renaissance texts are deeply concerned with the idea of the matrix – a preoccupation that Klein would later read as an ordinary human longing for the unspoiled safety of the mother.

As such, although Stokes's Renaissance texts might read as highly specialised and distinctly non-modernist texts, they are implicitly concerned with feelings of cultural and personal loss that he shared with other artists and thinkers at work in his time. Later, in 1948, W.H. Auden would develop a similar mythology surrounding the conciliatory and homely quality of limestone, as opposed to the 'clays and gravels' of greed and domination: "what could be more like mother?".[116] T.S. Eliot, too, had written his undergraduate thesis on F.H.Bradley and was left in a similar state of ambivalence by his own conclusions – as Joseph Maddrey puts it, "Bradleyan relativism [had] left him with a world-view held together by spit and chicken wire".[117] Bradley's theory, Eliot proposed, required us to make our peace with the conditions of subjectivity, and as such, was a call to faith that might not always be sustained:

> Bradley's universe, actual only in finite centres, is only by an act of faith
> unified. Upon inspection, it falls away into the isolated finite experiences out
> of which it is put together [...] The absolute responds only to an imaginary
> demand of thought, and satisfies only an imaginary demand of feeling.
> Pretending to be something which makes finite centres cohere, it turns out to

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[114] Ibid. p. 9
[115] Lawrence Gowing (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978)
[116] Quoted from Tony Sharpe, *Auden in Context*, (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.114
[117] Joseph Maddrey, *The Making of T.S. Eliot: A Study of the Literary Influences*, (Jefferson; McFarland & Company, 1979), p.64

be merely the assertion that they do. And this assertion is only true so far as we here and now find it to be so.[118]

Bradley's philosophy, in other words, presented an unreal world, or a world whose realness could only be sustained by our belief in it. Stokes and Eliot had their differences during the 1920s – perhaps, on Stokes's part, due to defensive arrogance – but they also had much in common. Eliot was in a similar struggle to accept the loss of unity, and to sustain faith in the face of it – a struggle expressed by his famous lines: "what are the roots that clutch, what branches grow/ Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,/ You cannot say, or guess, for you know only/ A heap of broken images".[119] There was a collective feeling, it seems, not only that culture had reached a state of chaos that was impossible to repair, but that the knowledge and self-understanding gained – knowledge that could not be undone – made a coherent vision of the world increasingly untenable. This, in turn, had an inevitable effect on the possibility of wholeness in the artwork that was intended to reflect such a world. In Woolf's 1925 essay 'Modern Fiction', she reflected on the growing complexity and difficulty of the artwork in her time: "on the flat, in the crowd, half blind with dust, we look back with envy to those happier warriors, whose battle is won and whose achievements wear so serene an air of accomplishment that we can scarcely refrain from whispering that the fight was not so fierce for them as for us".[120] Woolf is ambivalent about making claims for contemporary reality as compared to that of the past, acknowledging that no such vantage ground above history exists. But she also implies that there was something about the condition of modernity which made the attainment of a sense of wholeness, and with it, the reparative function of art, impossible or at least more difficult.

Faced with such challenging conditions for the human spirit, Stokes and Pound were not alone in turning to the Renaissance – the fantasy motherland of western civilization – for comfort. The idea of the Renaissance as a ruined matrix of modernity that might be recuperated was a widespread reparative fantasy in the intellectual circles of the early 1920s. In Pound's early Cantos he wrote "And they want to know what we talked about? […] Both of ancient times and our own; books, arms/ And men of unusual genius,/ Both of ancient times and our own".[121] T.S. Eliot's magazine, the *Criterion*, which was first published the year after Stokes's arrival in Italy – and in which he was eventually published in 1929 – was set up, as a meeting point for those dedicated to restoring the Renaissance project. As Jeroen Van Heste puts it in his history of Eliot's network, it was "an attempt to return on the track of the European humanistic tradition, at a moment in history when [Eliot's network of intellectuals] considered the Western Civilisation to be derailed".[122] As I will address later in this chapter, it was evident from

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[118] From T.S. Eliot's 'Leibniz's Monads and Bradley's Finite Centres' (1916), quoted from Donald J. Childs, *T.S.Eliot: Mystic, Son and Lover*, (London; Bloomsbury, 1997), p.162

[119] T.S. Eliot, *The Wasteland and Other Poems*, (London; Harcourt, 2014), pp.29-30

[120] Virginia Woolf, ed.by Andrew Mcnellie, *The Essays of Virginia Woolf 1918 – 1924*, (London; Hogarth Press, 1988), p.31

[121] Pound, Ezra, *The Cantos*, (London; New Directions, 1996)

[122] Jeroen Vanheste, *Guardians of the Humanist Legacy: The Classicism of T.S. Eliot's Criterion Network and its Relevance to Our Postmodern World*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), p.2
It is worth noting that, as a testament to its mythical quality, such fantasies of repairing or restoring the Renaissance were highly varied, in some cases incompatible. Though Nietzsche and Burckhardt had a long friendship, they had great disagreements about the elements of its culture that were to be preserved. For Nietzsche, the Renaissance had been thwarted by the German Reformation, which provoked a return to religion just as it appeared to be dying out. Eliot, on the other hand, eventually came to see religious orthodoxy as the only means of restoring the "control and balance" of the

his political leanings in the 1920's that Pound truly believed in the possibility of Renaissance culture's return or repair, but it is unclear to what extent Eliot, and indeed Stokes, really believed in this possibility. Stokes never explicitly argues for the Renaissance as a blueprint for a cultural revival; it seems, rather, that he turned to the Renaissance as a form of escapism, or a point of anchorage – a fantasy of purpose and meaning through which to navigate the present. Similarly, Eliot, in his essay *Ulysses, Order and Myth* (1923), wrote that a recourse to classical form – exemplified by Joyce's use of Homeric myth – would be increasingly emulated by artists seeking to gain a hold on reality that was not available in the terms of their own time: "it is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history".[123]

As such, this turn to the architectural and cultural landscape of the Renaissance might be more fruitfully understood, not simply as conservatism or a fantasy of self-transcendence, but as a form of escapism from genuine melancholy with regard to the failures and unwanted truths of modern culture. Indeed, it was partly because of his sensitivity to injustice and his apparent good intentions that Pound was partially forgiven by his contemporaries. As D.D. Paige wrote in his introduction to Pound's letters, for all his faults, "he justly believed that humanity deserved the best – in art, in ethics, in an economic system that would ensure just distribution of goods".[124] The same might be said of Stokes: his fantasies of cultural and personal transcendence were the expression of his continued faith in the wholeness that lay behind the apparently fragmented nature of the world, and thus, in the possibility of fruitful communal living. Indeed, it was the failure of this belief that had led to the moral, aesthetic and intellectual failures that both Stokes and Pound felt were responsible for the individualistic greed of emerging capitalism and for the losses of war. Before Pound began writing the *Cantos* he had written another longform poem, 1920's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, which took a more pessimistic tone:

> frankness as never before,
> disillusions as never told in the old days,
> hysterias, trench confessions,
> laughter out of dead bellies.
>
> There died a myriad,
> And of the best, among them,
> For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
> For a botched civilization.[125]

Serving as a rejection of both contemporary culture, and the former pretensions of the poetry he wrote within it, Pound's poem follows a failed and disillusioned writer as he makes his way through a corrupt post-war wasteland. This poem has often been read as partly a product of Pound's grief after the early death of Gaudier-Brzeska in the trenches. Likewise, Stokes had suffered a huge sense of loss on the death of his brother: "I was

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humanist project. These were, in effect, different means of achieving the same idealistic end – a kind of cultural integrity in which all of its various parts were essential to the whole.

[123] T.S. Eliot, 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', Lawrence Rainey (ed.), *Modernism: An Anthology,* (London; Blackwell, 2005), p.166

[124] D.D. Paige (ed.), *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907 – 1941*, (New York; New Directions, 1971), p.xix

[125] Christine Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) p. 66

14½ and I consider that that event has crippled my life, partly because I felt alone".[126] Afterwards, Stokes recalled that he grew serious, "a socialist".[127] As such, though after the rise of fascism this would reveal itself to be in some ways a fallacy, it is possible that Stokes and Pound saw the failure to conceive of culture as a whole, as a collective, as the cause of such careless "wastage as never before". And to conceive of a way out of such a state was surely the best means of making amends to the dead – one newer cultural meaning, of course, of what it means to make 'reparations'.

      Stokes worried that Europe had fallen to despondency after the war. "We are not yet ready to live", he writes in his notebook from these years. "How to rock a hammock when all the nation lie dreaming therein, heaped high upon their dead?"[128] Similarly, Pound retrospectively wrote of London, in 1935's *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, that, "after the War death was all over it. [...] London was in terror of thought. Nothing was being buried. Paris was tired, very tired, but they wanted *table rasé*, they wanted the dead things cleared out even if there were nothing to replace them".[129] This might seem a callous remark from Pound, but as Stokes would later reflect, it was more a manifestation of his own avoidance of grief and of death – or perhaps from his perspective, a refusal to be bogged down in melancholia to the point of inaction. On this front, Brzeska may have served as a spectral inspiration: before his death, he had written from the trenches that, despite the destruction surrounding him, his feelings about the significance of sculpture had not changed. "It is the vortex of will, of decision, that begins" he wrote.[130] He had taken the mountain not only as his sculptural aim but as his spiritual model: "the bursting shells, the volleys, wire entanglements, projectors, motors, the chaos of battle do not alter in the least the outline of the hill we are besieging".[131] When seen in the light of their respective post-war despair, then, the appeal to solidity and stoicism embraced by both Pound and Stokes reads as a form of self-bolstering; they willed themselves to adopt a universal perspective – a respect for the endurance of things overall, despite individual suffering and death – in moments of despair.

      Indeed, certain instances of *The Quattro Cento* make clear that the Renaissance was important to Stokes because it was a culture that endured and recovered death into something newly meaningful. It was a period in which destruction and suffering had been overcome, used as the impetus, in fact, for constructing a new, hopeful vision of living:

> The political and economic reasons given to explain the Renaissance are well known. To these I should like to add the Black Death of the fourteenth century, a general disaster which, like the late war, brought to some survivors other values. But in this case death struck out the older generation. Men rose from their knees. Such plagues do not finally result so much in disbelief as in hedonistic conviction, at any rate in Europe. Life stood opposite death again.[132]

Whilst he felt that the war had induced insularity and depression in some, he also held out for a constructive 'rising up' of life. Stokes's second book – *Sunrise in The West* – was

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[126] Adrian Stokes, letter to Graham Bell (1942) quoted from: Janet Sayrs, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes*, (London: Karnac, 2015), p.10
[127] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p.12
[128] Stokes, *Notebook 10*, Tate Archive Collection
[129] P.49
[130] p.69
[131] p.68
[132] Gowing, *The Critical Writings vol. I,* 1978, p.41

meant as a hopeful reprise to Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*.[133] Rather than seeing modernity as the end of something, Stokes and Pound expectantly and hopefully present the post-war moment as one analogous to the start of the Renaissance, in which we might emerge from dust and destruction into a stronger and more harmonious cultural form. And as ever, such reparation was not merely symbolic but literal: in their monuments the dust of time – and even of death – was gathered together into a new form, in a way that seemed to make death meaningful. Stokes writes various accounts of mineral formation, its collection of the diffuse and the dead to facilitate a landscape's new life. He writes of how, in the tomb which Sigismondo legendarily built to house his lover, "the bones of all the ancestors, uprooted from their resting places, were pressed into one triumphal sarcophagus"[134]; "so too the dying marbles of the ancient San Apollinare in Classe. The dead were disturbed, the multitudinous corpses of the black death a hundred years before: this the catastrophe which gave new generations their chance".[135]

In the end, of course, something did manifest itself from the mud and dust of modernity. A dark realisation of Stokes's hopes – and an explicit realisation of Pound's – would eventually come to the Italian landscape of the 1930s, in the form of Italian fascism. Whilst Stokes was writing about the compound nature of Italy's lime and marble, Mussolini had promised the rise of a structure "which amalgamates classes into a single economic and ethical reality", the dream of a "corporative system in which divergent interests are coordinated and harmonised in the unity of the State".[136] Mussolini's administration was known to literally, more gruesomely, carry out Stokes's wish, by co-opting the bodies of the first world war dead for his cause – digging them out of their graves and rehousing them in monuments to the new unified state. In an explicit attempt to recover the spirit of the Renaissance, the Italian fascist movement spoke the ostensibly reparative language of Quattro Cento architecture.

   As many scholars on Stokes have pointed out, it would be unfair to tie his Renaissance texts uncomplicatedly to fascism. It is true that by the time that Pound and Stokes met, Pound had already met Mussolini – in the Tempio no less – and had come to think of him as the second coming of Sigismondo.[137] Elsewhere, it was speculated that Mussolini was descended from the house of Malatesta, and was thus touted as his biological as well as his cultural heir.[138] But the extent of Stokes's awareness of these political forces, and their relationship to his own aesthetics, is unclear, and he makes no mention of the fascist movement even in diaries from these years. This perhaps belies a wariness about Pound's more extreme political leanings, or an adoption of his rhetoric without knowledge of its implications. Perhaps more importantly, it may indicate Stokes's unwillingness to collapse his own reparative fantasies into a cultural reality. Though Stokes evidently held up Renaissance culture as an ideal, there is no evidence that he truly believed in its revival, and therefore his idealistic image of it potentially

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[133] Oswald Spengler, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson, *The Decline of the West (an abridged edition by Helmut Werner)*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961)
[134] Ibid. p.155
[135] Ibid. p.155
[136] Stephen Eric Bonner, *Twentieth Century Political Theory: A Reader*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p.221
[137] Lawrence Rainey, 'Between Mussolini and Me', *London Review of Books,* Vol. 21 No. 6 (March 1999) p.22
[138] Rainey, *Ezra Pound and the Monument of History,* 1991, pp. 46-7

served as a comforting fantasy only – an uplifting distraction from the realities of the modern world. In any case, Stokes's later texts indicate that, had he contemplated support for fascism, this form of reparation was not truly what he had wanted, a 'rough beast' borne out of genuine hope for harmonious living. Stokes did not have the hindsight we now have about the nature of fascist ideology, nor the tools with which to recognise its imagery. But despite this, lack of conscious intent is not a reason to write off the very obvious watermark that Pound's rhetoric left on his work – the unconscious fantasies of absolution and triumph, and their latent tenor of violence, are important in themselves. This is not least because Stokes himself was later aware and critical of his own vulnerability to destructive idealism in these years. He admitted that he took a perverse pleasure, after the circularity and sagging of London, in such a violent constructive impulse. Though the images of 'dismemberment' "were not in this way relieved, an element of drama, even of 'healthy' catastrophe, was a relief".[139]

As chapter two will explore more fully, this experience was valuable, alongside his earlier faith in the power of logic, because it paved the way for his engagement with Klein's work on the dangers of reparative need, and particularly, its blurring with aggressive fantasies of omnipotent power. Indeed, in Roger Griffin's compendium of the intellectual history of fascism, he argues that the closest thing we have to a unifying feature of its various permutations is the mythology of national palingenesis – that is, of 'rebirth'. Narratives of fascism, he argues, use ruin as the impetus for repair. In Mussolini's case this was quite literal, proclaimed as it was in articles entitled "Italy is Reborn", "Campaign for the Forced Reawakening of Italy".[140] Griffin writes that Mussolini was the incarnation of "what studies of premodern revitalisation movements call the 'visionary' who 'experiences a radical change in personality, assumes a new role on society devises a new plan for reorganising society and proposes a new order that promises new meaning and purpose for living'".[141] Fascism was and often is framed as a hopeful means of recovery after grief, by way of renewed collective meaning and action. It was to be a re-enfolding of death into life, indeed a renewed attitude to death and destruction as a blessing that enabled the remaking of culture in a more enduring image.

As chapter two will more fully explore, Klein greatly complicated narratives of grief and repair, describing the mechanisms through which hope of reconciliation could turn into a form of destruction in itself. In the child's desperation to recover what has been lost, she posited, they often attempt a kind of crushing or cannibalistic scrambling in an attempt to erase or sublimate their suffering. There were features of such reparative attitudes that gave them away as latent fantasies of omnipotence, and paramount among these was a feature arguably central to the Italian fascist movement, and perhaps all fascist movements: that is, an act of reparation whose object was so ideal that it could not really be borne out. Many scholars have articulated this feature of fascism without recourse to psychoanalytic language. Italian fascism has frequently been described as an opportunistic form of politics that had no ideological core – a language of hallucinatory hope, it exploited the desire for rebirth, without specifying what would be reborn. It is through this sense of continual drive towards synthesis without an object that Griffin argues, although Mussolini's fascism was less brutal than Nazism, it was more ideologically dangerous: "paradoxically, [Mussolini] had been able to succeed where others failed partly because his palingenetic vision was not associated with any clearly focused blueprint of the ideal society, so that he had been able to chop and change alliances and policies according to the situation, a flexibility denied to more

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[139] Gowing, *The Critical Writings vol.II*, p.154
[140] Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, (London; Routledge, 2013), p.57
[141] Ibid. p.68

single minded activists".[142] Each of the more specifically focused forms of ideology that were invested in Mussolini's fascism thus saw its diffuse reparative form as a viable disguise – a Trojan horse as it were – for their more particular visions of social remaking. In this sense, Italian fascism spoke the language of reparation par excellence, because it allowed a multitude of very different reparative fantasies to be projected into it. Lawrence Rainey writes that

> fascism was not an aberration, but a diverse and dynamic movement that succeeded because it could speak to intelligent contemporaries, because its ideological premises coincided with concepts essential to ordinary scholars at work on quotidian problems in their field. Fascism, in other words, thrived because it could take a "homely form in homely contexts".[143]

Fascism thrived, in other words, because it was an ideal of reparative cohesion that secretly had no form. As Griffin points out, however, this ability to assimilate various conflictual elements was really a key aspect of its ideology, that of 'totalitarian pluralism'.[144] It's major goal, he argues, was complete assimilation of different viewpoints into a whole, and as such it tolerated any and all forms of difference, expanding itself to incorporate them into a single entity. As such, the key figures of the fascist movement are not to be considered opportunists but themselves misguided idealists in pursuit of what Griffin calls "the sacred synthesis".[145]

In identifying the hallucinatory quality of fascism's goal, I do not mean to suggest that Stokes and, to a much greater extent, Pound were taken in by a vague reparative rhetoric that did not represent their aims. But rather, that Stokes and Pound are particularly fascinating figures amongst the many thinkers who walked the line of reparative modernism because, in their lack of specificity about what kind of coherence they were looking for, their aesthetics actually resemble or reflect the nature of Italian fascism: as one article on Mussolini's architecture describes it, "a diatribe of relentless forward momentum" towards a realisation unknown.[146] Unlike Eliot who, despite accusations to the contrary, had a clear image of the kind of coherence he sought from the Renaissance – "*form* and *restraint* in art, *discipline* and *authority* in religion, *centralisation* in government"[147] – Pound and Stokes describe something more gnomic and hallucinatory. At the end of *Ariadne*, Stokes gestured towards a renewal of culture that seemed decidedly uninterested in articulating its eventual object: "this is an uprising against no particular age, no particular doctrine, but against the centuries. It is the proclaiming of a new start without precedent in history".[148] Such language is what led certain of his reviewers, perhaps rightly, as it turns out, to accuse him of urging a potentially destructive revolutionary spirit without a meaningful goal. Similarly, Pound's brief interlude of friendship with Stokes was one part of a continuous quest for what he called 'The New Synthesis' – later the 'Totalitarian' – a state of cultural cohesion that he

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[142] Ibid. p.68

[143] Rainey, Lawrence, *Ezra Pound and the Monument of Culture: Text, History, and the Malatesta Cantos,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.3

[144] Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 2013

[145] Roger Griffin, 'The sacred synthesis: The ideological cohesion of fascist cultural policy', *Modern Italy*, 1998, 3:1, 5-23

[146] Mussolini, Modernism, and the Architecture of Asmara, https://theculturetrip.com/africa/eritrea/articles/mussolini-modernism-and-the-architecture-of-asmara/ (Accessed 15th November 2016)

[147] Charles Ferrall, *Modernist Writing and Reactionary Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.97

[148] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p. 257

never managed to fully articulate. Eliot, in this sense, was onto them; in a review of several fascist texts, he wrote "the singularity of the Italian revolution seems to be this, that it began with no 'ideas' at all [...] and proved itself capable of transforming itself where occasion required".[149] "If we are to judge the 'idea' of fascism, then, we must speculate where its 'ideas' came from, how they cohere. And whether they are not still in the process of formation".[150] Unknowingly, Eliot sums up the nature of Stokes's early work when he speculates that such ideals seemed caught in a continuing state of 'formation'. Stokes's Italian texts contain a myriad insights about the nature of architectural material, construction, and the history of style, which are of great worth to art historical readings of him. But when attempting to locate their philosophical argument, it becomes apparent that the structure of these texts is that of a fractal: a mise en ebyme of reparative imagery that invokes, somewhat repetitively, the act of gathering and of 'throwing outward', without ever articulating what is being created.

　　　　To some extent, it seems that Pound and Stokes were aware that they were in pursuit of an impossible object. In fact, there are moments where they each imply that the aspirational movement towards such a perfect object, though hallucinatory, was the only means of sustaining the human will. As Klein well knew, to sustain the reparation of an impossible object was to continually defer the realisation of its failure. There are certain moments of Stokes's early texts and diaries where he seems to imply that the crux of the Renaissance aesthetic, and the feeling he absorbed from it, was precisely this feeling of continuous creation or expansion. Stokes's failure to articulate what the renaissance artist was expressing is not a flaw in his argument because it is not the content of revelation that matters to Stokes but the sheer urge to bring things to a head, to "throw life outwards".[151] He writes that Quattrocento art was "an intensification of all known art forms", and thus "art twice over".[152] It was an art that had no particular content, but whose only content was the act of expression itself. "The creative act itself," he writes, "the turning of subject into concrete and particular and individual form, *is* the symbol, one that is universal and that cannot confine and direct artists except those inspired to the pitch of so universal a range".[153] He wants to describe a synthesis whose only meaning and only result was to embody the constructive impulse, the need for cohesion itself. The ambitious need to create and to act was the original basis of Pound and Stokes's mutual veneration of Sigismondo. In his 1935 book about fascism, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini*, Pound wrote that "the indifferent have never made history"; 'The Duce did not call on his hearers for either more knowledge or more intelligence, he asked for "energie e volonta".[154] In Pound's eventual review of *The Quattro Cento*, Pound rejoices in the confusion resulting from the ambition and grandeur of Stokes's texts, comparing them to Sigismondo's own ambitious synthesis: "What a medley! The Tempio in Rimini would have been a far less daring synthesis had all its details been fully digested and reduced to a unity of style, à la Palladio. As a human record, as a record of courage, nothing can touch it".[155] Indeed, it is symbolic – and a symbolism of which Stokes and Pound were likely aware – that the Tempio was never completed. "What remained"

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[149] T.S. Eliot, 'The Literature of Fascism', in *The Criterion*, December 1928, p.280-291
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid. p.40
[152] Ibid. p.41
[153] Ibid. p.62
[154] Ezra Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini: Fascism as I Have Seen It*, (London; Stanley Knott, 1935), p.viii
[155] Pound, Ezra. Review of *The Stones of Rimini*, by Adrian Stokes. *Criterion* XIII. 52 (Aril 1934): 495-97. *P&P* VI: 159-60.

writes Rainey, "was a compelling monument to thwarted aspirations".[156] It is even possible that, since The Cantos were derived from the Malatesta series at its beginning, that Pound had intended his poem to be an expression of constructive ambition that could not be realised. The Cantos as a whole might be read as a poetic reflection of these ambitious but thwarted aims, some of its final lines being "that I lost my center/ fighting the world./ The dreams clash/ and are shattered – and that I tried to make a paradiso/ terrestre".[157] But it is unclear whether Pound means to convey genuine dismay at his failure to create a heaven on earth, or whether this was the poem's knowing destination all along. In William Carlos Williams' blurb for Pound's Cantos, he writes that Pound "fuses [history] with words, present and past, to MAKE his *cantos. Make* them".[158] He puts the stress on the verb, because it seemed that the action was what mattered most to Pound.

Stokes, meanwhile, seems to have explicitly known that his appeal to renewed life and creative action was an attempt to distract from or dig himself out of an essential loss of faith. It was the expression of Tenysson's famous line, "I must lose myself in action, lest I wither in despair". If he were to stop, he feared the encroachment of loss and hopelessness, "for all harmonies must needs be closed in somewhere, and this shutting off leads to a sneaking discontent which is only absent while there remains Will to enlarge the harmony or rule of life".[159] In other words, Stokes was fully aware that he could only fend off the return of his disillusionment – his knowledge of a fundamental lack of wholeness in the world – with continual process of 'bringing together' that promised its ongoing possibility. Indeed, there are certain moments in his diaries when he seems to confess to trying to sustain the feeling of renewed purpose he felt on arriving in Rapallo, whilst the same time acknowledging his loss of faith in its truth or efficacy. "Life is so difficult because, though weak, one has to enlarge upon a revelation. Faith has to be created. One is only given a certain amount of assurance and that amount one has to carry into places which it has not lit and overcome the worry that one loses the assurance".[160] Though the Renaissance texts as a whole are characterised by an overwhelming surge of life and new possibility, then, Stokes's diaries indicate that such a vision was the result of a conscious state of illusion that he was trying to sustain at all costs.

Despite his apparent ignorance to it, it is not hard to see how Stokes could have ended up supporting Mussolini's darkly realist vision of society. Mussolini, for example, encouraged the expansion of the population as well as the economy, for the sake of growth itself: what fascism had aimed to recover from the Renaissance was not a particular form of social organisation but simply the feeling of life and of possibility, of *drive* towards something. It was the expression of a frantic desire to live, in a bid to outrun what was felt to be a moment of cultural and spiritual entropy. Stokes, at least, was aware of this, but had come to wonder whether such outrunning was the only way to generate meaning in the face of life's cruel realities:

> Youth and death are sharp in the Italy of which I write. [...] Life is stark, facile. Art, life and death must be close together [...] But there must be no embrace of death, no retirement to green shades or sacred river where men are sobered by their guilt. Death must remain frightening right in the midst of life [...] Then

[156] Rainey, Lawrence, *Ezra Pound and the Monument of Culture: text, History, and the Malatesta Cantos,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.14
[157] Ezra Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, (London; New Directions, 1996), p.822
[158] Blurb from: Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 1996
[159] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p.83
[160] Stokes, Notebook 13, Tate Archive Collection

the people will be poor and they will be dishonest and they will be artists. For they are not sobered. They will be beautiful in their youth. When death is mitigated, so too is life.[161]

Mussolini had similarly written in his first world war diaries that "war has evermore and decidedly convinced me of the necessity of war".[162] Mussolini perceived not only that death begat renewed commitment to life, but new possibilities for cultural cohesion: "on one occasion he rejoiced that the war acted as a melting pot of regionalisms from which a genuinely united Italy could be forged".[163] Those who saw the Renaissance as the model for rebuilding a world damaged by death into a stronger form perhaps could not have perceived that this particular form of fascism, rather than seeking to recover the nation from death and prevent its mass recurrence, viewed war, instead, as a potentially ongoing source of revitalisation, a driving force that would keep the nation in a state of reconfiguration and reparative action. Alfredo Bonadeo, in his reading of Mussolini's war diaries, notes that "Mussolini had a keen eye for everything related to death: the wounded, the corpses, the cemeteries, the graves, and the effect of death on the living";[164] "Mussolini held death up as a virtue".[165] It is for this reason that Griffin asks whether fascism could be considered "a revolutionary form of nihilism?".[166] In some ways, it was borne out of a failure to conceive of a meaningful life as anything beyond the pursuit of productivity, the outrunning and sublimation of loss.

As will become apparent in the chapters to come, the crucial difference between Stokes and Pound was the capacity, or lack therein, to acknowledge their own illusions. If their mutual fetishisation of the Tempio – its embodiment of the creative will, and its vision of cultural synthesis – was the result of a well-sustained defensive illusion, then Pound sustained his until the bitter end. As Rainey states in *The Monument of Culture*, "in the closing years of his life [Pound] journeyed to Rimini again to visit the church of San Francesco one last, haunting time".[167] Whatever his potential understanding of their impossibility, Pound never relinquished his hope for the ideal cultural object, and never explicitly atoned for the violence he had espoused in its pursuit. Meanwhile, however, Stokes's knowledge of the falsity of his own illusions began, inevitably, to undermine them, and eventually, he lost the will to continue writing. "Life seemed so solid but yesterday" Stokes writes in his diary, "but now my purposes are playing with the wintry boulders in the stream below. The strongholds of the mind vacate. Unreality looms larger and larger like an emptied draw".[168] On arrival in Rapallo, Stokes had been confronted by the possibility of new life and a new source of meaning and connectivity. But this ideal world-view was occasionally peeled back, to reveal an essential deficit underneath. As such, the landscape that he had initially hoped would return him to a reparative encounter with the 'real', had in fact driven him to lose faith in it all over again. In moments of disillusionment, he was made painfully aware that his optimism was sustained only by a deliberate flight from reality, and thus, was only a repeat of his hallucinatory pursuit of logical 'oneness'. "Again and

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[161] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.36

[162] Mussolini's diaries, quoted from Alfredo Bonadeo, *Mark of the Beast: death and Degradation in the Literature of the Great War*, (Kentucky; University Press of Kentucky, 2013), p.135

[163] Richard J.B. Bosworth, *Mussolini*, (London; Bloomsbury, 2010), p.97

[164] Bonadeo, *Mark of the Beast,* 2013, p.133

[165] Ibid. p.134

[166] Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 2013, p.6

[167] Rainey, *Ezra Pound and the Monument of Culture,* 1991, p.4

[168] Stokes, *Notebook 13*, Tate Archive Collection

again" he wrote "faith passes over into cynicism".[169] Stokes left Italy in 1929, and though he and Pound remained to some extent in touch, their friendship was strained, and Stokes's work thereafter seemed increasingly to retreat from his euphoric descriptions of the Tempio, into a reevaluation of what he had originally sought from this landscape: a sense of truth and real-world purpose that did not succumb to idealism. As such, towards the end of Stokes's time in Italy, he had ended up much in the same state of mind as he had been in at the end of *Ariadne*:

> Where now are the old perfected harmonies of limitation, the certain, serene Commonplaces, the dogmas and faiths? How can they stand the strain – what are we to think – whither are we to turn? We cannot believe, and yet the world cries out for religion. We try revivals of all sorts.[170]

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[169] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 1,* ref number TGA 8816.1, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London).
[170] Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, p.256

Failures of reparation: Psychoanalysis and Hyde Park

'The maltreated things begin to live.'
- Melanie Klein-[171]

In 1929 Stokes returned from Italy to London, and began daily psychoanalysis with Melanie Klein – an appointment he would keep for at least the next seven years.[172] "Confirmed in a terrible and absurd morbidity", as he wrote to Edward Sackville West from Genoa in late 1928 , he sought psychoanalysis at first from Freud's translator James Strachey. [173] Stokes found Strachey too severe, however, and was eventually referred through Ernest Jones to Klein. The discussions that took place during this analysis are not, from a clinical perspective, completely clear. Stokes wrote few, mostly illegible notes about the process. But it is at least clear from letters of this period that Stokes came to Klein partly because he found himself unable to write, having thought himself into a hole whereby the pursuit of reparation – more broadly, the pursuit of meaning – had become self-defeating. Scholars of Stokes have generally come to regard Klein's two case studies 'The Case of Mr A' and 'The Case of Mr B' (both published 1932) as disguised accounts of Stokes's analysis.[174] In these respective studies, she describes a man suffering from "inhibition in work" and a "severe doubting-mania" which had led him to a state of depression so severe that he had "cut himself off from other people to a great extent".[175] The doubting mania Klein describes, as chapter one broached, consisted partly of a hyper vigilance about the failure of meaning. One important strand of Klein's analysis was her suggestion that Stokes conceived of critical thought, and the act of writing, much like building and sculpting – as a symbolic act of restitution through which the world might be reorganised and reborn. She refers often to the symbolic significance of 'Mr B's' theoretical life, writing that "each separate bit of information, each single sentence" represented an act of restoration that was prevented when "things that were valuable and beautiful and interesting to him lost their value".[176] As such, Klein's case studies shed further light on the vicious thought cycle evidenced by Stokes's diaries, whereby his awareness of the contradictory nature of things constantly undercut the possibility of constructive thought. As Klein wrote, "it was as though a person wanted to put up a particularly fine house but was filled with doubts as to whether he had well and truly laid the foundations".[177] Klein attributed this to "a poisoning and dangerous mother-

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[171] Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation: and other works 1921-1945,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002) p.213. Klein here is quoting a review of the play this text uses as its focus.
[172] In *Inside Out*, Stokes makes reference to his "seven years' daily analysis", but it isn't clear to what extent he continued to see Klein after his marriage to the artist Margaret Mellis in 1938. He did, however, remain in touch with Klein for the rest of his life, and sent his daughter for analysis with her in the 1950s.
[173] Quoted from Janet Sayers, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes*, (London: Karnac, 2015) p. 63
[174] Though no verification for this claim exists, the parallels are so striking and the timing so apt that it is generally considered to be true. Klein makes extensive reference to biographical details that map perfectly onto Stokes's own, including the idealisation of his deceased older brother, his feelings about the 'gloomy' inside of his parents' house, and his hatred of the traffic on Bayswater Road. In order to protect Stokes's identity to some extent, Klein describes the patient as an American scientist.
[175] Melanie Klein, *The Psychoanalysis of Children*, p.264
[176] Ibid. p.273
[177] Ibid. p.272

image who impeded the development of a 'good' mother-image".[178] Both Stokes's childhood and his intellectual life, she proposed, had been a struggle for restoration of the symbolic 'mother' – and by extension, potential new life – that was repeatedly ruined by his fear of her essential contamination and failure.

The chapter that follows looks at the text that was the most direct result of this analysis, 1947's *Inside Out: An Essay in the Psychology and Aesthetic Appeal of Space*. This text was not published until more than ten years after the publication of *The Stones of Rimini* (1934), during which time Stokes published several other texts – two books on the Ballet Russes, *Tonight the Ballet* (1934), and *The Russian Ballets* (1935); a long essay on impressionist art entitled *Colour and Form*; and a supplement to his Renaissance texts, *Venice: An Aspect of Art* (1945). All of these works are significant in their own way to the development of Stokes's post-Italy Kleinian aesthetics, but this thesis homes in on *Inside Out* on the basis that it is where Stokes articulated the underlying change of perspective that enabled those texts, and all of his writing to come. Stokes had been working on *Inside Out* since the publication of *Stones* in 1934, submitting an early draft to Horizon in 1937 pithily entitled 'A summing up of all I have ever thought incorporating six years psycho-analysis'. As Janet Sayers points out, *Inside Out* was not well received either in its early or final form: in 1937, "the result was so compressed and virtually incomprehensible" that it was rejected by Cyril Connolly for publication, and in 1947, Stokes wrote to a friend to say that Faber and Faber were "disgusted" and had only published it "under protest".[179] Such reactions are perhaps not surprising; *Inside Out* is the most generically complex of Stokes's work, but for that reason perhaps his most valuable. Hovering somewhere between self-analysis, aesthetic theory and cultural criticism, this is where Stokes first brings all the different elements and phases of his work into chaotic but productive friction, and as such it might be considered the keystone of his thought.

Inside Out is ostensibly an autobiographical essay in that it describes the landscape of Hyde Park from the perspective of Stokes's childhood self. But it is more theoretically loaded than might be expected of an autobiography, in that it retrospectively maps the reparative concerns of Stokes's adult intellectual life onto the raw aesthetic experience of childhood. As such, and as the preface to the essay makes clear, *Inside Out* might be viewed as Stokes's attempt to write up his own case study, as a means of understanding more broadly the mechanisms of self-formation:

> In the nursery, that is where to find the themes of human nature: the rest is working out, though it also be the real music. But if we want to get to the heart of the matter we must go back to the themes however bare, to the matchless mental suffering, for instance, of seventeen-months-old Christine, who said 'Mum, mum, mum, mum' … continually in a deep voice for at least three days. I am of the opinion that entering into Christine's experience imaginatively we respond more closely to the deeper sources of human action than in contemplating, say, the wide flung doctrines of Malraux about the nature of man.[180]

Through his analysis, Stokes hoped to discover the 'deeper sources' of several aspects of his work, not least his preoccupation with landscape as an expression of his inner architecture. Despite his transition to an explicitly psychoanalytic language, this essay is

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[178] Ibid. p.259

[179] Quotes from Sayers, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes*, 2015, p.155

[180] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p. 141

an extension of the Renaissance texts insofar as it deals with the psychological symbolism of aesthetic forms and their arrangements. He remembers the cruelty of the fountains' "cold and grinding mechanisms", and the pathos of a "tall, disproportionate alcove, shallow, high and cold, with toddlers squirming on a low brown seat".[181] Stokes came to feel that the landscape of Hyde Park – its degenerating follies and pseudo-classical monuments – were so entangled with his perception of modernity's failure that it had led him in later years "to find good architecture to be a particular symbol of life"; "Nearly all the monuments and buildings in the park, including the fountains, professed for me the same cruel discrimination".[182] This is part of what makes *Inside Out* so generically complex: although it is generally labelled as autobiography, this text is also an advancement of Stokes's aesthetic theory, insofar as it makes implicit critical arguments about the unconscious role of aesthetics in the development of the psyche. In Stokes's Renaissance texts, he had taken for granted that "the outward world at large takes for us the form of the jagged, shifting promontories of the mind", in the sense that he had projected his inner turmoil onto it.[183] But by the time he came to write *Inside Out*, Klein's theory of object relations, and her developed understanding of the mechanisms of projection and introjection, allowed Stokes to articulate this relationship more fully to himself. One of Klein's main contributions to psychoanalysis in the 1930s was her advancement of object relations: as Meira Likierman writes, "her vision from this period centralizes the human propensity not only to invest the world with subjective states, but also to take in, personify, and dramatize what is encountered".[184] In some ways, then, Klein's work inherently lent itself to aesthetic theory, given that all symbol formation for Klein – and thus all meaning – was derived from the primal language of bodily experience. The aesthetic outlook that Stokes took from Klein's work is similar to that taken by Geoffrey Scott in his 1914 book *The Architecture of Humanism*, in which he reflects on how architecture comes to be "unconsciously invested by us with human movement and human moods":

> There is instability – or the appearance of it; but it is in the building. There is discomfort, but it is in ourselves. What then has occurred? The conclusion seems evident. The concrete spectacle has done what the mere idea could not: it has stirred our physical memory. It has awakened in us, not indeed an actual state of instability or of being overloaded, but that condition of spirit which in the past has belonged to our actual experiences of weakness, of thwarted effort or incipient collapse. We have looked at the building and identified ourselves with its apparent state. *We have transcribed ourselves into terms of architecture.*[185]

In Stokes's aesthetics, as Klein put it in her essay on anxiety and the creative impulse, "we see what we discover in the analysis of every child: that things represent human beings, and therefore are objects of anxiety".[186] As such, *Inside Out* articulates the origins of the essential assumption of all Stokes's work: that all aesthetic forms, even when abstract, were inherently and unavoidably symbolic.

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[181] Ibid. p.144
[182] Ibid. p.144
[183] Ibid. p.147
[184] Meira Likierman, *Melanie Klein: Her Work in Context,* p.65
[185] Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism: A Study in the History of Taste*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), p.212-213
[186] Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation,* 2002, p.213.

To complicate things further, *Inside Out* might also be considered a form of cultural criticism. If material landscapes were expressions of human experience and human ideals, then they had some power to reflect the character of a society, and perhaps more crucially, to project expectations of human character onto those living within it. In this way, Stokes's analysis helped him to consolidate what he already knew intuitively: for example, that the assertive and all-encompassing Renaissance structures were a model of the intellectual masculinity it demanded from its leaders, or that the bric-a-brac of Victoriana reflected and perpetuated a frivolous and individualistic culture. As such, Stokes's ostensibly autobiographical texts are also political, insofar as they make claims for the relationship of material forms to the psychological state of those living under them. As its title suggests, *Inside Out* is essentially about this cycle of influence between the individual psyche and its milieu. It acts as a precursor to his later work which, as chapter three will explore, reflected more explicitly on what kind of psyche modernist aesthetics represented and the image of human life they might eventually give rise to. *Inside Out,* as this chapter explores*,* reflects particularly on the relationship between Stokes's own need for "constructive omnipotence", as Klein put it, and the fantasies of power that were subliminally expressed in the landscape of modernity: of unlimited economic growth, of mechanical efficiency, and of the various absolutist ideologies that were offered by the political orators at speakers' corner. On the one hand, then, *Inside Out* is a personal memoir, but as Richard Read puts it, "The Hyde Park of Stokes's childhood allowed him to probe the impulses that lay behind the mechanized greed of all imperial expansionism".[187]

One the one hand, then, this text represents the development of Stokes's architectural psychology into a more complex and fully articulated aesthetic position. But although this chapter implicitly deals with such mechanisms as the basis of Stokes's world view, it concentrates on this text as the marker of a major transformation of Stokes's outlook on the nature and aim of reparation. Such a transformation, as Klein's case studies indicate, was only enabled by facing up to the necessary failures of reparation as he had conceived of it. To that end, *Inside Out* turns away from the ideal and light-filled image of Italy towards the dark, existential landscape of Hyde Park. In the part of Klein's case study that is thought to most obviously give Stokes away as its subject, she writes that Mr B's struggle for reparation and its continual failure was embodied by the conflict between "a dark, lifeless and ruined [native town]" and an "imaginary city full of light, life and beauty".[188] As such, the park has come to be seen as a kind of "counter-landscape" in Stokes's work, representing the 'other side' of his thought.[189] If Italy had initially represented the possibility of repair, resolution and eternal life, Hyde Park is a space where things are continuously disrupted, where things fail to resolve themselves, indeed seem to be dead or dying. Despite its hopelessness, however, I want to argue that this confrontation with failure actually gave rise to the 'rebirth' Stokes had been trying to achieve; it marks his recognition that destruction, chaos and failure were necessary to a repaired relationship between the mind and the world, rather than an impediment to it. Stokes's image of Italy, Klein proposed, was an attempt to rid himself of difficult and destructive realities and, as a result, brought him further away from the world he was trying to reconnect with. So although this chapter implicitly deals with the developments in Stokes's inside/outside dialectics, its main concern is Stokes's attempt to reformulate what 'reparation' would mean in the light of Klein's insights about the necessary and meaningful role of destruction and loss for the

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[187] Richard Read, 'Vico,Virginia Woold and Adrian Stokes's Autobiographies: Fantasy, Providence and Self-Isolation in Postwar British Aesthetics', *Art History* (September 1st, 2012, p.779-795), p.782
[188] Klein, *The Psychoanalysis of Children*, p.272
[189] Kite, Stephen, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (MHRA, 2009)

human mind. One way of putting it would be to say that, although Stokes's analysis had not changed his position on the symbolic nature of material forms, it had dramatically changed what kind of self he wanted them to reflect. The result, this chapter argues, was a development of a lasting, post-psychoanalytic aesthetics and a new conception of reparation – one that had less to do with wholeness, resolution and immortality, than with the ability to generate meaning in the absence of those things.

Stokes's arrival in Italy, as Chapter One explored, had seemed to signal for him a potential way out of the confusion and loss of hope that he had felt when in London. From the coherence of Renaissance culture – expressed metaphorically through its architecture – Stokes felt a renewed faith in the constructive power of human civilization, and thus the possibility of its revival. But on his return from Italy in 1929, Stokes found himself in much the same position that he had been in before beginning his Renaissance texts: in a state of uncertainty about the human condition, and particularly, the possibility of collective purpose and cultural unity. Hyde Park, for Stokes, was the origin and embodiment of this feeling – it served as a contrast to the sense of potential cultural cohesion he had felt on arriving in Italy. In *Inside Out* he writes "it is basic human relationships that my two landscapes describe: Hyde Park is especially a destroyed and contaminated mother, Italy the rapid attempt to restore".[190] It is significant, however, that Stokes refers to Italy's restoration as 'rapid', and Klein to its landscape as 'imaginary'. Though the Renaissance texts have come to be seen as the most representative of Stokes's works, it is not often recognised that in his later work, Stokes himself admitted that his initial image of Italy was somewhat hallucinatory, a form of escapism rather than a genuine advancement in his world view. He writes in *Inside Out* that, contrary to his initial perception of a newly discovered truth, "I had in fact incorporated this objective seeming world and proved myself constructed by the general refulgence".[191] Italy was not, then, a landscape of uncomplicated repair, but rather, a fantasy state of resolution overlaying, replacing, but not really resolving Stokes's underlying concerns. "Each man", he writes,

> invents a myriad states to counter his inferno. They exist abreast of the inferno; compensations, mitigatons, transferences, controls, stern deletions, reparations. And so it has been with me. I have already referred to some of the priority repairs, as it were, by which an immediate patching up was attempted. But a truly exacting person […] is likely to construct a state parallel to that by which inferno is summed.[192]

Thereafter, Stokes goes on to characterise Italy as his ultimate fantasy of repair; the "paradiso" to his inferno: "instead of the Serpentine, I saw the Mediterranean, the end of my journey".[193] In his mind, it was an imagined state of salvation in which all conflicts would be resolved. But despite his best efforts "Rapallo could not oust Hyde Park".[194]

What the renewed claim of Hyde Park over Stokes's mental life signaled, then, was the failure of his idealism to erase his painful convictions about the essentially broken nature of the world. The park is Stokes's personal hell circle and the origin of his

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[190] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, p.158
[191] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, p.157
[192] Ibid. p.153
[193] Ibid. p.156
[194] Ibid, p.158

need for repair, primarily because it was responsible for his perception of the fundamentally conflicted and unresolvable nature of things. In an undated poem, Stokes casts the park as the primal scene of his life's struggle:

Even though upon Hyde Park I have based
     My life in the attempt sometimes to restore
     To put to rights everything then feed
     In wrong I cannot say I have succeeded
         Yet. The agony remains.[195]

All of his future attempts to 'make sense' of the world, then, were in fact a struggle to make sense of the events and objects of this space. Indeed, in the years that Stokes spent in the park as a child – roughly between 1905 and 1915 – Hyde Park was in many ways a space of chaos which consolidated the various conflicts of the modern world. As Stokes describes it, it was the epicenter of the city where all its social and political factions came to meet, and their conflicts were continuously played out by the geography of the space. The park keepers, symbolised for Stokes by "the cruel railings" were in a continual battle against the homeless and served as "a threat against the couples who blundered in the dark".[196] And in the light of day, "opposing camps" of rich and poor children with their mothers and nurses were mirrored by the dogs, "obscenely different in size, [who] fought each other".[197] It was also home to political, monarchic and military parades – opposing forces of control and revitalisation whose conflicts came to a chaotic zenith at Speakers Corner. The park was, in Brzeskian terms, the vortex of the city, but rather than coming together as a harmonious object, its various fragments and organisational forces clashed and redispersed. It was the frontline of a battle between elements of the world that, it seemed to Stokes, were hopelessly irreconcilable. As such, the park gave rise to a picture of humanity as an inherently self-destructive organism, trying and failing to work itself out, to instil a sense of order that was subsequently disrupted by some rogue or conflictual element.

     At the same time as being a microcosm of modernity's chaos, the park was also an embodiment of Stokes's attempts to think himself out of it. In Klein's analysis of Stokes she had stressed the symbolic importance of his intellectual life – how he had translated a desire for a healed mother, and thus a healed world, into a quest to correct it through understanding. Stokes's fetishisation of the Italian landscape during his young adult life was, by his own admission, an appeal to "human powers of clear discernment" that might demolish London from his thought.[198] As such, if Italy was an image of the omnipotent mind, and its potential for triumph over chaos and death, Hyde Park was the ultimately more powerful expression of that project's continual failure. The 'death' of his thoughts in his theoretical life seems inextricable here from literal dead bodies that washed up in the park: 'surplus water from the final basin poured away into the Long Water. Here was the inky dark medium of the park suicides'.[199] Stokes hoped that when these remains were recovered they would resurface as a form of understanding: 'later I was to be told that the Serpentine could be drained, that everything flung into it could be brought to light. All the miseries of the torn attacked and divided mother without me and within, she who was the park and all that happened there to be known, controlled,

[195] Robinson, Peter (ed), *With All The Views: The Collected Poems of Adrian Stokes,* (London: Carcanet, 1981), p.159.
[196] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, p.143
[197] Ibid. p.144
[198] Adrian Stokes, *Notebook 1,* ref number TGA 8816.1, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London).
[199] Gowing, 1978, 143

restored?' .[200] Out of a desire to salvage the park from obscurity, Stokes's time there became an obsessive quest to make these residual objects mean something, to make the body 'live'. Having 'not altogether given up hope of infusing these remnants with life,' he was compelled

> by the possibility of constant acts of restitution. I would therefore implore my governess, in spite of the ban, to use these seats; and I would get behind, between the low railing at the side of the walk and the back of the seat, and imagine that I was making this last refuge, for all the barrenness of board and of cold, jarring contortion of cast iron, to 'work'. [...] The underneath of the seat, at any rate, was my discovery. [...] Those who had forbidden it had not examined that side. Could I keep the underneath alive and thus cause the animation of the whole?[201]

Through his attempt and failure to revive it, the park becomes the precursor to his philosophical life; it was a game of sublimation, the aim of which was to give meaning to apparently meaningless things.

Stokes's rememberance of his childhood games of restitution are interspersed with reflections on the analogous quests for 'complete' understanding that such games would eventually transform into:

> For several more years I was engrossed entirely in the absolute which I had encountered compulsively first in religion and then (no less compulsively) in ethics and philosophy. After the Rapallo experience the problem had always been to 'bring the distant things near'. This phrase recurs in many notebooks. In view of the superlative absolute, how was any preoccupation to be justified? I could not defend myself against the absence of a logical answer.[202]

Likewise, Stokes's feelings about the park, whether retrospectively applied or remembered, had to do with its essential lack of resolution or completion. Anything that was banished or railed, anything that appeared to have been forgotten, undermined the logic of the space. Out of a desperation to sublimate or save these things, Stokes recalls putting his faith in the various organisational forces of the park – forces which, in retrospect, had come to be symbolic of his later fetishisation of logical thought. The mechanics of the park fountains in particular seemed to promise some hope of restitution, and he "would return again and again to the fountains and hope against hope that the engine house activity would spell out something good".[203] But, as he wrote, "this entirely mechanical restitution did not please me: the power behind it was blind, exact, faithless in the sense that it did not deal in faith".[204] Such a feeling mirrors his later realisation that mechanical or logical structures, even where they were able to produce the illusion of productivity or renewal, did not seem to truly generate meaning. Nor did they have the capacity to put to rights the suffering and loss he had put his faith in them to solve. Like the other follies of the park, the fountains were a disingenuous attempt to gloss over the destruction, suffering and conflict therein. Indeed, Stokes's feelings about logical or mechanical thought, of which I'll say more in the next chapter, were tied up with his feelings about the entire of Edwardian culture and aesthetics. "As for the Edwardian buildings in my childhood, I can truly say I experienced from them the

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[200] Gowing, 1978, 146
[201] Gowing, 1978, 143
[202] Gowing, *Critical Works vol. 2*, p.158
[203] Ibid. p.143
[204] Ibid. p.143

shamelessness of pretense as though death were smug".[205] And as a result of their pretense, such objects became more disturbing to him than what lay underneath. "Perhaps, indeed, the relentless mounting of the fountains when they were turned on, propelled by each stroke of the very extensive engine, was really most frightening to me".[206]

The park not only symbolises Stokes's faith in logic to 'resolve' the space, but in other kinds of structures that promised salvation. Particularly, we can see Stokes's investment in and disillusionment with the promises of Twentieth Century politics. Thwarted fantasies of ideological reformation haunt his version of Hyde Park through images of failed regulation, and aimless expenditures of power. Echoing the brief faith he had put in Fascism, Stokes writes that "for a time [he] clung to military pomp and discipline as a 'solution' of the park and its environs".[207] But even these appear to be human agents of the park's larger, less visible workings. More than once in *Inside Out* Stokes's anxiety about making things 'mean' becomes tangled up with industrial capitalism's loss and creation of value. To the "obscene hole" of the serpentine tunnel Stokes "attributed the home of the animus that tore the body of the park to shreds; the parkee spirit that made the park poor, hungry, desolate" .[208] Poverty is depicted as an anti-process which would eat things up, reversing any progress that the park might make. "Sheep left droppings on the grass," he writes, "left them there, so it appeared, just as towards sunset some living bundle of rags would seem to be left forlorn on a green chair for the use of which a penny should have been paid".[209] Stokes was deeply effected by the presence of death or of debt – any manifestation of negative value left him with the impression that the entire space was rendered senseless or hopeless by its presence.

As such, Hyde Park is Stokes's attempt to grapple honestly with something that he had already identified as a problem of his thought: his inability to tolerate a world or a self that was not 'total'. The major source of Stokes's unhappiness when in the park was the sensation that something was always left-over from the park's arrangement, and thus from the process of working out. Inevitably, the objects of his fixation were those that prevented the landscape from fully 'working' or from being resolved – particularly by those who could not be 'put to work' by society, and were thus unassimilable to the political logic of the space. Most of Hyde Park's negative bodies are like this – things unable to be 'used' by the engine of London, that actively contradict the aims of its organisation and thus, in a twist of agency, seem to threaten its systemic omnipotence. Similarly, elements of existence, such as death or, more troublingly, the desire for death, seemed to undermine the struggle for life. No matter what objects or structures he turned to, Stokes felt there was an inherent failure, a fatal flaw, which rendered all else meaningless. Stokes – recalling that he would scream "I want it all right" – tried to reform these elements in his mind.[210] "But there were vaster engines than my seat" he writes, "which I could not control".[211] He implies, in the wider reaches of the space, an immense mechanism that generated more senseless objects even as he tried to reform them.

In his notebooks, Stokes describes the depression he suffered during the 1920s as having precisely this 'residual' quality: a sense that something remained beyond meaning, undermining it from outside. In a circa 1925 notebook from his time in Italy, he

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[205] Quoted from Kite, Stephen, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (MHRA, 2009)
[206] Gowing, Critical Works vol 2., 1978, p.144
[207] Ibid. p.151
[208] Ibid. p.153
[209] Gowing, 1978, p.146
[210] Ibid. p.148
[211] Ibid. p.143

writes of a negative counterpart to Italy's ideal landscape that was "intent on frustrating and destroying" him.[212] This destructive force seemed to feed on meaning – the threat of meaninglessness intensifying as his investment in meaningful structures grew – and thus was exacerbated by his attempts to 'stockpile' understanding. "Hitherto [this force] has cared more for the greater slaughter", he writes, "has waited for accumulated treasure before a descent, inspiring ideas with that very fatality, the itch to accumulate that treasure".[213] Here, his depression seems to physically devour value. It takes the form of a force-field at the limits of thought, whose senselessness made any attempt at constructive thinking futile.

In short, Stokes's struggle for a sense of coherence was disturbed by the presence of the 'outside', the 'underneath' or the 'other'. As such, both his childhood and adult battles were a frantic working out of universal and primal crises: why there must there be 'others' that are not myself? Why must there be conflict and contradiction? And how does one resolve it without collapsing all into nothingness? It was a problem that William Empson, in a poem from 1937, consolidates in his famous lines: 'slowly the poison the whole bloodstream fills/ The waste remains, the waste remains and kills'.[214]

Given the nature of Stokes's neurosis, it was particularly appropriate that he was referred to Klein, whose work during the 1930s was specifically concerned with the inability to tolerate negation and loss, and the implications of this for the subject's successful relationship with reality. During Stokes's seven-year analysis, Klein was extending what is sometimes referred to as Freud's 'second topography' – a new model of the mind marked by the publication of 1920's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Freud's essay – which Stokes showed no indication of having read before his analysis – had in some ways pre-empted Stokes's implicit questions about the nature of conflict and negation. Prompted by the psychological fallout from the first world war, it asked: if a state of inorganic unawareness was easier, then why did individual sentience, and the conflicts consisting therein, come into being? If Freud did not have an answer to this question, what he posited in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* was an originary trauma of the failure to resolve it. As a way of rationalising the psychical and sometimes literal self-destructive tendencies of the human being, he proposed a primal resistance, experienced by all living organisms, to the demands placed on them by their emergence into the outside world: "the rudimentary creature" he writes "would from its very beginning not have wanted to change".[215] As such, he drew up a picture of the living organism – aggravated by the conditions of its own subjectivity – that was trying to get back to an original state, and whose struggle for life was in some ways a struggle to return to the undisturbed peace of death: "they thus present the delusive appearance of forces striving after change and progress, while they are merely endeavouring to reach an old goal by ways both old and new".[216]

Though Klein's work was less speculative and less explicitly reliant on evolutionary speculation than Freud's, Klein's clinical observations led her to take up the death drive as a fundamental part of her thought, insofar as she drew up a picture of the

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212 Adrian Stokes, *Notebook 10,* ref number TGA 8816.10, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London).
213 Stokes, *Notebook 10*
214 Empson, William, *Collected Poems,* (London: Hogarth Press, 1984)
215 Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 1922, accessed via: https://www.bartleby.com/276/5.html, last accessed April 5th 2018
216 Ibid.

human subject that was, from the very beginning, aggrieved by the competitive demands placed on it by its emergence into a physical and social reality.[217] For Klein, however, it was not the inorganic state that the subject was trying to reach, but their lost integration with the mother's body, and all the satisfaction associated with it. The child's emergence into embodied subjectivity gives rise to "the earliest anxiety situation of all", namely the separation from, and resulting desire for/frustration with, the mother and particularly the breast.[218] This is the first significant disturbance of emotional and physical coherence the child will experience. Their removal from the mother creates a fissure in the world that the child seeks by many means to close, resorting to sadistic acts of ingestion, or destruction in which "the subject's dominant aim is to possess himself of the contents of the mother's body and to destroy her by every weapon that sadism can command".[219] And when these measures inevitably fail to resolve the loss, "the attacks give rise to anxiety lest the subject should be punished".[220] This creates a catch 22 for the child: they feel not only hatred of the separation of other things from themselves and a desire to resolve it, but also fear of the potential vengeful damage others might do to his newly formed self-hood. This is a complex first situation, Klein proposes, that gives rise to all others. Becoming a 'thing' separate from and desiring of other things is the first of a series of unresolvable battles between the subject's twin reparative needs: their need for reconciliation to the world beyond themselves, and their desire for a lost state of coherent self-hood.

This troubled moment in the infant's development was what Klein referred to as 'the depressive position', and its characteristic feature was the sudden collision, in the child's inner world, of the bad with the good. The child's realisation that the mother was both loving and punishing or withholding elicited feelings of hatred towards her that also jeapordised his own perfect, uncontradictory self-image. As Money-Kyrle succinctly puts it, the depressive position is an orientation "in which the developing infant begins to become aware of, and miserable about, the conflict between his hatred and love".[221] This position paved the way for the child to get on terms with ambivalence and contradiction, and thus, with the failure of the world and the self to be ideal. Klein proposed that this was not merely an experience of infantile life, but an orientation that the subject was often pulled back into by experiences of disillusionment or loss. For example, of a moment when the literal loss of a loved person brings the fact of death into contact with life, and the subject is faced with the pain and futility stirred up by this contradiction. But it was also pertinent to lesser or less personal forms of loss; when the fact of war seems to mitigate the pursuit of peace; when suffering seems to negate the

[217] In Miera Likierman's account of Klein's work, she outlines how, despite Klein's lack of explicit commentary on evolutionary processes, her work was derived from Freud's 'phylogenetic' theories. "It is not always appreciated" she writes "how much Klein drew on the evolutionary aspects of Freud's thinking. She relied substantially on his belief in phylogenetic determinants that shape mental life. Like him, she thought of the infant's mental activity as owing much to inborn species characteristics that have accumulated over decades of evolution [...] Klein never fully articulated an evolutionary explanation of her reasoning, but she did explicitly draw on Freud's phylogenetic hypothesis". It is worth clarifying, however, that Klein was not necessarily an evolutionary determinist advocating for a necessarily dog-eat-dog society. Her work was very much concerned, not just with the child's innate competitive and aggressive tendencies, but also the child's capacity to sublimate and deal successfully with them, and the crucial role of the child's personal and cultural circumstances in this process of adaptation. (Miera Likierman, *Melanie Klein: Her Work in Context*, (New York; A&C Black, 2001), p. 71)
[218] Mitchell, Juliet, *The Selected Melanie Klein*, (New york: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.213
[219] Ibid. p.96
[220] Ibid. p.96
[221] Money-Kyrle, R. 'Normal counter-transference and some of its deviations', in *Melanie Klein Today*, Vol. 2. London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1988.

experience of joy; or, perhaps more often and ordinarily, moments when the subject was forced to reconcile their ideal self-image with their urges towards destruction and hate. Klein's proposition was that this was a crucial moment in the subject's self-development, and their failure to get on terms with the contradiction and ambivalence inherent to living could spell prolonged problems for the child's capacity to find meaning in a less than ideal world. Perhaps worse, it might lead to attempts to repress or eradicate the knowledge of contradiction, and of their own failures, to inevitably destructive ends.

It was essentially the experience of the depressive position, and his struggle to overcome it, that Stokes's autobiographical text describes. It describes his attempt, by many means, to solve or eradicate a primal source of contradiction within himself and within the world. Primarily, his anxiety about the loss of wholeness took the form of a survivor's guilt: he was overwhelmed by a feeling that the park itself could not justifiably continue to live while some of its inhabitants were dying. As Klein pointed out, this symbolised not only a fear of the contradiction inherent to the world but also within himself. Those that elicited his despair when in the park were represented by the poor, the socially oppressed, the depressed. In other words, those whose suffering might have come as the cost of his own survival. These figures brought him face to face with his own potential cruelty, with what he had repressed or destroyed in his own quest for life and for meaning. While he longed for a state of wholeness and self-satisfaction, he was also unable to cope with the possibility that such a state only came at the expense his own goodness, and as such, he was faced with a catch 22.

It was this guilt that Stokes eventually came to see as the root of his social and cultural life and of his thought. Just as the park itself was rendered hopeless by waste bodies within it, thought too lost its purpose when he perceived there to be a problem it had not solved. In a diary from his years in Italy he had written about "the futility any attention to detail?[sic]", and asked "why this thought rather than another, how can unreality stop?".[222] He perceived any sense of partiality as a manifestation of solipsism and self-interest on his own part, and thus, as a sign of his inherent severance from others and the world. Indeed Klein's picture of infantile life had many implications for the impulses towards artistic creativity and the desire for knowledge. During the time that Klein was advancing her conflicted picture of mental life, she was also writing extensively about the role of art and language in our attempts to navigate it. Klein's essay 'Infantile Anxiety Situations Reflected in a Work of Art and in the Creative Impulse' (1929) was arguably her first attempt to articulate this struggle. In it, she describes the incessant urge of a painter, driven by her perception of an emptiness inside her. Alongside this, 1930's 'The importance of Symbol Formation in the Development of the Ego', would explicitly posit that the development of object relations – the realisation of other things beyond and unassimilable to ourselves – coincides with the development of the symbols we use to bridge and designate them. In other words, our birth into the world as subjects, for Klein, involved not only a conflictual separation from other people and things, but also a failure to fully know them. Creativity, and the desire for knowledge, were born from this fissure – the "epistemophilic urge" being the drive where the child's desire to possess the mother and to know her were indistinguishable. As such, the child's relationship to knowledge came to be symbolic of their relationship to others and to the world at large. Klein's work, then, was not just about the child's passage into selfhood but into meaning: a passage that entailed necessary losses. Jacqueline Rose discusses this at length in her essay on negativity in Klein, in which she explicates the importance of death for the creation of meaning. Citing Hyppolite, she writes that "the symbol making capacity emerges in a "space of suspension", from a

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[222] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 13,* ref number TGA 8816.13, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

"margin of thinking", where thinking – and being – can only emerge through what they relegate to non-being, to the not thought".[223]

As such, Klein reframed or reiterated the conclusions of Bradley's philosophy, insofar as she made similar arguments about the less than ideal metaphysical conditions of being an individual. She proposed that being an embodied subject with an inside and an outside introduced fissures, ambiguities and contradictions that prevented the subject from being fully reconciled to other people and things. Klein and Bradley were twin bearers of an unwanted truth: that the apparently fragmentary and chaotic nature of the modern world was not a transient state but rather a truth of the human condition that certain upheavals of modernity had exacerbated or perhaps brought into clearer focus. Indeed, Esther Sánchez-Pardo, in her 2003 book on Klein's relevance for modernism, *Cultures of the Death Drive*, argues that certain cultural conditions, of which western modernity was one, could intersect with individual grievances, and render its subjects particularly susceptible to the state that Klein described. "Those who suffered the consequences of deterritorialisation and diaspora after the wars", she proposes, became profoundly aware of their own dislocation and difference from others, which in turn produced a "a gloomy discourse on the impossibility of action and the meaninglessness of existence".[224] To Stephen Spender's account of the expansion of informational and cultural horizons that pre-empted the modern condition, Sánchez-Pardo adds the pressure on established forms of self-identification from new irruptions in our understanding of gender, sexuality, and race. Seth Moglen, in his account of mourning in Anglo American modernism, reads Eliot, among others, as part of a specifically melancholic response to monopoly capitalism, the members of which were "united in their underlying conviction that things of ultimate value to them had been imperiled or destroyed [...] that the capacity for human connection in all its forms, from sexual love to solidarity, was radically endangered".[225] Indeed, there are myriad attempts to explain the root of melancholic character of Twentieth Century thought. Klein might suggest that it was simply a human sadness about the conditions of being an embodied subject that had been exacerbated by the cultural milieu. In other historical moments, perhaps, tradition, ritual and common goals provided a reparative counteraction to such feelings. But the modern milieu was what David Daiches in *The Novel and the Modern World*, called a 'trough' period: a moment in cultural history when the impression of common reality is lost, "when community of belief disintegrates, when public truth is shattered into innumerable private truths".[226]

Such a bleak view of human subjectivity has earned Klein a reputation as a depressive and negative thinker. During the years when Stokes was in analysis, Klein's picture of the psyche became the catalyst for the British Psychoanalytic Society's 'Freud-Klein controversies' (1942-1944), a series of debates intended to decide the future of the practice. These discussions mainly consisted of a disagreement between Klein and Anna Freud and her followers, particularly Edward Glover and Klein's own daughter, Melitta Scmideberg. There were a host of claims levelled against Klein's theories that I will not have space to address here, such as the early development of the superego and the Oedipus complex. Klein posited that, due to the quickly escalating separation from the mother, the child's psyche was conflictual from its very beginning, and generally

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[223] Rose, 2011, p.73
[224] Sánchez-Pardo, Cultures of the Death Drive, 2003, p.194
[225] Seth Moglen, Mourning Modernity: Literary Modernism and the Injuries of Late Capitalism, (California; Stanford University Press, 2007), p.28
[226] Daiches, David, *The Novel and the Modern World*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p.5

advanced a picture of infantile life that seemed more complex, more 'adult' than was possible.[227] But the most obvious source of objection to Klein's work – entirely related to her early Oedipal formulations – was its depressive and destructive picture of the human condition: "Klein paints a picture of childhood sadism that is unprecedented in its ferocity" and an unassailably melancholy outlook on life.[228] "The early fantasies described by Kleinian theory" says Anna Freud, "are often violently aggressive fantasies. This seems logical to the analysts who are convinced of the preponderance of the death instinct. [...] The existence of the same fantasies is widely questioned by those to whom the libidinal impulses seem of overwhelming importance".[229] What Anna Freud does not take into account here is that in Klein's work it is the necessary partnership between destruction and "the vigorous wish to live" which presents the subject with a paradox they cannot overcome. In this cycle 'the efforts by which [the subject] seeks to achieve something may be of a highly constructive nature, but the implicit triumph and the harm and injury done to the object may outweigh these purposes, in the subject's mind, and therefore prevent fulfillment'.[230][231] What Klein is describing is an overwhelming awareness of the 'outside' of the self: that is, what the self must negate to facilitate its existence. The death drive, in this account, is not simply 'destruction' or a general desire to regress; it is a guilt with respect to the violence and sadness of difference, resulting in the desire to undo it. As Harold N Boris writes of separation in Klein, "one will live and the other will die; one will grow and the other will be forgotten: and it is too unbearable".[232]

Of course, Anna Freud's misunderstanding is ironic, because it indicates that she herself was struggling to tolerate the ambivalence that Klein describes. Such an irony was to repeat itself many times in the reception of Klein's work; as Lyndsey Stonebridge and John Philips point out in their introduction to the Melanie Klein reader, there has been an ongoing tendency for those who criticise Klein to play out the defensive structures she described: "for some readers and analysts, it seems, Melanie Klein has always been hard to swallow".[233] Even Freud himself admits to a resistance to the lack of neatness and fulfillment inherent to the conflictual model of the mind, writing, "I can remember my own defensive attitude when the idea of an instinct of destruction first made its appearance in psychoanalytical literature, and how long it took until I became accessible to it".[234] Indeed, Klein proposed that the depressive position was an experience of disruptive ambivalence that the subject would struggle with throughout life, both personally and intellectually – the ambivalence of things, and thus the fundamental lack of fulfillment inherent to reality, would suddenly come into focus now and then, and the struggle to accept it would need to be remembered and re-played.

For Klein, each time that this renewed awareness of ambivalence occurred, it was a make or break moment for the subject. As I will discuss in further depth both in this chapter and elsewhere in the thesis, the child who was able to tolerate the ambiguity and

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[227] See King and Steiner's introduction to the Controversies for a fuller account of these disagreements: King, Pearl and Steiner, Riccardo (ed.), *The Freud-Klein Controversies 1941-45,* (London; Routledge, 1991)

[228] Likierman suggests that Klein upheld "the belief that the natural human state, as witnessed in infancy and before the advent of civilising social influences, as a state of acute and exclusive sadism". I would disagree with this phrasing, and argue instead that in Klein's work, it is the effect of civilising influences – the demands of collective life – that drive the child, against itself, to sadism.

[229] King & Steiner, 1991, p.332

[230] King & Steiner, 1991, p.561

[231] Mitchell, 1987, p.154

[232] Stonebridge & Phillips, 1998, p.122

[233] Ibid. p.1

[234] Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and its Discontents*, (New Delhi, General Press, 2018)

loss of fulfillment therein was able to attain what Klein thought to be a truly reparative attitude – one in which the child was reconciled to reality, and to new possibilities for meaning, precisely through their relinquishment of ideals. However, if the child could not tolerate the guilt and anxiety associated with confronting such failures, they resorted to what Klein called obsessional and manic defences: attempts to recover the lost state of wholeness and self-satisfaction that, doomed to failure, were destined to produce more destruction and loss. Klein made the important step towards understanding these forms of 'pseudo-reparation' when she took a second look at Freud's account of how we overcome mourning. It seemed dangerous, Klein thought, that he proposed we overcome loss by regaining control.[235] Instead, she proposed that attempts at control may reproduce the loss, may become the driving force of anxiety themselves. In trying to fully possess or control things, their unavailability for appropriation becomes all the more obvious and more painful, and the work of control reproduces itself. Through this compulsive desire for overcoming, the act of control often destroys the very thing it wishes to recover and protect:

> the desire to control the object, the sadistic gratification of overcoming and humiliating it, of getting the better of it, the *triumph* over it, may enter so strongly into the act of reparation that the benign circle started by this act becomes broken. [...] As a result of the failure of the act of reparation, the ego has to resort again and again to obsessional and manic defense mechanisms[236]

Klein's proposition was that the child who attempted to bypass the loss and disillusionment, or to gain control of it, has not really accepted their own vulnerability to it. As such, the bad object, the source of contradiction, is still felt to be an alien and unwanted presence that they continually seek to either sublimate or destroy. These forms of reparation, because of the impossibly ideal nature of their object, could bring no possible fulfillment and could not really be brought to an end. As Freud wrote in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, "out of the excess of the satisfaction demanded over that found is born the driving momentum which allows of no abiding in any situation presented to it, but in the poet's words 'urges ever forward, ever unsubdued [...] without, however, any prospect of being able to bring the process to a conclusion or to attain the goal".[237]

So it was, then, that in the park, Stokes continually found that his attempts to restitute the space were thwarted. By turns, he tried to rescusitate or rescue its forlorn objects, and when such a project failed, he turned to the possibility of destroying them. It was, in the end, because they were antagonists to formality that "a kind of feud was invented".[238] Stokes recalls false memories of being "seized by a pack of parkees" ("in spite of my remembrance I have little doubt that no such thing actually happened"), and how, "well armed with a stick", he "would run half-way in their direction, testing the evil in comparative safety" .[239] They came to embody the threat of being "kidnapped" and of being attacked, defaced or dismantled. Unable to cope with his objects of guilt, he looked for structural solutions in the environment that might be able to exorcise them. After seeing a procession of soldiers in the park he had started to feel hopeful for the park's recovery, and (speaking as his childhood self) decided: "once and for all I now put up the

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[235] See Klein's essay on 'Mourning and its Relation to Manic Depressive States' (Mitchell, Juliet, *The Selected Melanie Klein*, (New york: Simon and Schuster, 1987)
[236] Melanie Klein, 'Mourning and its Relation to Manic Depressive States', in Juliet Mitchell (ed.), *The Selected Melanie Klein*, (New york: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.153
[237] Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 1922
[238] Ibid. p.144
[239] Ibid. , p.144

railings inside myself. [...] I will follow out the most exacting inner imperative," whereby "the astonishing hideous pile of the Hyde Park hotel, so often figuring on the limits of vision, shall fall defeated below man's horizon".[240] His attempted revival of the park was, of course, an exercise in self-betterment. Stokes was attempting to erase or destroy the aspects of himself that he associated with the 'parkees', and the potential for himself to be 'like them'. "Projected onto the face of the park and there apprehended," Stokes's inner segregation was "redeemed slightly – and here figured a half-concealment of the most profound anxiety – by a morbid melodrama".[241] In other words, as a child Stokes used social difference to dislocate the conflicts in himself to a societal scale where they would no longer compromise his personal integrity. If he could pretend that the remains were outside of him and exorcise them there, it would save him from an inner contradiction that threatened to dissolve his sense of self.

Stokes's encounters with the parkees, like everything else in the park, is a map of his own thought patterns – patterns which also came to define his critical life. Much like his cyclical attempt to either sublimate or erase the negative aspects of the park, in his attempts to gain control of his thoughts, Stokes seemed to produce ever more rigid forms of thought that must discard more and more in order to ensure their efficacy. But his cyclical attempts to think himself out of this state could only ever reproduce it, as every new act of conception required an act of destruction, whose negated objects later haunted him. His attempt to 'oust Hyde Park' and replace it with a clearer landscape (embodied for him by Rapallo) mirrors that of the child in Klein's writing who, when he "came across the cart which had been damaged the last time and upon its contents, [...] quickly pushed both aside and covered them with other toys"; "in thus throwing them out of the room [was] indicating an expulsion, both of the damaged objects and of [its] own sadism".[242] In other words, in order to cope with his anxiety about loss and violence, Stokes repeats the violence itself; he attempts to eradicate the pain of superfluity by re-turning its subjects into a non-entity. Not unlike the belief, in certain kinds of political thinking, that suffering can be eradicated by the very same measures that produced it: in the way that capitalism continuously tries to exorcise the negative value it has produced, having claimed that poverty is not and has never been an aspect of itself.

Insofar as inside Out was written during the mid 1940s during Hitler's rise to power, its attempt to map out the structures of obsessional reparation are important for more than just Stokes's philosophical life. This excessive need for totality which Stokes identified in himself was a psychical pattern, he realised, that might also manifest itself in more sinister ways. It was possible, that is, for those subjects to project what they could not incorporate or tolerate onto other people, and try to exorcise the 'badness' from the world through acts of political violence:

> In desperation men turn their hate against their hate: in desperation, too, magnifying it to be even greater than it is, they unloose their hate upon the world: they surreptitiously fix upon an object. That shall be hated, tortured, destroyed. And that, that artificial object of hate, stands for the hate in themselves. That they would project, [expectorate?], destroy. In so doing they may use their hate with joy, in hating their hate. Instead of themselves they torture others, and hate them the more because in so doing they hate

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[240] Gowing, 1978, p.152
[241] Ibid. p.148
[242] Mitchell, 1986, pp.103-104

themselves afresh. More and more must be tortured.[243]

Understanding such cycles had arguably become more urgent for Stokes following his friendship and subsequent break with Pound. By the time that *Inside Out* was published in 1947, Pound's support for Mussolini's fascism had grown into support for Hitler's openly and more brutally totalitarian regime, the treason charges for which had led to Pound's institutionalisation. Contrary to his relative silence on Mussolini's administration, Stokes roundly rejected Hitler's world view, and while working on *Inside Out*, threw himself into assisting the war efforts. It is unclear to what extent he and Pound spoke, but the encounter left a lasting imprint on his work – namely, a greater understanding of how the pursuit of reparation could tip over into a form of violence in itself. In a diary from 1942, Stokes wrote "Ezra cannot wait, cannot make the one important renunciation of today: belief in the devil as well as in God. For him, darkness and fears are the devil. And so <u>he</u> ends up [...] an intellectual if you please saying ''The reds' (in Spain) are bankers and Jews' or 'Bankers and Jews are 'reds''.[244] The implication here is that Pound's idealism, his complete rejection of anything that threatened to disrupt it, had led him to be ignorant to his own destructive nature. Pound's refused to accept or acknowledge destruction as a necessary aspect of life, and thus he was unable to own and face up to the destruction that was the result of his own reparative efforts. In short, he did not and would not recognise that his own heaven was facilitated by someone else's hell.

As such, Stokes identified, through Klein, a terrible irony inherent to utopian and idealistic thinking: that "the denial of primary aggression, perhaps as a form of illusion or as a sinful fault of structure", actually led to its unchecked workings.[245] Stokes's conclusion, after analysis with klein, was the urgent need to resist fantasies of ideal wholeness, whether logical, aesthetic or ideological. "One renounces the misguided heroic cause, Fascism for instance, not because there is anything more stirring today or tomorrow, but because to renounce it [...] is the first and weary step to a heroism less misguided, less destructive".[246]

As chapter 5 of this thesis will discuss at length, obsessional reparation – the endless but unfulfillable striving for wholeness – was not the only possible result of the depressive position. It was also the gateway to a genuinely reparative reconciliation with the world. As such, there are two kinds of reparation for Klein: pseudo-reparation, that is 'manic' or 'obsessional' reparation – the destructive cycle by which the subject attempts to reach an impossible state of resolution – and 'true reparation', which can only consist in a reconciliation to reality through the acceptance of ambivalence, loss and imperfection. This form of reparation, as Stokes puts it towards the end of *Inside Out*, requires an attitude to meaning that can "allow necessity to fantasy but eschew indoctrination", can "admit that love's antagonist [...] is no mere extraneous devil".[247] It requires the subject to accept the guilt and loss associated with their own contradictory and destructive impulses. This form of reparation was painful and difficult to achieve, but it was the

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[243] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 12,* ref number TGA 8816.12, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

[244] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 12,* ref number TGA 8816.12, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

[245] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.165

[246] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 12,* ref number TGA 8816.12, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

[247] Ibid. p.165

means through which the subject was able to gain a genuine reconciliation to reality and to others. It was only through the hopeless pursuit of pseudo-reparative states that Stokes came to see that wholeness or sameness really had nothing to do with reparation. Wholeness, rather, was the demon of temptation that reparation had to face and ultimately reject. This is the crucial difficulty of Klein's work on reparation: it does not actually involve the resolution of conflict at all, but rather, our capacity to tolerate conflict. A psyche at peace with the world is not one that has somehow managed to erase the interplay of forces (and with it their own anxiety), it is a psyche that is able to hold conflict, to see it, to think it, and not succumb to the urge to disavow it either through forced resolution or repression of certain aspects of the world. "Each man struggles to cohere, to overcome the splitting schizoid tendencies. […] In man alone, impossible loyalty may confront undying resentment to one object".[248] After Klein, Stokes came to see reparation as a struggle to hold opposites in equilibrium, and therefore to see the full complexity of things without submitting to an anxiety that seeks to resolve them.

As such, Klein's reparation is not about the attainment of ideals, but about the reconciliation of ideals – people, objects, cultural states – with their necessary failure. This could operate on several levels: for the child, it was the re-integration of the nourishing mother with the punishing mother, and concomitantly, the reconciliation of their destructive impulses with their libidinal desire for life. As such, Klein makes the radical suggestion that reparation does not really feel 'good', or at least, not completely good. Klein's account of the first reparative moment relies heavily on ambivalent, bitter-sweet feelings. In such a moment, "the synthesis between the loved and hated aspects of the complete object gives rise to feelings of mourning and guilt which imply vital advances in the infant's emotional and intellectual life".[249] In Klein's account of infancy, the child's healthy relationship with the world comes not from an ideal mother, but from their realization that she is neither completely good nor completely bad – when, at one and the same time, the child must accept the mother's failure to be ideal and their own cruelty at having despised her for it. Sedgwick writes that "another word for reparation is love" – not ideal love, but real love, in the face of failure.[250] Other words for reparation might also be 'forgiveness' and 'regret' (or, as Winnicott preferred 'concern' or 'ruth').[251] It describes that pull we viscerally feel towards another being – or even an object – when we realise we have judged them too cruelly. In the case of human beings, what this implies is the ability to forgive another's imperfections, and, in the process to forgive one's own, to identify with the failure of the other person to be ideal. In relation to the world and to objects in general, what this implies is the capacity to accept the lack of resolution inherent to reality, and to recognise one's own unresolved self as an aspect of it. In such a process, the subject is reconciled to reality in the sense that they feel themselves a part of it, identified with its imperfect nature. This poignant contradiction is what Likierman describes as the combination of 'tragedy' and 'morality' in Klein; reparation in her work is an ambivalent combination of disillusionment and love, or more importantly, a state in which disillusionment produces and is crucial to, love.

In recognising the key difference between these different orientations towards the world, Klein helped Stokes to a crucial realisation that permanently changed his perspective on the nature of reparation in his work: in his Renaissance texts, Stokes's desire for coherence or completeness actually mitigated the associated desire he

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[248] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.3*, 1978, p.235
[249] Mitchell, *The Selected Melanie Klein,* 1986, p.178
[250] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 2003, p.128
[251] See 'The Development of the Capacity for Concern' in D.W. Winnicott, *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, (London: Karnac, 1965)

expressed for a reconciliation to reality. Real objects, and a 'real' relationship with them, could provide him with no such resolution, and as such, his image of Italy as a completely sublimated and reconciled world was always at odds with the more realistic conditions of the carving aesthetic: to carve involves a cutting away, and thus a loss. This mitigation was twofold: first of all, the world itself was contradictory and unresolvable – he could not 'work out' and thus completely erase its conflicts – but secondly, because the nature of his perceptual relationship with reality was itself ambivalent. A reconciliation to reality, for Klein, involved not only the holding together of contradictory qualities within one object, but the subject's associated acceptance of the inability to 'know' or assimilate what is other. As a result of Stokes's failure to recognise this essential fissure, each time that he tried to reconcile himself to reality he struggled to tolerate the lack of resolution therein, and began slowly to withdraw into a fantasy image of totality. Stokes's goals, through aesthetics and through writing had not changed. What he had always been seeking was a renewed connection with reality and with other people. But Klein had imparted to his aesthetic theory and his metaphysical position, a newly self-reflexive element: the knowledge that, in order to truly reconcile himself to reality, he must also reconcile himself to the partial failure of this endeavour.

Inherent to this reframing of Stokes's Renaissance texts is also a reconfigured approach to Bradley's philosophy. During the years when he began the Renaissance texts, Stokes had thought of Bradley's contradiction of thought, almost compulsively, as something to be overcome. But Klein had reframed it emphatically as a productive contradiction that must be tolerated, and that cannot be resolved. Indeed, this was something that Bradley himself had made clear. Though he presented an unsurpassable metaphysical contradiction, he did not intend his work to be read as a pronouncement of the end of thought. Rather, he asked that it read as a call for the continued apprehension of truth in the knowledge of its partial failure: "I am so bold as to believe that we have a knowledge of the absolute, certain and real though I am sure that our comprehension is miserably incomplete. But I dissent emphatically from the conclusion that, because incomplete, it is worthless".[252] For Bradley, those that objected to the pursuit of understanding on the grounds of its contradictory nature could have nothing to add besides a continued mourning for the insufficiency of thought. At the end of Inside Out, Stokes makes a similar reflection about the nature of sense-making: "We are," Stokes writes, "perpetually trying to manage, to harness the figures within".[253] But making sense of things in order to "keep up one's morale" "is not to be despised". "This instinct" he writes, "is an inevitable component of life"; "but it is no longer necessary to confuse it with the quest for truth, although practically everyone still does so".[254] The generation of meaning was a fruitful act in itself, and ought not to be considered a means of breaking down the productive bounds between the self and the world.

It is this commitment to meaning in the face of ambivalence – and despite its lack of resolution – that led Eliot to read Bradley's philosophy as a call to faith: "metaphysics" he wrote "depends upon our ability and good-will to grasp appearance and reality as one".[255] It depends, in other words, on our unverifiable belief that perception does attain something of reality; that the world and the mind are to some extent continuous. Indeed, Eliot proposes something almost like the empathetic identification with the

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[252] F.H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p.3
[253] Gowing, 1978, p.167
[254] Stokes, *Notebook 12.*
[255] From T.S. Eliot's 'Leibniz's Monads and Bradley's Finite Centres' (1916), quoted from Donald J. Childs, *T.S.Eliot: Mystic, Son and Lover*, (London; Bloomsbury, 1997), p.161

vulnerabilities of others that Klein described as the essence of reparation: "the assertion that two worlds are the same is an act of faith to the effect that the two are not the same"; "two types of object can only be held together by an act of faith".[256] Such a position held the potential for a renewal of collective meaning, insofar as one's doubt gave way to faith: faith, first of all, that things can be understood, and secondly, faith that one's perceptions and feelings can be grasped, although imperfectly, by another person.

Through Klein, Stokes eventually came to a similar conclusion. The last section of Stokes's *Inside Out* is a characteristically incongruous reflection on the art and life of Cézanne. But as is generally the case with Stokes, it turns out not to be incongruous at all. For Stokes, Cézanne's painterly process came to be the ultimate model of the reparative attitude Klein had described, insofar as he tolerated and even rejoiced in, the lack of resolution inherent to objects and to their perception. In this section, Stokes argues that Cézanne was, in spirit if not in reality, a classical or 'Mediterranean' artist :

> classicism in the sense of a truly Mediterranean art [...] is 'close to nature', far closer than is a great deal of romantic art which treats of nature as a raw projection of emotional states, of the inside of man. This classical art springs from a precise love and a passionate identification with what is other, insisting upon an order there, strong, enduring and final *as being an other thing* [...] without the arriere pensee of 'thinking makes it so'"[257]

Cézanne's work, in other words, is a testament to the simple belief that a world exists beyond, continuous with, but not fully assimilable to, one's own mind. In retrospect, Stokes had perhaps realised that this was the reason for his relief upon arrival in the Italian landscape. Not that everything could be reconciled, but simply a conviction that the world had a real and meaningful existence outside of his mind. The peculiar quality of Cézanne's paintings – which led him to be considered, by Clive Bell among many others as the "[inspiration] for a whole age" – was not only the struggle between objects, and between the self and the world, but the respect for that ongoing struggle, as bodied forth in the quality of his work.[258] Cézanne, though a painter, embodied the carving aesthetic insofar as he was interested in a communion with his material, at the expense of his own control: as Stokes put it, "a sudden or conceptual management of appearances was entirely alien to him".[259] Cézanne did not seek to gain control or omnipotence over or through any of the phenomena he sought to understand.

In this respect, Stokes in fact shares a perspective on Cézanne with Bell, whom he had formerly criticised with vitriol. In his 1922 book *Since Cézanne*, Bell had similarly claimed that Cézanne's importance came from his commitment to truth. He "was direct because he set himself a task which admitted of no adscititious flourishes":[260]

> Gazing at the familiar landscape, Cézanne came to understand it, not as a mode of light, nor yet as a player in the game of human life, but as an end in itself and an object of intense emotion [...] it was in what he saw that he discovered a sublime architecture haunted by that Universal which informs every particular". [261]

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[256] Ibid. p.162
[257] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.174
[258] Bell, Clive, *Art,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.199
[259] Ibid. p.175
[260] Clive Bell, *Since Cézanne*, (London; Harcourt Brace, 1922), p.14
[261] Ibid. p.208, 210

Stokes and Bell, then, seem to agree insofar as they felt Cézanne was concerned with the existence of a 'whole' world that was vaguely but not perfectly available to perception. It is perhaps worth speculating that Stokes disagreed with Bell only on the grounds of a contradiction between Bell's account of Cézanne's own method, and the one he himself employed to understand it. In the preface to *Art*, Bell had written that "a work of art is the product of strange activities in the human mind. In so far as we are spectators and connosieurs we need not bother about these; all we are concerned with is the finished product".[262] But later in the book, he also recognises that Cézanne's art was based on an opposite attitude to the act of creation and its product: "for Cézanne every picture was a means, a step, a stick, a hold, a stepping stone – something he was ready to discard as soon as it had served its purpose. He had no use for his own pictures".[263] The painting itself was a mere result of the endless process of working out between himself and the world, to which he seemed addicted. Likewise, for Stokes, the process was all; it was the sentiment behind a painting's production – its metaphysics – that produced its perhaps subliminal but always present meaning. In 1937's *Colour and Form*, Stokes's first work of explicit art criticism to follow his analysis with Klein, he clarifies his disagreement with Bell's aesthetics with the assertion that "equal insistence [of all a work's parts] should not be conceived as something imposed upon pre-existent form of design, but as the end result of a certain attitude to nature".[264] For Stokes, Cézanne's attainment of 'Significant Form' was not the outcome of a mathematical interplay of relations between lines and colours, but the outcome of his love for objects outside of himself, and his sincere, though not entirely successful attempt to understand them. As such, his major objection to Bell may have been that he attempted to force an abstract, almost mathematical framework out of art that he felt was a deliberate resistance to such thinking.

Following Stokes's analysis, he never made significant mention of Sigismondo again. Cézanne , it seems, had come to replace him as a reparative model. In Cézanne, Stokes saw the same dogged will to understanding and expression that he had projected onto Sigismondo – he embodied the same attempt to reconcile himself to reality by making sense of the world, and by bearing that object out into the material plane it hoped to grasp. Stokes's image of Sigismondo, however, sought a kind of understanding and expression that might triumph over nature. Sigismondo was a master of its particles, a microcosm of all that was, and not, in some senses, a particle himself, incapable of collapsing into 'other' things. The essential difference in Stokes's praise of Cézanne is that he identifies in the father of modern painting, a respect for the ambivalence and contradiction inherent, not only to objects, but to his relationship with them. He cultivated an appreciation for the necessary interdependence of things, as well as the interdependence of 'appearance and reality', and as such, his paintings were testament to the fact of individual objects and persons, like the mind and the world, as singular entities that were none-the-less engaged in a continual exchange. For Cézanne this was not a source of frustration – rather, it was his incapacity to fully reconcile other objects with his own being that he remained fascinated with it. Stokes quotes Gasquet's account of the "lonely ageing painter" and his fascination with the pure fact of difference: "he picked up a handful of moist earth and squeezed it to bring it closer to him, to mix it more intimately with his own reinvigorated blood. He drank from the shallow

[262] Bell, Clive, *Art,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.40
[263] Ibid. p.210
[264] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.2*, 1978, p.10

brooks".[265] Cézanne jubilantly inhabited the contradiction of being that Stokes, at times, could not tolerate, and as such, he managed to sustain the attitude that was essential to Kleinian reparation: the love of, and reconciliation with, an imperfect object, *without* trying to rectify its imperfectness.

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[265] Ibid. p.174

'Mythical Remainders': Alienation and Reparation in the Machine Age

By 1938, when Stokes ended his daily sessions with Klein, he had transformed both his cultural and aesthetic outlook. Through a new understanding of the ways in which reparative need could itself become destructive, and subsequently deny the subject a sense of well-being, he had realised that a reparative reconciliation to reality, whether in art or elsewhere, must be based on respect for the necessary limits and failures of other people and things – that is, the necessity of decay, resistance, ambivalence, as well as their separateness from himself. Though Stokes had transformed this into the basis for an aesthetic attitude, that aesthetic attitude was, in turn, a model for a balanced mind that might, were a greater proportion of individuals to achieve it, pave the way for a less destructive society. "One day men will learn to think of sanity as an aesthetic achievement" he wrote, in his 1964 essay 'Living in Ticino'.[266] A civilisation based on the attitude to other things and people modelled by Cézanne would be less destructive; if people could tolerate the inherent vulnerability and difference of others from themselves – even find meaning in these things – they would have a better sense of control over, and greater provision for, conflict, as well as a decreased tendency towards the grandiose self-image that precipitated violence.

Despite this ostensibly hopeful outlook, however, other insights afforded Stokes by psychoanalysis – particularly about the dialectical relationship between the mind and the world – also troubled the possibility of such a state coming to pass. Particularly, his reflections on Hyde Park had reinforced for him that the cultural landscape itself was changing, and that the kind of reparative attitude that Klein and Cézanne had differently modelled was increasingly difficult to attain. Cézanne had modelled his perspective after nature, whose own forms were in some ways models of Klein's reparative attitude. Organic forms, those that were subject to disintegration and decay, were an image of the productive vulnerability that the Kleinian child must learn to tolerate. Auden, for example, considered limestone a homely or comforting form because he saw in its porousness and susceptibility to change, his own self image:

> If it form the one landscape that we, the inconstant ones,
> Are consistently homesick for, this is chiefly
> Because it dissolves in water. Mark these rounded slopes
> With their surface fragrance of thyme and, beneath,
> A secret system of caves and conduits

In London, however, Stokes was surrounded by objects and forces that sought to deny or to rid themselves of conflict, ambiguity and vulnerability. The absolutist ideologies of Speakers Corner; the displays of military organisation and imperial power; and, most troublingly, an increasing faith in the organising powers of the machine, presented a distinctly invulnerable vision of human living. As such, Stokes increasingly felt that the modern landscape negated the possibility of the reparative attitude Klein described:

> Was there 'objective' justification for the hopelessness I felt in urban life, in
> suburban life, in polite or semi-polite country life; justification, I mean,
> warranted to every civilized person who, for some reason or other was not

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[266] Adrian Stokes, 'Living in Ticino 1947-50', *Art and Literature*, no 1, 1964

equipped with adequate defences? And what did the more normal man pay for his 'adequate defences'? I doubted and I doubt whether the material by and large of ideal inside things are to be easily found outside in terms of modern cities, or whether this outside can be easily converted into suitable inside nourishment.[267]

The question was whether Stokes's excessive need for repair was a symptom of his own neurosis, or whether his own neurosis was a symptom of a worsening cultural state of affairs that he could not help but internalise. As Stokes saw it, modern life was characterised by its lack of suitable models for sanity. Far from reflecting the vulnerabilities and limitations of the eco-system of which humans were a part, the urban milieu projected a fantasy of humanity's removal from them. "Nothing in the daily surroundings spoke of an accumulated heritage, of treasure wrestled from nature [...] whereas in the country we may always see the quick reversion to weed and jungle".[268] Cultivation of the material world had turned into colonisation and limitless exploitation of its resources to serve increasingly unnatural ideals, and this in turn fed human fantasies of triumph over nature, as well as over certain parts of the self now considered base. It was a similar problem of attempted self-transcendence that Spender, in 1963, would argue to be a central problem of the machine age:

> Many things that formerly signified rootedness and permanence – trees, rocks, the rotating seasons of country life – today have become significant of their opposite: the destruction of unspoiled nature by machinery, the breaking of links connecting the present with the past. [...] Not, of course, that the Nature of 'nature poetry' had ceased to exist. But there is less sense that it is organically continuous with the most perceptive contemporary sensibility.[269]

It was not necessarily that the organic world had been overcome or destroyed, but merely that our attitude to living was no longer 'continuous' with it. Similarly, Stokes wrote that, "for those who are under the spell of rootlessness, machines and modern cities tend to encourage an unreal view".[270] Instead of the limits and vulnerabilities of the natural world, there was a "sense of awful measurelessness"; "as a child I would have needed adult intelligence to have imagined easily that London had grown and possessed a limit".[271] The city, as such, was an image of human power and self-mastery that was at odds with human reality. The result, as Spender similarly felt, was a disjoint between human culture and human nature, between the literal and metaphorical 'architecture' of western society, and the (inalienable) vulnerabilities of animal life.

This presented Stokes with problem that the second half of this thesis is occupied with. For Klein, reparation was a process of reconciling the psyche to reality; but Stokes was ambivalent about reconciling himself to such a reality if it would only give way to a more troubling form of alienation – namely, from himself. In short, the modern world had left him with a choice between two different forms of dissociation: to acclimatise oneself to the contemporary landscape, and accept one's alienation from nature; or on the other hand, to dissociate oneself from the urban milieu and retreat, either into the

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[267] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.159
[268] Ibid. p.227
[269] Stephen Spender, *The Struggle of the Modern*, (Los Angeles; University of California Press, 1963), p.143
[270] Ibid. p.226
[271] Ibid. p.226

inner life, or else, like Cézanne, to a meditative focus on the organic world. By the time *Inside Out* was published, it seems that Stokes had at least temporarily chosen the latter. In 1938, he had left London for St Ives, Cornwall, where he would live until the mid 1950s. This was primarily a necessary escape from London in anticipation of the looming dangers of war – in a manifestation of the strange contrast between creaturely life and the newly omnipotent structures of human making, Stokes's wife, the painter Margaret Mellis, had planned to give birth in a limestone cave in the event of an air raid. But the move to Cornwall was also a timely means of escaping an urban landscape that, even without the dangers of war, Stokes felt was designed to drive its inhabitants to a state of self-estrangement.

Alongside completing his work on *Venice* and *Inside Out*, from St Ives Stokes wrote two other texts with very similar paradigmatic concerns: his book on *Cézanne* (1947), *Art and Science* (1949), and his second autobiographical text, *Smooth and Rough* (1951). As the chapter that follows explores in more depth, this period of Stokes's writing was characterised by his concern with the estrangement of ideal structures from the realities of the inner life. Particularly, the latter two were concerned with a growing divide between rationality and subjectivity – or as Stokes sometimes put it, rationality and fantasy. This was manifested explicitly for Stokes through the growing division of science from art, but he also felt that it was a battle inherent to newly emerging conceptions of representation, and to the rational ideologies of the mid-century. In modern conceptions of language, as well as in Hitler's rhetoric – and the scientific ideals of the Nazi regime more generally – he perceived there to be a similar battle to free the rational human subject and its objects from the corrupting influence of emotional and fantasy life. As such, Stokes came to see the machine age as the collective manifestation of the split and conflicted Kleinian psyche – a self in a battle for self-transcendence, resulting in the dissociation of unwanted aspects of the self.

The clearest example of Stokes's attempt to grapple with this paradigm was his second autobiographical text, 1951's *Smooth and Rough.* This text is generally considered the sister text to *Inside Out*; interposing descriptions of Stokes's family life in St Ives with psychoanalytic reflections on the rise of technological power, it is a similar combination of personal reflection, aesthetic theory and psychoanalytic cultural critique. Conceptually, however, *Smooth and Rough* has a much clearer structure: alternating between two distinct aesthetic experiences – 'The Sense of Home' and 'The Machine Age' – it recasts Stokes's earlier distinction between carving and modelling in Kleinian terms, and applies it to the modernist milieu Stokes had arguably always intended it to describe. In his later-written sections of the Renaissance texts, the carving and modelling distinction was intended to distinguish between two different attitudes towards the world: namely, between that which sought to understand and reconcile the self to materiality, and that which attempted to overcome or transcend it. After his analysis, however, Stokes seemed to feel that this was a somewhat tenuous symbolic attempt to describe, in terms of Renaissance sculpture, a sense of discomfort he felt from his own time. In *Smooth and Rough*, Stokes reframes this distinction more explicitly as one between 'reparation' and 'alienation', between the integrated and fragmented or split psyche. Rather than casting these in explicitly theoretical and psychoanalytic terms, Stokes describes the embodied experience of these two states, almost as two aesthetic categories that were respectively embodied for him by 'The Sense of Home' and 'The Machine Age'. This text is composed of alternating chapters on urban and rural life – the others being 'Houses and Machines', 'The Sense of Rebirth' and 'The Sense of Loss' – which distinguish between these two major contrasting feelings of his life in modernity: being at home in the world and being dissociated from it.

The organic, integrated or reparative vision of life was embodied for Stokes by the

landscape of St Ives. In these chapters, he describes his feeling of connection with the landscape, or more importantly, his feeling that the landscape reflected the nature of his inner world:

> Pools restore images of quiescent inner states whereby the sea which fills and renounces only to return, assumes the character of the protean mind. We infer on a cliff our separateness, recognizing tufts visited by bees who bring the pertinacity of a closed world like figuration on a bare expanse of cloth. [272]

Through the different qualities and objects of this landscape, Stokes was able to recognise the varied states and patterns of the mind. As such, these sections describe a feeling of territorial rootedness, a sensation of complete immersion in, and psychological communion with, his environment. In these years, Stokes was confined to market gardening, through which he came to feel a "strong tie to the Cornish soil", and took a position as part of the home guard where, "staring for hours into the night face of the sea", Stokes was forced to inhabit Cézanne's vigilant communion with the landscape.[273] Though such an image might seem idyllic, Stokes did not of course intend to imply that the 'sense of home' necessarily meant the banishment of negative, disruptive or violent experiences; on the contrary, it was landscape whose negative and destructive elements reflected his own, and whose conflicts he recognised as expressive of conflicts within the world and himself: "the sporadic tides of war were superimposed upon [the sea's] ceaselessness", and "if the sky is sullen, then this heaving, dark, cold breast of livid tone conjoins with a deep unrest within".[274] Still, however, this "brings ease, since all the vastness of sea and sky play out emotion with various magnitude".[275] Conversely, in Stokes's chapters on the urban landscape, he describes a feeling of disjointedness in which aspects of his inner world go starved and unreflected by the landscape. In these sections, Stokes reflects on the technological landscape of modernity as inherently traumatic to the subject, composed as it was of objects and movements alien and irreconcilable to the human psyche. "Our ancient towns" he writes, "suffer movement and noise in a mechanical form alien to the stones"; and yet, it was "impossible to disconnect the sinister knowledge that it was all made by man".[276]

Stokes had always been fascinated by man's capacity to create structures that turned on him, a problem that he felt had been neglected by critiques of modernity. The crucial question, he writes, is "how man *created*, rather than how he suffers, a culture in which he is so far from home".[277] Stokes imagined the modernist landscape as something like a Frankenstein's monster – a once loved project which had taken on a violent life of its own. Although the modernist landscape was distinctly man made, "we may well feel that the general timbre of the urban environment has not been willed".[278] Though the industrial city had been built by humanity, it had now grown into something alien that was actively hostile to our inner life. "We of this century have suffered a pressure from reality which finds the spirit of man unprepared: or so it seems, in spite of his creating

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[272] Ibid. p.217
[273] Gowing, Lawrence (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes*, vol.2, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.223
[274] Ibid. p.219
[275] Ibid. p.221
[276] Ibid. p.230
[277] Ibid. p. 151
[278] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, (1973), p.151

that pressure with inventiveness. The discovery of atomic power brings to a climax our situation of imaginative unpreparedness for the environment ensuing from the industrial revolution".[279] This was the particular cause of alienation in Twentieth Century life, he argued, and what made it so distinct from other periods of human history: it was an unprecedented situation in which the creations of man had outstripped him. The atomic bomb was beyond us in the sense that its potential for destruction was past human understanding. But also, because the knowledge and self-control required to prevent that destruction was at odds with the irrational and hateful aspects of human nature. Such inventions seemed to demand that human beings aspire to impossible ethical and rational standards at odds with their conflictual inner lives.

Stokes's answer to the question of how this came about was that mankind had fallen prey to fantasies of his own omnipotence and self-mastery. The Enlightenment period had given way to a belief that we were beyond nature, perhaps that we could overcome it, which had resulted in man's ignorance to his own vulnerability, and his failure to recognise the irrational and destructive aspects of the self. In his early writing, Stokes had recognised this impulse in the rational structures of what he called 'The Common Heritage' – teleologically oriented philosophies that aimed for the realisation of thought, and thus, for salvation. But for Stokes, such fantasies of omnipotence had reached their ultimate expression in the form of the machine. More than just an object, for Stokes the machine was an aesthetic and psychological phenomenon – it reflected a certain style of living and thinking *beyond* the limits of nature that had begun to infiltrate all parts of cultural life. It was symbolic of certain kinds of thought, or certain fantasies of thought's capacity to order the world. As Marx writes in the *Grundrisse*, machines are not merely a means of physical organisation, they "are the organs of the human brain, created by the human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified".[280]

Citing Hans Sachs and Lewis Mumford, Stokes traces a history of our relationship with machines, from our pre-modern aversion to the uncanny of automatic power, through our slow surrender to its promise of omnipotence. He depicts mechanisation almost as an addiction that the human psyche could only resist for so long – its absence in earlier stages of human civilisation being more a product of "the inhibiting power of anxiety" than want of knowledge.[281] In the Renaissance, he claims, it was as if civilisation was so afraid of the seductive pull of mechanical power that it held off on releasing it. In the Twentieth Century however, under the impetus of certain scientific discoveries, the human psyche gave in to the allure of its own potential supremacy. In doing so, Stokes argues that humanity instigated a new form of anxiety, wherein it was beholden to forms of organisational power that it could not really rise to. As a result, Stokes describes how human civilisation began to generate dissociation precisely through its desire for self-perfection and complete understanding. Modernity is characterised, Stokes writes, by "guilt and compulsiveness from the split mind which, using the weapon of omnipotence, has joined in pillaging the mother's body, in squandering the Earth's resources, in projecting the automaton".[282] As a metaphor, the machine perfectly expressed to Sokes the neurotic cycles of the Modernist psyche; it marks the point in history where the pursuit of a perfect world began to destroy the object it was trying to repair.

Stokes felt uneasy about representational and theoretical forms that sought control beyond their means. His first text, in fact, had been the result of a dissatisfaction with the excessively systematic structures of philosophical thought. In 1925, of the carvings on

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[279] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol 2.*, 1978, p.181
[280] Marx, 2005, p.xviii
[281] Lawrence Gowing (ed.), *The Critical Writings of Adrian Stokes vol. II,* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), p.249
[282] Ibid. p.249

Florentine tombs, he writes "[the form] is exact, worked out […] It is also carefully logical not a grain of love in it. The enamel itself is sickly and grudging, without a [trace] of impromptu. No ghost of an apparition".[283] This sculpture was "not risen from stone, [but] <u>turned</u> to stone".[284] The Florentine tombs bely a vision of coherence that congeals itself to death, unable to live up to its own promise of unity and exactitude without sacrificing something fundamental. In their precision, they cast off or destroy some aspect of the world in the attempt to perfect it. In other words, they were the result of too much 'working out' – of a desire for perfection beyond organic possibility.

In the wake of Klein, what Stokes is essentially arguing here is that the machine, or the cultural fetishisation of mechanical thinking and mechanical efficiency, was a collective form of manic or obsessional reparation. The machine and its associated fantasies of the human mind, emerged from a compulsive but always thwarted belief that human civilisation might be 'fixed' if only it could eradicate and triumph over certain parts of the human condition. As such, though it seemed oriented towards cutting up and dividing, it was an attempt to recover a lost state of coherence and self-understanding through the erasure of contradiction. This kind of thinking took many different forms for Stokes and, as chapter 4 will explore, was as much a fantasy of the artist as the scientist – particularly in avant-garde aesthetics, Stokes argued, there was a fantasy of escaping or retracting from the tyranny of the rational mind. Such an attempt to recover the 'wholeness' of the self, as I will come to later, was a response to the destruction wrought by 'mechanical' fantasies. In this sense, the modern milieu so badly in need of reparation had itself come about as a fantasy of repair. This latter form of reparation specifically focused on over-defined or systematic forms that, in their grasping for a sense of resolution, expelled important aspects of the world they tried to describe.

In some respects, then, Stokes had come full circle. In addressing the dissociation of ideal structures from the realities of material and psychical life, he had returned to the concerns of *Ariadne*, and thus to his original object of repair. In his first book, he had set his intention to find an alternative to the "revolting brutalities" of logical thought that, as he saw it, "[could not] contain the inspiration of life".[285] "Systematic thought" he wrote, "seems to be a vain and over-hasty stretching forth of the hand to grasp something which it can never come near grasping unaided and alone".[286] In these early years of his career, however, Stokes had no helpful frameworks with which to understand his complaints against abstract language and concepts – only a vague feeling of unreality that he sought by many means to counteract. Through Klein, Stokes was able to understand that logical language was symbolic of a certain orientation towards meaning (a manic reparative one) that he himself was prone to. In *Inside Out,* Stokes's attempt to distinguish between the machine and the tool provides a neat summary of this orientation: "machines, for the most part, work or they break down".[287] Unlike the tool, which was flexible, the machine had a one track mind; it was unaccepting of deviation or uncertainty, and as such, it was the symbolic opposite of Klein's reparative state. As opposed to the acceptance of conflict and ambiguity, it symbolised absolutist tendencies in thought, black and white distinctions.

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[283] Adrian Stokes, *Notebook 14-16 loose leafs,* ref number TGA 8816.14, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)
[284] Ibid.
[285] Adrian Stokes, *The Thread of Ariadne*, (London; Faber & Faber, 1925), p.11; p.8
[286] Ibid. p.69
[287] Gowing, Critical Writings vol. 2, 1978, p.

Like any form of manic reparation, however, the machine, both figuratively and literally, only seemed to create more objects of guilt and destruction, which it must resort to sublimating or erasing. This was something that Stokes observed as an effect of the machine in real life, as well as in its symbolic 'logical' workings, writing in *Inside Out* that "the machine, designed to reduce work, has tended always to entail more work"; it is a system desperately trying to outrun its own failures, he writes, "like an unsuccessful neurosis".[288] At around the same time as Stokes, the similarly polymathic writer George Steiner – whose work, as I will return to in chapter 4, Stokes was familiar with – had observed a similar cycle in the progressive drives of modern life . In his essay collection of 1971, *Bluebeard's Castle*, he described how, in modernity, "[exaction] hammers at human consciousness, demanding that it transcend itself, that it reach out into a light of understanding so pure that it is itself blinding".[289] Much like Stokes, Steiner was preoccupied with the tendency of such fantasies to produce more of the thing they were designed to eradicate. "We know now" he writes "that material progress is implicated in a dialectic of concomitant damage, that it destroys irreparable equilibria between society and nature".[290] Such a structure repeated itself in many different ways across the modern world, for example, in the way that "improvement in the chance and duration of individual life, as brought on by medical tech, [...] fuelled the cycle of population hunger".[291] In denying that these negative effects were a part of their own system, a result of the progress and not an impediment to it, such systems were equivalent to the child in Klein's work who cannot accept responsibility for their own failures and destructive actions, and resorts to even further attempts to deny the growing store of guilt.

This is why, for Klein, one of the major workings of obsessional reparation was 'splitting'. In order to maintain a belief in the efficacy of ideal objects, the subject must deny or hide the bad objects that were its necessary counterpart. As a response to the pain of the depressive position, "the persecuting and the good objects are kept wide apart in the child's mind. When [...] they come close together, the ego has over and over again recourse to that mechanism—so important for the development of the relations to objects – namely a splitting of its imagos into loved and hated, that is to say, into good and dangerous ones".[292] Splitting, however, was a temporary and unsuccessful mechanism of protection against the dissolution of ideals. The aspects of the world and of the self that obsessional and manic defences tried to eradicate could not really be eradicated, and as such, all that such mechanisms achieved was a temporary illusion of their potential erasure, sustained by a fantasy that the 'bad' parts of oneself or of others could be separated and banished from the 'good'. A crucial means of defense against the pain of real reparation, splitting was a process by which the subject was able to retreat from feelings of confusion, ambivalence, and the associated feeling of loss and persecutory fear, into an illusionary fantasy that the loved object could be protected, and that which threatened it worked away or destroyed. Of course, it could not be, and the guilt and destruction was merely displaced and projected into other objects, which the subject vainly tried to eradicate. Splitting, in Steiner's case, would be the displacement of poverty and death into areas of the world out of sight and out of mind, in order to facilitate, elsewhere, a fantasy of triumph over those things. For Stokes, it would be the displacement of irrational and imperfect human qualities into other spheres or persons,

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[288] Ibid. p.249

[289] Steiner, George, *Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p.38

[290] Ibid. p.69

[291] Ibid. p.70

[292] Mitchell, Juliet, *The Selected Melanie Klein*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.152

in order to sustain one's own logical and perfectable self-image. This had been at work on many levels in society, and indeed in Stokes's own thoughts; as Klein had pointed out, Stokes had a tendency to project his fears of his own irrationality and destructiveness into the female body.[293]

As such, the mechanisation of human life in modernity, Stokes proposed, had not resulted in the genuine eradication of the irrational, but only its displacement and purification. Far from achieving a state of resolution, it led to further sources of conflict and dissociation between mechanical structures and the aspects of human nature that they could not account for. Such a process was one that Stokes understood from his own attempts to rectify his inner world through the power of logic. In his early life, Stokes had felt that his attempt to repair the world through logical thought had led to his dissociation from realities that would not assimilate into such forms, and as a result, had led him to further need of reparation – specifically, the desire to heal the dissociative rift he felt between idealism and life. As such, defensive splitting was doomed to fail, and when it did, to reveal to the subject an even more divided and conflictual situation than the one it had hoped to repair. As such, *Smooth and Rough* traces how this fantasy of efficiency or perfection was responsible for a divided culture – a newly exaggerated friction between systemic structures and what escaped them. 'The Machine Age' describes the Modernist landscape almost as a split personality, in which rationality is trying to take leave of subjectivity. It is a vision of the self trying to rip itself in two. "For many," Stokes writes, "there is a widening split in experience: culture reflects a potential psychical dissociation which modern science, with supreme humility, may admit to be connected with its own birth".[294] For Stokes, our fetishisation of objective knowledge was the embodiment of our mechanistic fantasies: a dream of rationality so perfected that it had to purge itself of the world's imperfect truths.

This text is the successor to Stokes's essay on the interconnectedness of *Art and Science* in the Rennaissance, and is in some ways an extension of its thought. What he seems to map here is the dissociation of two formerly intertwined 'substances' in the human psyche. The Renaissance, he writes, was "man's most comprehensive attempt to rule the universe with the least withdrawal from the world of the senses": an "equation between true science and a majestic rapture from the earth".[295] Stokes stresses that Piero and Giorgione's measured forms were not an abstraction from emotional and instinctual life. Rather, they made sense of "man's circumstances" and "his heavy body"

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[293] A side note on one crucial manifestation of 'splitting' in Stokes's own early thought: during his time at Oxford, Stokes had written an essay entitled 'The Profundity of Liberalism' In this essay, Stokes argued that contrast was crucial for the production of meaning – "If there was only darkness, if there was no light - but that is nonsense - for if there is no light, there is also no darkness. Do away with all possible contrasts to a thing, and you also do away with that thing – and that, as such, political ideologies based on economic equality meant the collapse of meaning: "Socialism […] would reduce us to a dead-level - a meaningless dead level". This essay might have seemed, superficially, to grasp Klein's logic about the importance of ambivalence and conflict for the production of meaning, Stokes's thought process being that lack was a part of life, that fulfillment could not be appreciated or conceived without it. However, what Stokes fails to understand here is that he was partaking of what Klein called 'defensive splitting'; in displacing lack and fulfillment into separate objects such that he could keep them apart and, indeed, not be contaminated by the former himself. Lack was a necessary part of existence, he claimed, but must be inhabited by someone else such that he could sustain his own continuous fulfillment. In this essay, which Stokes later contradicted with his commitment to socialism, was a naïve and self-serving attempt to hold apart the poor and the rich, the good and the bad, to protect himself against the threat of their mingling, and the invasion of lack into his own self. Adrian Stokes, *Loose leafs*, ref number TGA 201213/8 (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)
[294] Ibid. p. 249
[295] Ibid. p.194

in forms both precise and emotionally full .[296] It was "as if the abysmal contradictions of the spirit were transmuted into the density and demarcation of a heavy turve [sic]".[297] Conversely, Modernity's "Victorian conception of perfectibility, [...] reinforced by a cast iron belief in evolutionary progress", believed itself to have broken rational form away from the swamp of subjectivity.[298] "For the first time," Stokes writes, "the quality of fact and the quality of fantasy were cleft apart upon their recognition, in such a way that from the side of science they could not be run together again, whatever the changes in scientific doctrine, or whatever the fantasies still immured in a scientific creed".[299] Modernity's 'coherent' world was one emptied out; its mechanical dream, he feels, was playing out a fantasy of sublimation, in which reason would finally extract itself from feeling. At times, *Smooth and Rough* goes as far as to describe modernity as though it were a biochemical process. "Much idealism" Stokes writes "resembles a fantastic chemical experiment whereby, in the attempt to isolate an element, there is discovered at the base of the ultimate solution the very essence of what has been compounded with it".[300] Any act of distillation must leave its equally purified opposite behind. As such, the logic of mechanical organisation, as Stokes saw it, could never reach the level of purity it desired without isolating and intensifying its own 'other'. In a landscape dominated by mechanical forms, he writes, "the fluid emotions seeping over all that is perceived to be actual, though little restrained, appear to have less support".[301] Whilst this text imagines organisational power striving to separate itself from the mess of subjectivity, it also imagines what is left over from the 'mechanical' environment as a now helpless aspect of the self, vainly searching for its image in the outside world.

In the wake of this 'chemical experiment', Stokes argues that Modernity is operating under a complicated aesthetic power-play: what he describes as "the separation from experience of a mechanical system".[302] 'Experience' here appears to denote the immediacy and ambiguity of human subjectivity – it's a shapeshifting category by which Stokes attempts a complicated equivocation of affect, fantasy, and art, as formal experiences cut loose from the severity of factual or 'mechanical' systems. In the text at large, this play of difference gives rise to a threatening picture of industrial London as a manic space where extremes would produce one another, and come into conflict. It was a space both ordered and out of control – that was, by turns, rigid in its systems and frightening in its limitlessness, in which the machine only seemed to produce new kinds of excess that could not be brought under its control. London, in this sense, is similar to the manic headspace that Stokes inhabited in Hyde Park, in which the desperation to gain control of the world only served to emphasise its unruly aspects. "In London" Stokes writes, "it is as if steel were welded to miasma" – as if the excess of Victorian London were somehow intensified by the strictness of mechanical power.[303]

In describing this tension – between the systematic and the indistinct – Stokes deals with an elusive aesthetic difference that many of Modernism's conceptual formations were trying to pin down. Steel and smog turn what Stokes initially describes as a distillation of science from art into a much more slippery aesthetic relationship – something like what Gilbert Ryle, in his mid-century critique of Descartes, termed 'the

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[296] Ibid. p.196
[297] Ibid. p.196
[298] Ibid. p.249
[299] Ibid. p.249
[300] Ibid. p.249
[301] Ibid. p.249
[302] Ibid. p. 249
[303] Ibid. p. 238

ghost in the machine'.[304] Although intended as a critique of the mind matter distinction, Ryle's paradigm drew on a growing concern about the friction between systems and what escaped them. And though Ryle famously claimed that philosophy regarded the mind as the ghost and the body as the machine, in other forms of thought from this period, such as George Bataille's, it was arguably the opposite. The body, too, had become a fleshy, viscous pit of aesthetic experience that the mind's desire for categorisation couldn't truly incorporate. Whichever direction this problem is approached from, however, it grasps for an elusive distinction between Stokes's two formal experiences – a distinction that became endemic to the critical theory of modernism. This dissociation is what facilitates Bataille's writing on structure and excess, and what drives Zigmunt Bauman to see Modernity as a landscape composed of solids and liquids. It describes a newly dualistic world, which, as it solidified into a tool for regulation and containment, left behind a silt, a secretion (or, as Bauman calls it, a "dense tissue") of something it used to contain.[305]

In his later work Stokes would also come to express how such 'splitting' was repeated in representational and linguistic forms of his time. The dissociation or removal of certain kinds of language from the inner world was something that recurred in Stokes's diatribes against theoretical writing, and his own struggle when trying to express himself from within it. As Janet Sayers writes in her recent biography of Stokes, he had always had a "distrust of the 'definiteness of words' in the west, cutting off one thing from another on which it depends".[306] In his 1957 essay 'Listening to Cliche's and Individual Words', Stokes writes that "we want to separate words, in the interests of abstract meaning, from the voluminous bodies that surround them".[307] Imagining a kind of battle between the rational and irrational aspects of language, 'Listening to Cliches' sees modernity's 'divided self' as an inherently symbolic problem; it proposes that language was trying to achieve a similar distillation, that would allow the rational concept to escape the conditions of its own body. The essay at large serves to frustrate this wish, describing how conceptual language is always tied up in the irrationality of corporeal experience. Stokes pays particular attention to colloquial words, and the implicit bodily states they contain. But his emphasis on the work of aesthetics in language is testament to Stokes's fear that it was somehow being subordinated, or that we imagined it to be gone. This essay makes the case for a vision of language he felt was

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[304] This term was first used by Ryle in his book 'The Concept of Mind' as a means of criticising the assumption of a material/spiritual distinction in Descarte's mind-body dualism. It was later taken up as a dichotomy by Arthur Koestler, who pushed Ryle's materialism of mind further, attempting to explain human aggression and self-destructive drives by means of the brain's physical chaos. (Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind, (Philadelphia: Lulu Press, 2015); Arthur Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine, (London: Arkana, 1989))

[305] Zigmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012) p.1. The full version of this quote is from a section where Bauman describes the way in which Modernity shed its material concerns so as to become economically 'liquid' or limitless: "'Melting the solids' meant first and foremost shedding the 'irrelevant' obligations standing in the way of rational calculation of effects; as Max Weber put it, liberating business enterprise from the shackles of the family-household duties and from the dense tissue of ethical obligations". In Bauman's account, he actually seems to invert Stokes's dichotomy in that it is the economy that becomes liquid, releasing itself from the solid though visceral bodies of real human subjects. Such inversions, however, will be discussed later in the chapter as attempts to get on terms with the same textural or qualitative splitting

[306] Janet Sayers, *Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes*, (London: Karnac, 2015), p.22

[307] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p. 9

slipping away.

The cleansing impulse that Stokes was always quick to criticise in theoretical language was similar to that which Theodor Adorno derides in his 1958 *The Essay as Form*, which argued for what he believed to be the essentially anti-totalitarian spirit of the essay form. Adorno makes a useful sounding board for Stokes, because he makes explicit a relationship that is latent but never quite expressed in his work: that between the mechanical landscape of the industrial age, and mechanical or hyper-logical forms of representation. For Adorno, these processes were overtly connected; he felt that the age of "scientific purism" had engendered a mythical idealism about what language could do – a dream of its power to objectify and order the world.[308] For certain kinds of theoretical language in his time, he writes, "every instinctive impulse in the presentation jeapordises an objectivity that supposedly leaps forth when the subject has been removed".[309] In other words, there was a prevailing fantasy that language contained a kernel of pure truth, which was clouded by a tissue of subjective, aesthetic impressions. Echoing Stokes's concern about forms that disown the unruly aspects of themselves, he claimed that representation had been caught up in an impossible fantasy of sublimation. "The longing for strict definition," he writes, "has long offered, through fixating manipulations of the meaning of concepts, to eliminate the irritating and dangerous elements that live within concepts".[310] Much like Stokes, he holds to account a kind of language that tries to fend off what it cannot adequately and rationally contain.

Language, then, in these essays respectively, is an entity in two minds; Stokes and Adorno imagine words in modernity trying to crystallise themselves into resolute forms, only to find that first they must rid themselves of something resistant to such definitive power. As such, they present language, whether intentionally or not, as a version of the Kleinian subject: one that continually tries to disavow its own badness, that is traumatised by its necessary imperfection.

Though fruitful for understanding the nature of representation in itself, what is perhaps most interesting about Stokes and Adorno's shared picture of language is that it reflects an entire social and psychological pattern that they respectively felt was crucial for an understanding of many structures of modern life, not least its ideological crises. In the early 1950s, Stokes and Adorno were both writing in the aftermath of a slew of seemingly automated violence, committed in the name of new and more totalising ideological structures, and as such, their respective pictures of language are saturated with the threat of fascism. *Smooth and Rough*, similarly, was written in the mid 1940s, during which time Stokes was engaged as a lookout for the home guard, spending nights, as he wrote in a letter to Graham Bell, "lying wondering when Hitler would lose control of his imperious animals and start killing us".[311] Indeed, such was the extent of the omnipotent fantasies expressed by Hitler's rise to power that, in Inside Out, Stokes reflected that the one positive outcome of it had been London's restoration, in his mind, to a vulnerable human state: "London and the attaching stigma from which I could not separate myself were under threat. Hitler epitomised a greater destructiveness: over against Hitler London was, to my mind, a volatile bedraggled bird, sprawling in a snare, punch drunk, indifferent".[312] As such, London had been saved from its fantasies of omnipotence and power in becoming itself a victim to mechanising fantasies of a greater

[308] Theodor Adorno, 'The Essay as Form', trans. by Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique,* (No. 32: Spring – summer, 1984) p.153
[309] Ibid. p.153
[310] Ibid. p.160
[311] Adrian Stokes, Letter to Graham Bell, Correspondence B- 8816/203 (tate Archive Collection, tate Britain, London)
[312] Gowing, *Critical Writings II*, 1978, p.252

and more dangerous extreme: "once identified with an infantile omnipotence of thinking or with some fearful animus of derogation", it was, at least "a psychological relief" to see London recover knowledge of its own mortality. London, no longer the embodiment of the machine, was now the body apt to be divided and cast off by it.

Stokes's image of rational language is also an image of Hitler's totalitarian regime: that which, in an act of cleansing, attempts to eradicate aspects of the world that it considers degenerate. He describes a kind of language that wrenches itself away from human subjectivity in the name of efficiency and omnipotent prescriptive power. Imagining the machine as both a linguistic and political form, Stokes writes that "mechanical instruments are not only the means of an incomparably more efficient totalitarianism but may themselves be found to condense propositions of omnipotent thinking [...] The microphone and the voice of Hitler, the demoniac romantic puppet, were one".[313] Stokes's writing on the mechanical is a metaphor for all systems of thought that fetishise their own efficiency, and that strive for an ideal beyond their means. They do this by trying to work away the unusable aspects of the world's form – to sublimate them into something acceptable, or to destroy them entirely. Hitler's speech, for Stokes, is itself machine, believing it can somehow expunge everything beyond its grasp with the sheer force of its delivery. It symbolised his pathological need for totality, precisely driven by a fear of dissolution: '"Hail"', he writes, 'simply means 'Be Whole'. It is ironic that never had anyone else so often been thus adjured as was Hitler, by name and at his own command'.[314] Ironic, because never had a man been so internally 'split'. Similarly, Adorno, in his 1950 collaborative text *The Authoritarian Personality*, famously wrote that the "intolerance of ambiguity" was its mark. This book was created in collaboration with psychologist Else Frenkel-Brunswick, who developed a test to measure the subject's tolerance to the ambivalent and the uncertain.[315] As such, Adorno's reflections on language are also indissociable from his social-critical writings; he felt that a person's use of language said everything there was to know about his inner world. In the case of Nazi ideology and language, it spelled a manic reparative attempt to recover coherence in the face of potential dissolution.

George Steiner had also, without recourse to Klein, read totalitarianism as the result of obsessional reparation, insofar as it was the result of a human subject that could not come to terms with its own destructiveness and failure of perfectability. He takes a surprisingly empathetic view of the totalitarian thinker as one who was unable to cope with the expectations of 'goodness' and 'wholeness' placed on them, and as such, had been driven to eradicate any objects or persons that threatened such a self image: as civilisation developed, he proposed, "men had forced upon them ideas, norms of conduct, out of all natural grasp"; "these challenges to perfection continued to weigh on individual lives, on social systems, in which they could not be honestly met", and culminated in a modern situation characterised by both extreme perfectability and equally extreme failures to achieve it.[316] Where Stokes traces the beginning of this process back to the enlightenment, Steiner traces the development of the mechanical landscape, and subsequently of totalitarianism, to the beginning of monotheism –to the replacement of several conflicting Gods with a single, coherent figure. If deities were representative of

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[313] Gowing, *Critical Writings II*, 1978, p.252

[314] Stokes, 1973, p.14

[315] John Bancroft, in his book Tolerance of Uncertainty, gives a comprehensive history of the development of such tests in response to totalitarianism, which continued to be developed long after Frenkel-Brunswick's initial attempt.
John Bancroft, *Tolerance of Uncertainty*, (London; Authorhouse, 2014)

[316] Steiner, George, *Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p.43

the expected state of the soul, then where a polytheistic system was the expression of an essentially flawed, multifaceted and conflicted inner world, monotheism placed unviable expectations of inner coherence on the human soul: "demands made by monotheism on human consciousness are intolerable; these fantastic moral requirements mock and undermine mundane values. They set anarchic love against reason".[317] As such, he proposed that the totalitarian was driven to violence not due to its inherent destructiveness and hatred, but his attempted repression of destructiveness and hatred – of incoherence within the world and the self – such that any persons who brought those aspects of themselves into view – those different from themselves – had to be eradicated in order to protect them from the threat of inner destruction. He frames the Christian backlash against the Jewish, much like Stokes's feelings towards the parkees, as a result of the strain such disruption placed on a moralistic, rationalistic self-image. Steiner suggests that the Jews, and other minority groups deemed degenerate by the Third Reich had to be eradicated because they were a symbolic source of guilt about the lack of moral and intellectual perfectability in the Christian mind. As such, Steiner's account of the holocaust is a retelling of Klein's manic reparation: in which the object of repair is so ideal that its implementation requires new acts of destruction, which would later become objects of guilt themselves. It was a violent cycle in which humanity was driven to eradicate its objects of guilt – signs of its own imperfectability – but thus producing more. Steiner, like Stokes, connects these developments to developments in representation. As chapter 4 will explore in more depth, his essays of the 1960s reflected on changes to the cultural conception of language that he felt were intimately related to the rise of technological and totalitarian power. Like a culture's image of god, its expectations of language and of symbols more generally, were representative of their self expectations. And in such an age, these self-expectations seemed so unviable and so violent that, eventually, there came to be a revolt against language itself.

Indeed, Stokes's observations about systemic forms and their remainders are also prophetic. They prefigure a growing paranoia about 'structures' – and what they left behind – whose zenith he would not live to see. *Smooth and Rough* was written on the cusp of the post-modern turn, and, as such, it illuminates a cultural dissociation that later gave way to a deep-seated anxiety about the dissonance between human material and machines. By the post-structural turn of the 1980s, language's 'separation' from materiality was arguably no longer a dangerous ideal in need of critique, but a source of melancholy that had taken hold of theoretical discourse on what it meant to be in language at all. As I will elaborate in chapter 4, this was later felt in some ways to have been a result of, or at least concomitant with, the rise of totalitarianism. The entanglement of its successes with its use of language – and of collective meaning more generally – had corrupted language and the pursuit of collective meaning in themselves. The idea that words left behind a human residue – somehow cast off the parts of the subject that they couldn't assimilate – was no longer seen as a symptom of particular attitudes to representational form, but the condition for it at large.

Such paranoia was perhaps not just the result of anxiety about fascistic forces but the inevitable symptom of a generation of systematic thinking about human things – a generation that had, perhaps as a way to make sense of capitalism, started to extract abstract superstructures from living human relationships. It seems no accident that Stokes's critiques of abstract language were written during the rise of structural

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[317] Ibid. p.43

linguistics, and it might be read as a warning against the dissociation that such a systematic vision of human relations would eventually produce. The structuralist turn saw representation increasingly described as a kind of machine – as an abstract system separate from the material world it processed. Noam Chomsky's book *Syntactic Structures* – published five years after Stokes's *Smooth and Rough* – espoused a language theory which, like all kinds of formalism, aimed to be free from the weight of subjectivity: "a theory of linguistic structure in which the descriptive devices utilised in particular grammars are presented and studied abstractly, with no specific reference to particular languages".[318] The adoption of structuralism as a means of social critique is perhaps the best example of how the spirit of industrialisation permeated even the ideals and the expression of those who resisted it. Writers such as Chomsky and Barthes were not under any illusions, but they did try to disrupt the master's house with the master's tools, as it were – to critique the machine age with its own forms. Perhaps a detailed and systematic account of ideology's covert workings was the only one that would convince in this cultural moment? "By treating 'collective representations' as sign-systems," Barthes wrote, "one might hope to go further than the pious show of unmasking them and account in detail for the mystification which transforms petit-bourgeois culture into a universal nature".[319] Barthes, in any case, did not believe in the autonomy of formalism; he claimed to live somewhere between the objectivity of the scientist and the subjectivity of the writer, and thus "to live in the full contradiction of [his] time".[320] Stokes too believed that this separation was an impossible task, and it's likely that he would acknowledge that such theories of language – as he frequently said of science itself – were less blunt than they seemed, and a crucial tool for the developing understanding of human experience.[321] Rather, the problem was that he felt he was living to some extent in a moment when the *fantasy* of mechanics had come to monopolise our vision of society, such that we could not conceive of representational form outside of it. Stokes anticipates in the latter half of 'The Machine Age' that the Twentieth Century would eventually suffer the negative effects of this compulsion to mechanical understanding – namely, a sense of estrangement and unreality from which it couldn't escape.

As such, the long-term object of Stokes's critique in *Smooth and Rough* is not the embrace of the machine, but the sense of anxiety and estrangement from ourselves it would eventually produce. This text does not end with fearful prophecies about the dominance of the machine, but with a long reflection on the destructive power of such anxieties – those delusions of being controlled or constructed that Victor Tausk united under the concept of "the influencing machine".[322] Tausk's account of the machine, it is important to say, was a quite literal account of the persecution fantasies of schizophrenics, in which they imagined that they were being controlled by advanced structures that they could not see. But Stokes felt, as with most forms of psychosis or neurosis, that this was only an exaggerated version of the anxieties we found in culture at large. Indeed, before a time when it was recognised as a biological effect, Stokes saw schizophrenia as a more extreme manifestation of the fragmented mind of which we all in some way partake. Especially in modernity, it seemed to Stokes that the schizophrenic was magnifying culture's inherent anxieties about being mechanised or commodified.

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[318] Noam Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures*, (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), p.11
[319] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, (New York: Noon Day Press, 1991), p.8
[320] Ibid. p.11
[321] In his preface to the 1970 edition of Mythologies, Bathes conceded that his theory was outmoded, that critical theory had become more "sophisticated", and he "could not therefore write a new series of mythologies in the form presented here, which belongs to the past." (Ibid. p.8)
[322] Gowing (ed.), Critical Writings II, 1978, p.252

"The schizophrenic influencing machine," writes Tausk,

> is a machine of mystical nature. The patients are able to give only vague hints of construction. It consists of boxes, cranks, levers, wheels, buttons, wires, batteries and the like. Patients endeavor to discover the construction of the apparatus by means of their technical knowledge, and it appears that with the progressive popularization of the sciences, all the forces known to technology are utilized to explain the functioning of the apparatus. All the discoveries of mankind, however, are regarded as inadequate to explain the marvelous powers of this machine, by which the patients feel themselves persecuted.[323]

The most common fantasy among Tausk's patients, the influencing machine articulated a cultural anxiety about the possibility of human creations outstripping us, and thus dominating us from an unreachable sphere. Stokes felt this was a paranoia just as evident in our art forms, in which "Frankenstein's monster, Robot, planetary man, stalk through our matter-of-fact yet far from Roman baths. Puppets suggest the thraldom of Petrouchka".[324] These might seem disparate figures, but they are united by the knowledge or sensation that they have been constructed or are being controlled by something beyond themselves. Their feelings of unreality and dispossession – of coming alive and being unsure how, becoming aware that their lives may not be their own – articulate our deepest fears about the machine: the fear of being trapped within a foreign or artificial body. For Stokes, this was the greatest danger to the human psyche from modernity: not the mechanisation of life in itself, but the resulting equation of life in culture – and relatedly in language – with regulation, unreality and dissociation.

Perhaps no-one felt this duality more keenly than Julia Kristeva, who also engaged extensively with Klein's work. Experiencing the extreme depression that Stokes also suffered with at times in his life, her 1989 book *Black Sun,* Kristeva describes how she had come to see feelings of self-estrangement as a condition of living in culture, in thought and in language. "The premature being that we all are" Kristeva writes, "can survive only if it clings to an other, perceived as supplement, artificial extension, protective wrapping".[325] Her account of being a person recalls the vision of one of Tausk's patients who, Stokes quotes, "first imagined the 'influencing machine' as a complete reproduction of her own body, something like the outstretched figure on a sarcophagus"'.[326] Recalling Stokes's florentine tombs, she has the experience of being inside a shell that is too rigid to contain her, that she continually slips out of into a different realm. As such, Kristeva experiences depression as a moment when meaning itself seems to peel away from the world it describes, when all representation reveals itself to be artificial. Her depression is, as Stokes said of modernity "the separation from experience of a mechanical system [...]; the dissociation, the loss of feeling, the stiff, unattached expression, a sense of alienation".[327]

As chapter 4 will explore further, then, much philosophy after Modernism seemed preoccupied with a central and existential question: in a world still dealing with the fallout of an industrial and ideological dream of organisational power, how were cultural and linguistic structures to be trusted at all? As well as the machine's fear of

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[323] Victor Tausk, 'On the Origin of the 'Influencing Machine' in Schizophrenia', *Journal of Psychotherapy Practice and Research*, (Vol. 1: Number 2, Spring 1992), p.186
[324] Gowing (ed.), Critical Writings II, 1978, p.252
[325] Kristeva, Julia, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p.16
[326] Gowing, *Critical Writings Vol.II*, 1978, p.252
[327] Ibid. p.252

phantoms, in late modernity there seemed to be, as Stokes writes in *Smooth and Rough,* "a sense in which monstrosity is ghostless" – that is, an entirely opposite fear of the spiritless forms produced by the 'structure' or 'system'.[328] In a late modernist landscape, all expression was suddenly in danger of doing this – of holding the world at a false remove from its original chaos, and of putting human life into an idealised structure that ripped it away from its fluid state. It was possible, we began to imagine, that this was the human condition. It was possible that all representations might cut or boil away all the ghostliness, ambiguity and affect from human experience.

Such a position was one that Stokes fully understood. His perception of the divisions of the self and the world that were necessary for subjectivity and for meaning had, at the beginning of his career, prevented the possibility of expression. But the fundamental insight that Kleinian analysis afforded Stokes was that these divisions were more ambiguous and unresolvable, even, than mechanical structures could describe. As he had also learned from Bradley, objects, persons and spheres of thought were complexly interdependent, and if they could not be resolved into 'oneness', they could not be fully separated into fragments either. As such, Stokes's essay on language has a very Kleinian logic; it serves to frustrate the wish for ideals, for abstraction or conceptual resolution. In 'Listening to Cliché's', Stokes argues that the slightly muddy and evasive quality of aesthetic experience is necessary to any possibility of conception or representation:

> In naming a thing we seek not only to demonstrate, to define it, to give it the full status of an object with definite limits, but also to taste, to absorb, to drink it in, so that the whole world stands qualified by that experience. Such, it seems to me, is comprehension, in part, an aesthetic act. Accuracy, it seems, involves, rather paradoxically, a degree of wallowing, often ludicrous or equivocal, in regard to the corporeal suggestiveness of words.[329]

In short, Stokes cannot conceive of language as a 'clarity machine'; for him there is an equivocal quality to it both physical and representational, the repression of which would destroy its truth.

It is for this reason that 'Listening to Cliches', although seemingly disparate in content, makes an important sister text to Stokes's account of the machine age in *Smooth and Rough*: it is about the constant and necessary presence of the 'voluminous body' or 'injurious phantom'. 'Listening to Cliches' clarifies how Stokes's conception of mechanical power was a representational problem. Moreover, 'Listening to Cliches' deals as much as *Smooth and Rough* with the constant failure of this endeavor. Stokes and Adorno seem concurrent in their belief that this 'split' is one of fantasy only – itself a dream of systematic division that believes itself possible whilst failing all the time. Adorno refers to this banished aspect of theoretical language elsewhere in his work as 'the mythical remainder', not only because its exile from representational form lends it a mysticism, but because the possibility of exiling it is itself a myth. In 'Listening to Cliches', Stokes confronts this delusion by revealing how the feeling, fantasying subject is at work within 'scientific' or rational language itself – that is, how any attempt to escape from the body into objectivity is already conditioned by a deeply material desire for certain feelings or ego states. Modern science, Stokes feels, is not free from fantasy or feeling, but rather, reflects our fantasy of a rigid, impenetrable self: "One aim of the more

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[328] Ibid. p.252
[329] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p. 17

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cumbersome scientific terms is to keep the denoted object at a proper distance from the ego: and the object itself must be denied, were it possible, the aesthetic seduction of an evocative shape".[330] An evocative shape was also what the 'ghostless' Florentine tombs were denied, 'evocation' being not only to call on or draw something forth but also to summon a spirit, a demon, a God. The machine age is made up of forms that are afraid of calling on things they cannot control, and didn't mean to invoke. As such, 'sterilised' language makes an impossible wish that its own form contradicts – it tries to prevent us from having an aesthetic encounter with the object of our contemplation. The aim of overly rational language is not just to 'harden' language but to 'harden' the self, to such an extent that it could rid it of vulnerability to its environment. But with a word or a concept, Stokes writes, "as with the work of art […] we are drawn into the orbit of this independent object, or swamped by it".[331] In order to understand any word, any concept, Stokes feels we must put ourselves at risk of being possessed by its formal state:

> Mania, for instance, exhibits an ecstatic, on tip-toe state, yet it is by no means ill defined by the slang word 'balmy', ie, yielding a soft, fragrant smell or vapour, indistinct or else shapeless as smoke. We are given to understand that the ecstasies of mania lack body, and that body here means a regular as well as substantial shape, an almost Hellenic conception.[332]

Even 'hard' and definite forms require us to be possessed by their definiteness, and thus are already implicated in an aesthetic subjectivity beyond our control. "The more precise the shape, the greater the ego's power of decisiveness".[333] But decisive power, Stokes knows, performs an objectivity – a crystallisation or cutting away of excess – which is never as resolute as we would like. In reality, language, for both Stokes and Adorno, is always dragging something up with it – something dangerous to its own ideals of proper embodiment. In trying to deny or break free from it, theoretical language hopelessly tries to distill the world into its respective substances, in order to protect conceptual form from its own irrational counterpart.

As such, to internalise the mechanical structures of modernity was to indulge the illusion of achievable separation and resolution of such ambiguities. For Klein, such black and white 'splitting', whether of the self, of culture, of language, was an illusionary defence against a more ambiguous and complex reality – particularly, against the necessary blurring of good and bad objects, even despite their separateness. *The Development of a Child* documents the difficult progress of her curious child patient, Fritz, who struggled to understand the dual nature of divisions between things. Fritz would repeatedly ask Klein "where was I before I was born?"

> It seemed also to be based on the evidently painful feeling of 'not always having been there', as immediately on being informed and repeatedly afterwards he expressed his satisfaction by saying he had been there before all the same. It was evident that this was not the only instigation for the question, however, as in a short time it cropped up in the altered form of "how is a person made?""[334]

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[330] Stokes, A Game That Must Be Lost, 1974, p. 15
[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid.
[334] Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation: and other works 1921-1945,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), p.3

All of Fritz's questions were ultimately about boundaries, a metaphysical enquiry about the way they did or didn't exist. "How does a person move, touch something?"; "how does the blood stay in him?" Klein gives an exhaustive account of Fritz's long analysis, during which he asked her "how eyes stay in" and "whether picked flowers can be replanted".[335] In anticipation of tomorrow he asked her "how long does a new day still come?" He is anxious to know whether conceptual and bodily limits will hold, and whether things will continue somehow living even when they have been cut up or disappeared.[336] He confronts, particularly, the knowledge that physical and psychical containers are important even though they leak. It is through Fritz's ambivalence that Klein argues one of the most crucial aspect of a person's development is coming to understand the irresolute and contradictory nature of relationships, as things both divisive and porous, as meaningful despite their ambiguity. As such, Stokes writes, in *Smooth and Rough*, that the 'splitting' attempted by the machine age, though damaging, was also a failed or false one: "for there can be no absolute removal in territories of the mind";[337] "the corollary to logic is fantasy. Consciousness combines closely the sense of fact and of emotional substitutes or symbols. [...] We cannot go beyond myth, beyond art, in wide *emotional* discernment, to some revealing state that is more precise, more particular, less the product of distortion".[338]

　　　This failure of splitting, of course, presented its own problems. For Stokes, the major problem initiated by the rise of pseudo-logical cultures and languages was not that they *had* shed the emotional and fantasistic aspect of life – something they could never truly achieve – but that they falsely believed themselves to have shed it. Meanwhile, these elements were still at work, now hidden behind a mask of false objectivity. It is for this reason that Stokes characterises Hitler as a "demoniac romantic puppet"; despite the Nazi regime's claims to a newly rational society, the movement was in fact riddled with the workings of fantasy. This was a new and serious danger of modernity for Stokes: if self-awareness about the workings of fantasy within rationality could not be achieved, this covert mingling of the two spheres could be infinitely exploited. And this was made all the worse by the sheer potential for destruction that science had given rise to. As such, Stokes saw the modern world as the unfortunate product of a terrible irony: that advancements in rational understanding had produced such horrors as the atomic bomb, but they had still not managed to eradicate the irrational and destructive tendencies that might cause us to use it. Stokes's conclusion was that the fate of human culture lay ultimately in the sanity of the scientist: "it is the duty of every scientist" he wrote, "the fount of power today, to seek psychoanalytic treatment in its longest form".[339]

Stokes's *Smooth and Rough*, then, though an autobiographical text, gives a complex account of late modernity as both 'split' and, at the same time, ironically unable to truly divide rationality and fantasy. Modernity was a strange moment characterised by the dangers of a new belief in the removal of mechanical and explanatory structures from the subject's emotional and fantasy life; and at the same time, characterised by the dangers of their covert relationship. It's important to point out, then, that in his critique of abstraction Stokes does not succumb to the overstated dissociation between material things and their representations. Rather, he is dealing with the cultural conditions that gave rise to this anxiety. When Stokes cites "the separation from experience of a mechanical system", he does not mean to collude with a newly emerging paranoia about

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[335] Ibid. p.8
[336] Ibid. p.5
[337] Gowing, critical Writings vol. 2, 1978, p.237
[338] Ibid. p.236
[339] Ibid. p.182

representational form. His account of the machine age reads more as an intellectual history and a psychoanalysis of this cultural turn; it describes how the fear of representation and thus of collective life, grew from its increasing equation with mechanisation. This is part of a misunderstanding about what language can do that Stokes trying to critique – the idea of language as a container for concepts, a machine for making objective. Stokes might want to argue that it is partly our subscription to this version of language that creates our sense of exile from it. We do not need to 'escape' the limits of the word if the word is not petrified by us into objectivity. "The less we treat of words in our writing as the voiceless digits of a code," Stokes writes, "the closer our thought about meaning tends to be, due to this care for their effect".[340]

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[340] Stokes, *A game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.20

The True Self: Avant-Garde Art and the Quest for Pure Subjectivity

"I do not want to be made to choose between a dream of hygiene and a vision of endlessness"

– T.J. Clark[341]

In Harold N Boris's essay 'Tolerating Nothing', he recounts a memory from a patient that encapsulates Stokes's vision of mechanical modernity. "There was a story," she said,

> the worst and most upsetting story [...] about a time when the birds and babies understood one another; talked a common language. Then not only did the babies outgrow the language — but this is the awful part — they forgot they could ever talk to the birds. But the birds remembered and they couldn't understand why the babies weren't as upset as they were. I mean, it's one thing not to be able to talk anymore, but for one to forget he ever talked and so never know what makes the other so sad is just terrible, horrible.[342]

This story is retold by Boris to help describe his dissociated patients. These patients, he observes, develop a false 'precocious self' – a surface persona which is not really in dialogue with their inner life. "The exact replica", as one of his patients called it, develops its own emotionless language as a form of protection, and pretends not to know the aspects of the self that it seeks to hide from view.[343]

Chapter three meant to illustrate that this is the kind of existence Stokes felt we had created for ourselves in the machine age: one in which the ostensibly powerful, universalising forms of mechanisation abandoned their dialogue with a more creaturely existence. Boris calls the false voice 'precocious' precisely because it pretends to a certainty or self-control the subject does not really have. It is the rogue voice of the superego when it breaks off and stops talking to anything beyond its own totalising impulse. But as Stokes made clear, when we attempt to distill one substance or quality, something else is always left behind. The false or precocious self cannot get rid of the other aspects of the self that it seeks to hide, and similarly, in a landscape where mechanical thinking (or as Stokes sometimes calls it 'concrete thinking') denied its origins in the muddier depths of human experience, much of our emotional and aesthetic lives had come to be seen as secondary, a waste product of more efficient descriptors. In other words, Stokes felt that whatever quality it was that the modernist milieu sought to isolate and elevate was once a valuable equal who had left the rest of our subjectivity in the dark.

Where Chapter three meant to deal with the tyrannising voice of the machine, the following chapter turns its attention to what it 'broke away' from. It traces what Stokes saw as an opposite but equal form of obsessional and hopeless reparation instigated by the separation of science from subjectivity – namely, the attempt to isolate and recover the aspects of the self and of life that had been 'cast off' by the machine. For this reason,

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[341] T.J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: episodes from a history of modernism*, (London: Yale University Press, 2001), p.369

[342] Lyndsey Stonebridge and John Philips (ed.), *Reading Melanie Klein,* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.121

[343] Ibid. p.121

this chapter suggests, it is impossible to separate Stokes's thoughts about the machine age from his later writing on the residual quality of late modernist painting. In Stokes's account of modernism, what Adorno called the 'mythical remainder' seems to return most clearly through the radically unassimilable forms of expression emerging in his lifetime. If Stokes identified the machine as the major manic reparative drive of modernity, the form of reparation taken up by the art world, he posited, was reparation of an entirely opposite nature: an attempted retreat into the self, in an attempt to recover a sense of safety and freedom from exploitation. Throughout his life, Stokes was ambivalent about the abstract project, because while he respected the recovery of subjective and emotional life that had been its initial aim, he also felt that towards the end of the century, it was becoming a self-devouring and destructive endeavour. Stokes was not as optimistic as Adorno; he did not frame what J.M. Bernstein calls "[late] Modernism's negativity and subsignifying materialism" as a form of resistance, but rather, as a sad but necessary attempt to recover something lost that could not really be identified.[344] Moreover, and as this chapter hopes to show, he felt that at the extremes of non-representational art, the ostensibly reparative attempt to retreat from the omnipotent structures – of industrial capitalism, of totalitarianism, and of the harsh grasp of logical interpretation – had transformed into a new kind of omnipotence all of its own. The following chapter looks primarily at three of Stokes's late essays on the art-world of late modernity – *Isness and The Avant-Garde*, *Three Essays on the Painting of Our Time*, and *The Future and Art* – in order to explore the rise of art driven by what he called "the greedy, prehensile and controlling act of vision".[345] (Stokes 1961 p.14)

In 1972 Stokes delivered a student lecture titled 'The Future and Art'. He died in December of that year, and this essay was his last sustained piece of writing. As such, we might consider it his last word on the fate of our culture. In this essay – tracing an aesthetic line from the impressionists through to the abstract paintings of Kazimir Malevich and the found object tradition initiated by Duchamp – Stokes proposes that the turn away from representation in Twentieth Century art was not, as critics such as Clement Greenberg had proposed, a true realisation of the creative spirit. Rather, he argued that it was the result of a struggle to find things of value in the modern industrialised landscape. The progression of art, he wrote, "from the time of the impressionists at least – I would like to include Courbet – will eventually be seen to be figured in front of this one general emotive background"; "namely, the urban environment and its products".[346] Stokes did not necessarily mean to imply that these forms reflected or reproduced the urban scene, but rather, that they reflected the resistance and confusion inherent to humanity's attempts to make sense of and communicate with it. The fragmentation, the expanding and thinning forms of modernism, Stokes argued, were the signs of a human subject stretching and compressing itself to find a language with which it could speak to an alien landscape. It was in this sense, fundamentally reparative, as was all art for Stokes – despite an increasing resistance to engagement with literal reality, modernist painting was in a strained way trying to reconcile the human psyche to the state of the world. But increasingly, Stokes felt that such a reconciliation necessitated the expression of failed

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[344] J.M. Bernstein, Against Voluptuous Bodies: Late Modernism and the Meaning of Painting, (California: Stanford University Press, 2006), p.172
[345] Quoted from Harris Williams, Meg (ed.), *Art and Analysis: An Adrian Stokes Reader*, (London: Karnac, 2014), p.41
[346] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p.151
[346] Ibid. p.146

connectivity or a failed search for meaning. "Art tells of ourselves in terms of the external world", he wrote "tells that we are now joined to things that mean less than we would like them to do. Each of the vastly differing aspects of the Modern Movements can be interpreted as an attempt to get on familiar terms with these things."[347] In short, this essay argued that for the first time, what was being expressed by our art forms was the world's hostility to a meaningful conversation, and its failure to say anything of recognisable worth to the human spirit.

The essence of this turn, as chapter 3 touched on, was the loss of faith in collective linguistic and representational structures. In a landscape that was increasingly removed from the realities of inner life, Stokes proposed that modernity was in crisis because the sterile image of shared meaning it offered had turned us against the idea of meaning itself: "we are far less at home with the urban than were our forbears, that our art often reflects a distrust of its meaning and therefore of meaning".[348] It was unsurprising to Stokes that the intellectual world of the 1960s had lost faith in the possibility of collective meaning, when in the years prior to the late modernist turn, western culture had been so easily lured into political dogmas by its promise. As a result of this recent history, he argued, meaning seemed to be tainted by the violent methods we had used to preserve or achieve it:

> There exists in some intellectual circles today so strong a horror of the human state that a writer, George Steiner, has urged that understanding, protestation, emotional accountancy on the part of authors should cease in the matter of concentration camp horrors; that the way to measure up to enormity on this scale is silence, drying up, if only because words have been emasculated by the bending they have suffered from the hypnotic techniques of advertisement and propaganda.[349]

Stokes is likely referring here to Steiner's 1967 essay collection *Language and Silence*, in which he proposed that the integrity of language had been doubly broken down – firstly by regimes that used it to make ambiguous emotive appeals under the guise of truth, and secondly, by that rhetoric's instigation of events that were beyond description: "the world of Auschwitz lies outside speech and it lies outside reason", he wrote, and "to speak of the unspeakable is to risk the survivance of language as creator and bearer of humane rational truth. Words that are saturated with lies or atrocity do not easily resume life".[350] In some ways, Stokes misreads Steiner by failing to acknowledge that elsewhere in his work he clarified that he did not advocate for a suspension of productive thought or representation, but took an ambivalent interest in this unprecedented cultural state where "deliberate violence [was] being done to those primary ties of identity and social cohesion produced by common language".[351] In fact, Steiner used this to make an optimistic argument for the communal value of newly emerging sub-linguistic communication.[352] Steiner's statement, however, was perhaps a

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[347] Ibid. p. p.151

[348] Ibid. pp.152-153

[349] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p.132

[350] George Steiner, *Language and Silence*, (London; Faber & Faber, 2010), p.182

[351] George Steiner, *Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971) p.115

[352] Particularly, Steiner discusses the reliance of youth movements on music, and a newly emerging "thirst for magical and 'transrational' forms" (Ibid p.121). While he was ambivalent about the apparent loss of constructive discourse, he confessed to "the conviction, irrational, even tactless as it may be, that it is enormously interesting to be alive in this cruel, late stage of western affairs" (Ibid. p.141).

neat summation for Stokes of a general distrust of linguistic and representational structures that he felt was in the air of early post-modern discourse. Stokes recognised the start of an intellectual turn that Gillian Rose identified as a continuing legacy of modernity in her 1996 essay on fascism and representation: "the demonstration that fascism and representation are inseparable," had led to "the conclusion, current in post-modern aesthetics, philosophy and political theory, that representation is or should be superseded".[353] Like Stokes, she criticises a moment when the inherent relationship between ideology and representational structures led to an implicit claim that representation itself was an instrument of domination.

For Stokes, however, possibly greater than the impact of fascist ideology and its resulting violence was the related impact on 'meaning' of the commodity form. In *The Future and Art*, as well as in his *Three Essays on the Painting of Our Time* (1961), Stokes attributes new movements away from representation partly to the "proliferation of plastic objects" that now passed for the creation of value.[354] Whilst it was certainly true that recent horrors had rendered representation inadequate to its task, artists since the turn of the century had been increasingly resistant to enter into an exchange with the world because of the increasing "reductiveness that rules our urban scene".[355] As chapter 3 explored, the cultural commentators of modernity appeared to be looking everywhere – from academic language to the organising forces of fascism – for the source of a general feeling that the world's sole drive was now to cut up and compress whatever entered it, eradicating what could not be assimilated. As such, for Stokes the use of representation for violent ends, and its failure to express recent extremes of the human condition only supplemented an already growing awareness or paranoia about representation's failure as an expression of human experience.

This infection of mechanical thinking into our attitude to meaning was cemented a few years before Stokes's lecture, in 1966, by Susan Sontag's canonical essay *Against Interpretation*. It is unclear whether Stokes was aware of Sontag's work, but it is clear at least that he was aware of its tenor in the general atmosphere of his time. Sontag argued, exactly as Stokes had observed, that meaning was now a tyranny on the work of art – an act of appropriation that sought to limit and tame the work, to make it more palatable. It stops short of saying that meaning was the machine by which we appropriated works of art for sale, but the idea of meaning in Sontag's essay is nonetheless muddled up with industrialisation. She writes that, "like the fumes of the automobile and of heavy industry which befoul the urban atmosphere, the effusion of interpretations of art today poisons our sensibilities".[356] "Directed to art," she writes, "interpretation means plucking a set of elements (the x, the y, the z, and so forth) from the whole work".[357] In short, for Sontag meaning was a form of philistinism because it entailed being separated, simplified, and sold. Interpretation – "the revenge of the intellect upon the world" – was for her a process of extraction that did violence to the integrity of subjectivity.[358]

The ironic result, Stokes proposed, was that the ostensibly reparative efforts of 'mechanical' culture had created a feeling of dissociation and self estrangement that became itself an object of repair. This opposing reparative effort consisted of a renewed

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[353] Rose, Gillian, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.41. Rose attributes to the post-structuralists – particularly Derrida and to deconstruction at large – views on the rejection of representation to which they do not necessarily adhere. But what she does identify at least is a stalemate: an ongoing concern with the inadequacy of language, even where it could not be superseded.
[354] Stokes, A Game That Must Be Lost, 1973,
[355] Ibid. p.148
[356] Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, (London: Penguin, 2013), p.7
[357] Ibid. p.5
[358] Ibid. p.7

attention to base and unrefined experience – to expressions of subjectivity that were undivided by interpretive thought. As was evident in his early thought, this was a position that Stokes was to an extent sympathetic towards. Since his very first work, Stokes took against dissociating forms of mathematical thought, and sought a new kind of language that could replace it. Indeed, perhaps one of the first artists to mark himself out as an antagonist to the threat of abstraction was Cézanne, whom Stokes had come to regard as a model. It is reported that Cézanne's favourite maxim was "to work and to avoid theorisation," a tidy summation of Cézanne's general resistance to appropriation by outside influences.[359] In his very sparse comments on art, the father of modern painting tended to advocate the avoidance of anything that was not nature, as though afraid that if he looked away from it he would float away or be pulled into a mechanism from which he wouldn't be able to escape. Writing to his friend Emile Bernard in 1904, he urged that "[the artist] must beware of the literary spirit which so often causes painting to deviate from its true path – the concrete study of nature – to lose itself all too long in intangible speculations".[360] Such a resistance to abstracting principles and systems from an innately material and emotional practice, in fact, was a common feature of many of the artists Stokes prized. Later, Henry Moore would express a similar sentiment, writing that,

> I started to read Erich Neumann's book on my work, *The Archetypal World of Henry Moore*, in which he suggests a Jungian interpretation, but I stopped halfway through the first chapter, because I did not want to know about these things, whether they were true or not. I did not want such aspects of my work to become henceforth self-conscious. I feel they should remain subconscious and the work should remain intuitive.[361]

Stokes too had set out to resist the pull of 'abstraction' and the academic institution more generally. But as he had made clear as early as *Ariadne,* he felt equally that such resistance should not lead us to completely reject or undermine the truth content of representational meaning or of interpretation. For Stokes, the tendency to see alienation as a condition of meaning at large was simply evidence of how pervasive the newly 'mechanical' environment was in the modern psyche. If the landscape was unconsciously experienced as a picture of the mind, then, as forms of mechanisation had colonised the landscape, they had also inevitably colonised the image of sense-making. Cézanne was a truly reparative artist for Stokes – as was Moore – because despite rejecting certain kinds of sense making that they found to be detrimental to truth, they did not reject the possibility of representation, nor an apprehension of the world through it. As I explored in chapter 2, Stokes saw Cézanne's work as the painterly embodiment of Bradley's plea for the *continued* apprehension and translation of reality, even in the face of that project's partial failure.

As such, Stokes took up an ambivalent position towards the advancements that the impressionist movement had initiated. He argued that, for all impressionism's merits, it was also the beginning of an aesthetic turn that would eventually go so far as to contradict itself. That is, what impressionism had started would eventually transform, in Kleinian fashion, from a truly reparative attitude to a manic or obsessional one that, in attempting to recover a renewed sense of reality, inadvertently destroyed its own object.

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[359] Herschel Browning Chipp and Peter Howard Selz (ed.), *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*, (Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1968), p.13
[360] Ibid. p. 19
[361] Moore, Henry, ed. By Alan Wilkinson, *Writings and Conversation*, (Berkley, The University of California Press, 2002), p.115

It was a slippery slope, whose trajectory began with a retreat from certain kinds of 'false' explanatory structures, and gradually became a retreat from the possibility and value of communication at large. Where Cézanne had advocated a retreat from particular aspects of culture that perpetuated fantasies of intellectual power, newer forms of art seemed to emerge from a belief that representation itself was 'false', and that the pursuit of truth meant withdrawing from the world in general. This was somewhat of an irony for Stokes: Cézanne had not expressed a distrust of representation or the subject's relationship with 'reality' at large, but rather, distrust of a world that seemed to mitigate or corrupt our understanding of that relationship. In some ways, then, late modernist art – or, at least, theories about it – seemed to have fallen foul of that corruption, by allowing themselves to believe in the loss of communal truth. The impressionist movement, as such, was slowly transformed from a desire for honest, if imperfect, communication with the world to a deliberate breaking down of that communication. Artists were afraid of being made into something else, something they were not, something lesser, and this led art increasingly to want to turn inwards, away even from representation as we knew it. As the world was increasingly taken over by abstracting forces, engagement with reality seemed to entail a regression from the world, and a refusal to put ourselves into anything 'outside'.

Such changes in aesthetics were symbolic of changes happening in human self-conception more generally at the time of Stokes's late writing. Even psychoanalysis was moved by modernity to lose faith in the possibility of honest self expression. Despite having practiced a profession for forty years that taught resolution by talking, in 1963 D.W. Winnicott tried to write a paper on communication, and "soon came [...] to staking a claim, to my surprise, to the right not to communicate. This was a protest from the core of me to the frightening fantasy of being infinitely exploited".[362] This did not only have implications for the possibility of speaking, but for the kind of entity we were speaking from. The possibility of exploitation in the late modernist world had caused Winnicott to reassess, perhaps with difficulty, his whole conception of selfhood. Specifically, it had caused him to argue that a healthy person, though retaining communication between their inner and outer selves, does nonetheless retain a 'true self' that was untouchable by the world. The 'true self' in Winnicott's work arose as a natural response to his formulation of the 'false self' – a compliant mask or projection worn by subjects in their interactions with the outside world. In short, it was his own way of formulating the 'splitting' that Klein had described. As parts of the self split off and began to dominate its interaction with the outside world, there was a need to name and to validate what was left behind – the life of the subject behind the mask. These different selves, for Winnicott, were differentiated by the qualities of rigidness and flexibility: "the defence of the compliant false self appears, with the hiding of the true self that has the potential for creative use of objects".[363] The false self, in other words, conformed to the structures and demands of the outside world as a way of protecting the true self, the aspect of the self which remained beyond their reach.

     The 'true self', then, appeared to offer some hope of escape from the conditions of early modernity that Stokes had described. It was now too frightening to see the self as something discovered and defined through our interaction with the world. This would mean resignation to the world's new shape, and the impossibility of resisting it. Up until

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[362] Donald Winnicott, *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, (London: Karnac, 1965), p.179
[363] Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, (London: Routledge, 2012), p.137

this point, much cultural criticism was focused on the capacity of culture to shape the self; but in an apparently inhuman world, it seemed important to emphasise that culture's grasp on the human subject was not total. This was one drive behind the postulation of an unreachable, undivided experience before self-hood and language. Lyndsey Stonebridge argues, in *The Destructive Element*, that this was the importance of the death drive for modernist culture:

> Freud needed to believe that there was some point at which it was possible to stand beyond the reach of culture. Perhaps his formulation of the death instinct is to be interpreted as the expression of this need. "Death destroys man" says E.M. Forster "but the idea of death saves him". Saves him from what? From the entire submission of himself – of his self to life in culture. For Trilling the death drive is a redemptive thesis which, because it affirms 'a biological sense of self', leaves a triumphant 'residue of human quality beyond the reach of cultural control'.[364]

Out of a desperate need for refuge, then, 'truth' or 'reality' had come to be thought of as something to be found, not in the world, but in the self. And if this was to be true, then subjectivity must also be something pre-existing that could be protected from the world, something that could be kept intact. Such a position was ostensibly conservative, but it emerged from a radical and admirable attempt to reverse or counteract ideological forms which seemed to believe that things could not – or may as well not – really be alive if they could not assimilate themselves. Conversely, in this new anti movement, if the abstracting forces of the machine signaled a kind of death for humanity, the essence of 'aliveness' was now to be found in the wholeness of *not* assimilating oneself, in not placing oneself 'outside'. This is what led Susan Sontag to declare cinema the most "alive" of art forms in her time: because it was so "unified and clean" that it was able to be appreciated for "just what it is".[365]

The purpose of Stokes's essay at large is to argue that this shift towards self preservation eventually gave rise to what he referred to as the *Isness of Avant-Garde* (1961): an era in which art could only point to its own manifestation if it was not to be debased. In this essay he predicted, largely without judgment but with a sad resignation to the movements of history, that the fate of art after modernism was precisely to be made from *not* meaning. In protest against commodification, art's identity was to lie in not being exchanged for anything else. "Many objects," Stokes writes, "are made now by artists primarily, strikingly, *to be,* at the expense of much onset of connectiveness in the communication".[366] As in human relationships at large, Stokes believed that a kind of self-induced loneliness was the true sacrifice art had made for Clement Greenberg's triumphant declaration that "the work of art or literature cannot be reduced in whole or in part to anything not itself".[367] Stokes saw this not as a liberation but a sad reproach – "indeed it is sometimes defiantly asserted that these objects mean only themselves; beyond that, not only do they not represent but they must not symbolise".[368] Stokes's language here gives away that he suspected a defensiveness and secret melancholy in these objects. They were not triumphantly themselves but 'only themselves', as though their retreat inwards meant succumbing to a mereness, a wasting away. As such, he did

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[364] Lyndsey Stonebridge, *The Destructive Element: British Psychoanalysis and Modernism*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p.1

[365] Sontag, *Against Interpretation*, (2013), p.11

[366] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.148

[367] Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 6

[368] Stokes, A Game That Must Be Lost, 1973, p.148

not feel that art had 'escaped' representation, but rather, had been told that it 'must not' reach out or speak to an undeserving world.[369] In some respects, this reproduced the position that Stokes had found himself in at the beginning of his career, when the apparent failure or violence of meaning had led him to a state in which he could not write.

As such, Stokes describes a phenomenon in the art world not dissimilar to one that analysts encountered with their child patients: an attempt at communication that was also a protest against speaking. Though it was not always the case, Winnicott sometimes felt that the abstract pictures of his child patients were deliberately obscure as a means of expressing discontent or hatred towards the world, and when this happened he called it "a cul-de-sac communication".[370] By this he means a language that was not a language, but deliberately looped back to the self instead of reaching the outside world.[371] Composed of obscure forms or violent scribbles, the cul-de-sac form of communication was a deliberately destructive one, a form of communication that itself sought to mark the end of communicative possibility. Steiner posited the cul-de-sac communication as a rising condition of modernity: "the violent iterations of the graffiti, the non-sense cries from the stage-happening" much like "the mumble of the drop-out, the 'fuck off' of the beatnik, the silence of the teenager in the enemy house of his parents, are meant to destroy".[372] Similarly, Stokes read the violently non-representational art of the 1960s – Jackson's Pollock's works for example, and the found art objects that proceeded from Duchamp – as declarations akin to refusal; as if to say, I am here but you cannot know me, or else, there is nothing to know beyond my pure being. They were intended to mock all attempts to dissect, understand or mechanise them.

Perhaps the saving grace of this endeavour for Stokes was that it did not or could not really work. "Of course" he writes, "modern art is most varied and experimental: and in achievement, magnificent. But I think we are also aware of an impasse in those directions where symbolic functions of the art object are either isolated or minimised or consciously repudiated. This last attitude itself tends in fact to be symbolic — for symbolism can never be undone — of the psyche's negative estimations and of the projection of schizoid states".[373] As Stokes had consistently argued, attempts to retreat from meaning or from the world were not really viable, but instead produced a form of representational meaning despite themselves. By not really speaking, these works represented or embodied a particular cultural condition marked by splitting, fragmentation, and a failure of its 'parts' to communicate. As such, though he recognised art's attempt not to say anything, Stokes did not believe that it could really be achieved. Much in the same way that he acknowledged the dominating moves of logic without validating them, he acknowledges art's departure from representation whilst reminding us of its impossibility. His contention that art had abandoned communication is counteracted by his belief that this abandonment itself was profoundly representative of modernity's self-estrangement. In short, he felt that the resistance to representation was

[369] Incidentally, this bears a resemblance to Christian phenomenology such as that of Michel Henri. Henri argues that Freud's theories were defunct because they had neglected to attend to the miracle of manifestation. Were Freud alive to respond, he might have replied that what Henri described as life, psychoanalysis felt could only be reached in death: the desire to retreat into pure being is what the destructive drive describes. What's more, Freud might have replied that the miracle of manifestation cannot always free us from the psychological torments that follow it. (Michel Henri, *The Geneaology of Psychoanalysis*, (California, Stanford University Press, 1993))

[370] Winnicott, *The Maturational Processes*, (1965), p. 183

[371] Ibid. p. 184

[372] George Steiner, *Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p.115

[373] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, p.157

itself representative of the split culture that had created it. In Stokes's work, then, meaning could not be thwarted or bypassed; he will not allow art to shut out the world any more than he will allow science to conquer it.

Despite his resistance to its apparent aims, it was for this reason that Stokes did not straightforwardly reject non-representational art as meaningless or destructive. Stokes did not believe that abstract art could 'represent' not representing, or communicate non-communication (though it could represent the desire to do so). This arose from the false belief that there was a sense of wholeness to be found in 'pure' subjectivity. However, as the last chapter made clear, Stokes did fundamentally believe that there *were* aspects of the self unaccounted for by the new aesthetic and structural ideals modelled by the late modern landscape. As such, he felt that, even if abstract art could not manifest the 'true' self, it was at least trying to isolate an aspect of the self or of experience that had been cast off by modernity's mechanical structures. Abstract structures had tried to isolate a single aspect of the human condition – that of rationality, and in the process, had cast off the subjective, vulnerable or ambiguous elements of human living that it could not incorporate. When Stokes argues that the avant-garde took part in modernity's projection of 'schizoid states', he means to say it took part in the 'fantastic chemical experiment' by which culture was divided; it was, just as much as the machine, the attempt to isolate one of two extreme qualities that modernity appeared to be manically zig-zagging between. As chapters 2 and 3 explored through Stokes and his contemporaries respectively, in this new landscape it seemed we could only move between mechanical forms and their dejecta – from extremely rigid to extremely ambiguous forms, in a way that forbid any reconciliation between them. Or, as Stokes puts it, the modern landscape was one in which "any alternation of the extremely good and bad in disorderly alternation, of disconnection and compulsive equivalence, was sacred".[374] (This is the same purism that causes the schizoid person, in Melanie Klein's account, to move back and forth between elation and despair, between ideals and their failure.) As such "the element of what we now call anti-art" Stokes writes, was not due to art's new autonomy and self-posession; it had "arisen from an exaggeration of a single aesthetic component".[375]

When addressing this 'single aesthetic component' Stokes's thinking sometimes gets as difficult and self-devouring as non-representational art itself, because such an isolate is hard to identify or define. In short, Stokes was describing an attempt to rescue whatever in the self was beyond the forms of domination we now lived under. Art was attempting to find what was not commodified, economically or by the mind, and to scrape these wastes together into a partially conceivable object. Perhaps the best way to describe this single aesthetic component is as pure subjectivity, or pure contingency. In the face of reductive and reifying forms, art was trying to recover whatever in the world was messy and changeable, subject to entropy, death and rebirth. Stokes writes that "many of us long to be enveloped, even brow-beaten, carried away, by a mere impression of elemental actuality; of pure or abstracted actuality".[376] 'Abstracted actuality' is the key contradiction here. Despite being framed as a resistance to abstraction, this was a form of abstraction itself in so far as it sought to separate itself from any contaminating forces. But rather than discovering pure coherence, this new materialism sought an opposite kind of purity in the world's capacity for dissolve. If the modernist subject could not stand the fixity and universality of theoretical concepts or of economic values – which threatened to arrest and homogenise everything – then as an act of defiance, he must try to gather to himself only things that have slippage, anything that might resist

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[374] Gowing (ed.), Critical Writings III, 1978, p.175

[375] Ibid. p.175

[376] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p.152

containment, that might disintegrate, alter or die.

Stokes includes in this movement not only the nebulous art of late expressionism, but also surrealism's contradictory desire for the non-contrived, the automatic, the unconscious. Modernist art placed a new emphasis "upon the random occurrence and upon the perishable or passing, as if art were otherwise cruel to natural disorder, to the successive, to universal transience".[377] These were the only things that could undo the predictability of the machine, and could slip through modernity's cages of metal and glass. In its resistance to standing still, Stokes felt there was a kind of madness in this endeavour. Quoting Shattuck, he writes that art in his time "acknowledged the vitality of certain areas conventionally called evil and lunatic".[378] It was vigorous, desperate, and destructive, like an animal that was writhing around with such ferocity that it could not be put in its cage. Susan Sontag believed that cinema had been able to escape the cold grasp of interpretation only because it relied on flow and moved at such a pace that it could avoid capture. Similarly, if artists wanted to negatively identify themselves against the reductive forms of the machine, this meant asserting more than ever that a material being was something illogical and elusive, but also indivisible: something that, if taken apart for appropriation, would instantly die.

This project started out, Stokes believed, with Cézanne's meditative retreat into the senses. He quotes: "'If I think, everything is lost', wrote Cézanne. 'What was lost, Lawrence Gowing commented, 'was the pure character of sensation: his whole preoccupation was with perception, […] with gathering and grasping'".[379] Stokes clearly has admiration for the attention to sensory experience that was paid by the paintings of Courbet, Gauguin and Van Gogh. But as the Twentieth Century artist craved more and purer of the so-called 'real' (in fact an aspect of reality that had been split off and idealised) this quest for sensation seemed to rapidly devolve into something unidentifiable and more self-destructive. Slowly, it began to constitute the "compulsion to regress, to embrace whatever appears more primary, to disconnect in order to bring extraneous things together so that they sprawl at all angles".[380] This slow slide, from resonant sensation into mania is the process that Balzac describes in his 1831 story *The Unknown Masterpiece*. Balzac's artist, in a feverish attempt to capture truth, fell to a "most incredible, gradual, progressive destruction," unable to believe that he had discovered the true essence of form until he had destroyed it.[381] "Ugliness has strengthened not only confusion but a desire for collapse" Stokes wrote.[382] How else, besides a sprawling or crumbling, to describe an object that was made up of everything not accounted for by descriptive forms?

The emphasis on transience also gives away that what such art most wanted to reclaim, as part and parcel of experiencing pure sensation, was the power of time. Modernity was not just frightening because its landscapes aspired to 'hard' values, but because they aspired to an absolutism so total that it couldn't or wouldn't need to change. Francis Fukuyama summed up this (continuing) late modern fear in his 1989 essay 'The End of History', in which he argued that civilisation could develop no further, and was fated to exist in suspension. However successful or unsuccessful the form we had arrived at, Fukuyama felt that what was distressing for humanity was the sense of inertia itself. "The end of history will be a very sad time," he writes, "I can feel in myself,

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[377] Ibid. p. 148

[378] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.175

[379] Ibid. p.181

[380] Ibid. p.175

[381] Honoré de Balzac, *The Unknown Masterpiece*, (Wildside Press, 2011), p.42

[382] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.III*, 1978, p.155

and see in others around me, a powerful nostalgia for the time when history existed".[383] Given what modernity had seemed to be striving for, this was a terrible irony: it was only at the very moment that civilization was felt to finally be 'repaired' that we realised we did not really want what that would entail. Late modernity was, in this sense, a reparative fantasy made terrifyingly real.

Such a fear of stasis was one that Stokes himself summed up in his horror of the electric lightbulb.

> The electric bulb is fixed and destroys time. Light itself has turned against us. We are at the mercy of space. It is dawn in the world above, but the tube has neither day nor night. [...] here we have no time, horror of horrors! The tube station has form and what is form without variations of light? [...] What comes and goes here?[384]

Stokes was frightened that in modernity even the passing of seasonal light was about to be exchanged for an incessant and sanitary day-time of enlightenment. Though he perhaps didn't know it, this fear reflected the ambivalence of Stokes's early work. This passage seems to have been written in the 1920s – or at least among notes from that time – among his own attempts to describe Italy's timeless world. Such tone changing moments show us that Stokes was never really able to be co-opted by totalitarian visions; life was really nothing to him without the play of the world's conflicting forces. By the late Twentieth Century, Stokes's dream of a continuously light filled Olympus would turn into his nightmare. Though he had at times wanted to harden things to a point of eternity, he did also understand abstract art's desire for the formlessness of pure time. This desire arose, he writes, from "the recognition of an irreversible numbness in the static aspect of our urban scene compared with which any chance concatenation is freedom, poetry, Elysium".[385] But although Stokes was sympathetic to such desire, there is a clear irony here that will become important later in this chapter: Elysium, too, is a mythological conception of the afterlife, an eternal place to which mortals hoped to eventually arrive.

Though it's clear that Stokes sympathised with the ostensibly reparative drives behind our changing art forms, he felt the crucial problem of the endeavor was its self-devouring nature. This was namely because, in its later stages, the abstraction of art seemed to have trapped itself in the pursuit of an undisturbed subjectivity whose 'purity' was destroyed as soon as it was manifested. How was an artist to 'capture' a pure state of transience without betraying its aim? Moreover, how was an artist to translate the unmediated experience of subjectivity into a medium? This contradiction was the reason that Stokes found surrealism to be mostly facile: because he believed it was a movement that aimed to manifest 'the unconscious' as an object, as though that were something that could be isolated from the rest of our cognitive lives. By the 1940s, it appeared that Jackson Pollock was undertaking a similar struggle by trying to manifest pure slippage on the canvas. Clement Greenberg famously said of Pollock's first exhibition "It is unpredictable. It is undisciplined. It spills out of itself in a mineral prodigality, not yet crystallised".[386] In

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[383] Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History', *The National Interest* (Summer 1989), p.17
[384] Adrian Stokes, *Notebook 10,* ref number TGA 8816.10, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)
[385] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.148
[386] James Johnson Sweeney, *Catalog- Introduction- Pollock's First Exhibition*, (New York, 1943)

other words, he felt that its excess and lack of fixity or form somehow managed to express pure formation or becoming – a violent rising up of something that never actually arrived. "Although Pollock wrote and wrote in his art, his script was never lucid, never legible".[387] All it really records is its own force.

'Force' or 'energy' are perhaps other names for the 'single aesthetic component' that Stokes was trying to describe. The elemental experience Stokes argues it was trying to recover was that feeling we get from the movements of winds and tides: material drives that are behind all acts of creation and destruction, but that never objectively manifest themselves. "We have today an art without manners, without veneer, arresting, knock-you-down yet unbraced and unlimited, [...] one reason why it must continually change so much".[388] Force and energy, as we conceive of them, always seem to be before an object or behind it, and never in the object itself. And this 'beforeness' is part of what Stokes believed abstract artists were trying to manifest. They attempted to uncover "naked processes", "earlier perceptions", "to get behind symbols".[389] In order to avoid the omnipresent cage of symbolisation, but still *be* something, they were trying to express what came just prior to manifestation or thought. They were trying to access human drive or energy in a state before sublimation, before it was effaced by the definiteness of its finished object. This sense of existing without quite managing to *be* is also what Mary Jacobus saw as the essence of Winnicott's true self. When it came down to it, the "secret communication" he described was not really a conversation, but "turns out to be a loose congerie of perceptions and feelings that 'does no more than collect together the details of the experience of aliveness".[390] Stokes's 'single aesthetic component' – variously looked for in time, transience, materiality, mess – turned out to be affective, unintelligible substance, devoid of its structuring counterpart.

Stokes recognises that, far from nihilism, this was originally a reaction against those who sought to sterilise the world by those who wanted it to remain resonant or mystifying. He writes, in *The Painting of Our Time,* that "the modern stress upon 'isness' in contemporary art is still [...] a modern version of a romantic reaching for the moon".[391] However far away from its origins it had grown, he felt that modern art was still connected to the romanticism it had begun with in its desire to capture the mystical, the spiritual, the shifting essence of life. As T.J. Clarke writes, "Enchantment was part of [these paintings], and this seems to me true of Modernism in general".[392] In fact, according to Stokes's account, late modernist art may have been pure enchantment: it was the irrational isolated and made palpable. In such an art, the rationalisation of expression had succeeded in creating its own negative. We were now dealing not only with a form of reparation that was overwrought, sterile and emptied out, but an accompanying reparative object which was made up entirely of the residues of this kind of expression. What he had once described as the 'voluminous bodies', the demons or ghosts of expression, were trying to break away and become autonomous in themselves.

T.J. Clark, though just as mesmerised, is as skeptical about abstract expressionism as Stokes was in the 1960s, seemingly for the same reason: they both fear that this reparative endeavour, much like its cruel mechanical counterpart, begins to chase itself out of the world. Indeed, Clark's book is not merely about modernist painting but the relationship of modernist painting to possible cultural futures beyond capitalism. He

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[387] Pepe Karmel, *Jackson Pollock: Interviews, Articles and Reviews*, (new York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1999), p.273
[388] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III,* 1978, p.148
[389] Ibid. p.169
[390] Mary Jacobus, *The poetics of Psychoanalysis*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.160
[391] Gowing(ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.176
[392] Clark, *Farewell To An Idea*, 2001, p.302

proposes that these works were symbolically reparative in that their art forms were attempting to model, through new forms of representation, new possible worlds. But at the same time, the possible future worlds such art was presenting seemed increasingly thin or lacking in potential for collective meaning. About ten years after Pollock's death, Ad Reinhardt had taken American painting to new extremes with his 'black paintings' – images that claimed to be the last possible paintings man could make. (In real life, these paintings are not as geometrically rigid as they seem – they are textured so that they appear to contain different consistencies of life's unidentifiable 'stuff'.) In 1967, he sealed art's retreat from meaning by declaring his paintings to be "a free, unmanipulated, unmanipulatable, useless, unmarketable, irreducible, unphotographable, unreproducible, inexplicable icon".[393] Feeling that he could not express anything about the world without debasing it, his art now expressed only what escaped the mechanisations of culture, which, as consumer culture devoured everything, gradually dwindled to nothingness. Perhaps even before that, however, Soviet artist Kazimir Malevich – whom Stokes makes reference to as a proponent of 'isness' – had already fallen as far into this abyss as it was possible to go. Malevich's 'White on White' paintings were, like Reinhardt's 'ultimate' paintings, textured monochrome squares made heavy by the philosophy of resistance behind them. That philosophy took up a position seemingly something like the position that Stokes had initially taken up after reading F.H.Bradley – that is, a sense of futility in apprehension. In his 1922 essay *God Is Not Cast Down*, Malevich wrote that thought, which "[shows] man this or that object in its precision and reality – all this is absurd".[394] Reality was uncognisable, and what Malevich wanted to convey was "the groundless stimulus of the universe"[395] or what he describes as "the pure feeling of non-objectivity" beyond "the world of will and idea in which I had lived and worked and in the reality of which I had believed".[396] In other words, he attempted to isolate the experience of subjectivity from all the apparatuses that gave it form and meaning, and to somehow represent it. The paradox of Malevich, as such, is the paradox that Stokes saw as that of abstract art more generally: namely, that what started as a desire to recover a more meaningful grasp of reality had eventually descended into a triumphant and slightly hallucinatory form of nihilism: "it turned out that nothingness was God". Malevich's paintings were created ostensibly in the spirit of revolution against capitalism, in a spirit of potentiality. For Stokes, however, this appeared to be reparation transformed into a form of self-destruction, insofar as these artists had taken art as far into solipsistic and untempered subjectivity as it could possibly go without falling out of existence. This is one reason why Clark ties the disappearance of representation to the disappearance of a viable alternative to capitalism. Those that had taken it upon themselves to repair the world seemed only to re-destroy it. The question was, as Clark puts it, "if these are the only paintings the revolution has so far given birth to — then what other, further paintings are now possible? One listened to Malevich — one pored over the thirty three theses of *God Is Not Cast Down* — above all because he appeared to be trying to work that problem out".[397]

Similarly, Stokes argued that although modernism had set out with admirable, self-explorative aims, the attempt to recover some kind of sensuous or unconscious

[393] Barbara Rose (ed.), *Art as Art: The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt*, (California: University of California Press, 1991), p.81
[394] Kazemir Malevich*, God is Not Cast Down*, 1922, accessed at:
https://www.scribd.com/document/149667662/Malevich-God-is-Not-Cast-Down, last accessed January 5th
[395] Ibid.
[396] Ibid.
[397] Ibid. p.269

subjectivity had eventually meant a slide into vagueness, possibly a slide out of existence. This is the "impasse" of which he speaks. As such, despite conveying admiration for abstract expressionism, Stokes was also concerned that its pursuit of pure subjectivity was running up against the same problem as pure rationality; that it was striving for an impossible object.

Increasingly, then, Stokes felt that culture was in the grip of a stand off which, at the end of his life, seemed only to be getting worse. As a harder, more violent-seeming landscape rose to power, art had fallen to the pursuit of increasingly residual forms that seemed unable to sustain their own being. He writes, in *Smooth and Rough,* that "the residues remain and are liable to be increased by the very environment that has been projected".[398] The landscape was divisive. And, as with the split and manically reparative subject, some had even learned to take a strange pleasure in its divisiveness. What Stokes's account of the machine age captures more than anything is a kind of decadence that underpinned the extreme aesthetics of modernity, in which culture was caught between pure mechanical transcendence and pure elemental mess. Whilst mechanical formalism took pleasure in the purity of its systems, aesthetic formalism deliberately sequestered itself inside an ever thickening resistance to them. Stokes consistently described modernity as a schizophrenic or split historical moment because it seemed to consist of a total shutting down of communication between two ways of seeing the world, who perceived that their respective forms of existence were murderous to one another. Science, it seemed, would die as soon as it was contaminated by subjectivity, but equally, the essence of art would be destroyed by the presence of explanatory structure. What seemed important to both languages was the attainment of pure immediacy – they sought different ideals of uncontaminated truth, a less refined or less processed experience.

   Stokes could not get on terms with either of these ostensibly reparative endeavours, because, as chapter 3 hoped to demonstrate, he felt that this struggle between the definitive and ambiguous was one inherent to being human. The human psyche consisted of this sliding movement between the subjective bog of feeling and the crystallising objects of reason. As such, he felt that a singular refuge in either of these states was to cast off one part of what it meant to be a subject. Winnicott also acknowledged, despite his instincts to retreat into the 'true self', that this was only one half of a human life. "In the healthy person there is a need for something that corresponds to the state of the split person in whom one part of the split communicates silently with subjective objects".[399] There is a need, in other words, for every human being to inhabit both shared, fixed forms of meaning, and at the same time, to acknowledge the separation of these meanings from the muddier, less translatable inner life. As Steiner wrote in *Language and Silence*, whatever the value of communication, "there are actions of the spirit rooted in silence".[400] But a problem arises when we retreat only into one of these spheres – into the subjective or the fixed – and imagine that this is a more full, a more 'real' existence. In the case of late modernist aesthetic philosophy, this was to imagine that the recovery of the self consisted in a retreat from shared meaning, that the self was constituted entirely of "silent or secret communication with subjective objects".[401] As such, it is not necessarily the works themselves that

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[398] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings II*, 1978, pp.251-252
[399] Winnicott, *The Maturational Processes*, (1965), p. 184
[400] George Steiner, *Language and Silence*, 2010, p.16
[401] Ibid. p. 184

Stokes took issue with, but rather, the delusional mythology of wholeness they had created for themselves. It was a self preservative illusion in which, as Winnicott writes, "the loss of contact with the world of shared reality [was] counterbalanced by a gain in terms of feeling real".[402] Though Stokes respected these artworks for their experimentation, expressions of discontent and of history at play, he worried that the art world had begun to tout its self-referentiality as the essence of being, rather than as one isolate of being that it had been driven to by the state of the world.

As such, Stokes's essential problem with pure subjectivity as a basis for art is that its champions could never acknowledge or accept that it was the expression of a half-life. Contemporary art critics and many artists alike were so invested in the new autonomy and subversive power of art that they were reluctant to recognise that such forms were a by-product of the very thing they sought to negate. This is a difficult thing for the abstract movement, and any resistance movement, to do: to accept that it is still beholden and somehow defined by what it despises, to the extent that even its desire for autonomy is colonised. Indeed, it was in some ways this very hopeless feeling – that no resistance is enough – that drove abstract art to ever more extreme forms, and eventually into nowhere. In an interview about his landmark text *Postmodernism* Frederic Jameson states that "there is today a feeling that even the negative has been co-opted by the system—indeed, that the system needs negative critiques to keep itself going (this is the meaning of the ingenious saying, communism is the dream of capitalism)".[403] By all accounts, Stokes did consider this to be true: expressly anti-ideological art, he believed, was a product of the 'culture-machine' it sought to resist. But crucially, he did not believe that this rendered such forms meaningless or 'tainted'. Not least because this is the kind of logic that such anti-art had claimed to resist: the kind of logic that is only satisfied with totality – the kind of thinking about representation that gives up on itself if it cannot reach absolute knowledge and autonomy.

Such was the ostensibly reparative, but covertly greedy and destructive desire for 'oneness' that Stokes felt was the winning force in the philosophy of the abstract movement. In tracing a line from Cézanne to the likes of Pollock and Malevich, Stokes modelled a cultural manifestation of Klein's manic or obsessional reparation. What began as a genuinely reparative attitude – a desire to heal the fissures wrought by a newly mechanical world through the recovery of subjective experience – had itself begun to perpetuate the desire for autonomy that originally created those fissures. The avant-garde, he felt, had started to consider its own self-sufficiency and integrity more important than its engagement with the world. And it was in this arrogance, Stokes realised, that this movement slowly and strangely began to resemble the thing it claimed to resist: "Extremes, it is said, meet"; "crudity of feeling disowns, but owns none the less, certain aspects of peculiar sophistry".[404] By 1953, Stokes felt that the language of 'primitive' or untainted expression had attained something of the desire for omnipotent oneness inherent to the mechanical and abstracting forces that it had once resisted. Like the Kleinian child who cannot overcome its infantile defences, such artforms ended up reproducing the same damaging pull towards transcendence that they had tried to be free of. Stokes writes that "it is bound to be a muddled thinking":

[402] Ibid. p.186
[403] Conducted by Nico Baumbach, Damon R. Young, and Genevieve Yue, 'Revisiting Postmodernism: An Interview with Frederic Jameson', *Social Text 127* (Vol. 34; No.2, June 2016), p.145
[404] Gowing (ed.), Critical Writings II, 1978, p.249

a demand for a more charged, and often child-like, mode of symbolism alternates with a claim, revealed in the use of such words as 'super-real' or 'ultra-object', that a work of art should 'stand' for nothing, should possess a value entirely without reference outside itself.[405]

There was something confused, Stokes felt, about a project which began with reclaiming sensory experience and later proclaimed a deliberate blindness to anything that could be sensed. Later in *The Painting of Our Time,* Stokes quotes a strange moment in Kandinsky's thinking that captures this pivotal moment in the avant-garde's development:

> I was returning, immersed in thought' wrote Kandinsky, 'from my sketching, when on opening the studio door I was suddenly confronted by a picture of indescribable and incandescent loveliness. Bewildered, I stopped, staring at it. The painting lacked all subject, depicted no identifiable object and was entirely composed of bright colour patches. Finally I approached closer and recognised it for what it really was – my own painting standing on its side on the easel… One thing became clear to me – that objectiveness, the depiction of objects, needed no place in my paintings, and was indeed harmful to them.[406]

In a moment that might have horrified Cézanne, Kandinsky came to believe that physical objects in the world might, paradoxically, do violence to the pure experience of sensation. Far from seeing our conceptual and mechanical creations as structures that corrupted the world's varied and ambiguous forms, the world itself now seemed to pose a threat of deadening or hardening to a purer and more transcendent reality. Thereafter, abstract painting became, as Malevich had said, a quest to "free art from the dead weight of the real world", a search for "refuge in the form of the square".[407] A turn in which the pursuit of reality precisely begins to negate it, through a perception that reality must be something more than what is. This turn epitomises the always dissatisfied pursuit of reparation, when reparation is conceived as a whole or untainted state – how it always evades capture, and requires its pursuer to turn away continually into another realm. In pursuit of reparation, the avant-garde seemed to bound backwards and forward between abjection and transcendence, recoiling into its opposite state every time it came up against a barrier to totality.

This confusion – between abstraction and the resistance to it – is arguably something that the avant-garde had been dealing with all along. That is, a confusion as to whether expressionist art was resisting modernity's omnipotent fantasies, or was itself an expression of them. Was modern art, as Rosalind Krauss and Yves Allain Bois had argued after Bataille, where the mud and spit of a sickeningly 'clean cut' society had gathered? Or was it, in itself, an attempt at cleansing? Formalist thinkers such as Bell, Fry and Greenberg had long argued that modern art was not a respite from the Twentieth Century's fantasies of intellectual and technological power, but the equal expression of them. As far back as 1924, Roger Fry had written that he believed the "contemplation of formal relations […] to be as much detached from the instinctive life as any human

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[405] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.168
[406] Ibid. p.168
[407] Malevich quoted from: Susan Holtham and Fiontan Moran, 'Five Ways to Look at Malevich's Black Square', Tate.org, http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/five-ways-look-Malevich-Black-Square, (Accessed 20 October, 2016)

activity that we know: to be, in that respect, on a par with Science".[408] It's possible that all Fry means to say here is that the contemplation involved in Cézanne's process involved precision, and an almost scientific attention to the details of reality. Cézanne often advised artists to express themselves as "logically" as they were able.[409] Stokes too often commented that true art and true science are the same kind of activity, in the sense that their mutual aim is to discover what is truly there. As such, Stokes did eventually come to see that he and Fry shared many perspectives on the nature and purpose of art. But he also retained his disagreements with the formalist movement, as chapter 2 touched on, because he believed that it used an abstract and universalising language inappropriate to the values underpinning art. Indeed, in an address to the psychoanalytic society, Fry described art in such a way that it seemed entirely complicit in the "fantastic chemical experiment" Stokes saw in the unreal fantasy of machine power. He asks psychoanalysts not to mistake the 'contaminants' of art for constituent parts of its nature:

> If you have a substance which you know to be chemically pure it is clear that you have a right to say that every element which you discover in that substance by analysis is a constituent part of it, but if you have any reason to suspect an impure mixture, you know that any particular element which the analysis reveals may be due to the impurity and form no part of the substance which you are investigating. [410]

It is not difficult to imagine what Klein would have made of a speech that claimed, for any discipline, a cleansing power, and a pure respite from 'instinctive' life. This is a confusing and confused statement, in which it is never clear what would constitute an a-priori knowledge of an object's purity. But it communicates, at least, that purity and essence was the aim.

Clement Greenberg would later take this language of 'extraction' to new extremes:

> If you want to discover something about the nature of artistic activity, you should study it at a stage where it has thrown off the traces of its origin, has run clear, as it were, of all these accessory accompaniments which surround and, perhaps, cloak it in its earlier stages.[411]

Greenberg, in his strange oscillation between such statements and claims for Pollock's spillage, epitomises how the search for elemental, even infantile mess can turn into its own kind of purism in formalist language. In truth, it did not matter whether art went the route of the machine or its wastes, as long as it achieved a supreme and essential existence. Whether it was Kraus and Alain Bois' 'slippage' or Malevich's "cold, hard, unsmiling system set in motion by philosophical thought", the crucial quality of formalist language was a claim to the timeless, the endless, the 'super' or the 'ultra' – a claim to something purer than nature's forms.[412]

Such a meeting of extremes, as Stokes identified, is how critiques that try to entirely dismantle the transcendental language of art also end up being complicit in it. In 1997's *Formless,* Rosalind Krauss and Yve Alain Bois attempted a reappraisal of contemporary

[408] Craufurd D. W. Goodwin (ed.), *Art and the Market: Roger Fry on Commerce*, (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1999), p.125
[409] Chipp and Selz, *Theories of Modern Art,* (1968) p.20
[410] Craufurd, *Art and the Market*, 1999, p.126
[411] Greenberg, *Art and Culture,* 1972, p.4
[412] Clark, *Farewell To An Idea*, 2001, p.271

art through the philosophy of Bataille. Through such a treatment, they hoped to return art to the abject, fleshly language it began with, arguing that

> the modernist interpretation of modern art, which is an extraction that dares not speak its name, partakes above all in an ontological project: once art was liberated from the constraints of representation it had to justify its existence as the search for its own essence. Manet's 'indifference', far from being read as the perverse slippage that Bataille saw in it, is instead understood as painting's first step towards autonomy and a self-revelation of its essence.[413]

Krauss and Alain Bois argue that modernism's first aim was precisely to counteract the transcendentalism that those like Greenberg eventually subjected it to. But at the same time, they give Bataille less credit than he is due in assuming he did not know how secretly and closely related materialism was to the transcendental. In presenting us with pure presence, Bataille felt that Manet had manifested "that which goes *beyond* and is more significant than meaning".[414] In short, he also sought a superior state, a state in which things would throw off their cloaks of reason, representation, difference, and this time become as dust. Indeed, Bataille ended his career by making an argument quite literally for the worship of the formless. He declared human waste to be sacred, and raised everything that was base to a God-like status. As such, their thinking was not really a turn away from Greenberg's elitist language at all; he too claimed that the transcendence of elemental mess was art's true aim. "The avant-garde poet or artist tries in effect to imitate God by creating something valid solely on its own terms".[415]

The question to which the avant-garde did not have an answer, then, was whether it was aiming for purification or chaos. Stokes – who, after Klein, believed in the necessity of tolerating contradictions within one object – insisted that it was both. In fact, what these movements shared was a resistance to contradiction that meant they came around to meet one another in pursuit of a sublime consistency. It was precisely in bringing "extraneous things together so that they sprawl at all angles" that "these manifestations stress a yearning for simultaneity, for singleness and equivalence".[416]
The language of formalism, by whatever means, always seeks to work towards a perfect state at the very beginnings or the very ends of objects. And much like the beginnings and endings of everything, they come to the same infinity. Extremely definite meaning and extreme removal from it have something in common; they cannot really speak to anything beyond themselves. Each of these endeavours were differently articulated attempts to recover a sense of unity, consistency or originary wholeness. These were two very different kinds of reparation, Stokes felt, that reached towards a kind of boundlessness:

> Unspoken experiences, bodily or mental, have always been incorporated into art through the appeal of formal relationships; but when, as now, they are offered without the accompaniment of any other symbolic content […] they readily suggest the unlimited, a concept always present to the mind in terms of a boundless traumatic bad, or a boundless, bountiful good, by which we

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[413] Yve Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, *Formless: A User's Guide,* (new York: Zone Books, 1997), p.25
[414] Ibid. p.21
[415] Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture*, 1972, p.6
[416] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.176

suffer envelopment or from which we would perpetually feed.[417]

Here, Stokes makes plain that the 'dream of hygiene' and the 'vision of endlessness' Clark had not wanted to choose between in the epigraph of this chapter were not really presenting two opposites at all; they were expressions of the same state. "Such is the bridge, it appears, between the predominantly manic depressive temperament of the artist and his visionary bent": the artist's tendency to revel in states of extreme elation and despair, or in a strange affective space where these two feelings meet. [418]

In its visionary vagueness, there is something hallucinatory about Stokes's account of the avant-garde that resembles his own fantasies of omnipotence from earlier periods of his life. It is almost as though he felt they were under a spell – an epiphanic immediacy that he potentially recognised all too well. In some ways, abstract art appeared to be making a declaration of having seen the light, but Stokes was worried that ultimately this aspired to the same quality as a haze or a stupor, in which vacancy became pleasurable. "I am not denigrating forms of abstract art which I have always greatly admired," he writes,

> nor the varieties of Expressionism. [...] I but weakly say that while it can approach an effect of cosmic contemplation, great generality, even at the same time, often expresses some affiliation with the settlement of a nerveless trance. Though we lack hope and belief, we are somewhat mesmerised and stimulated by mechanical pressed button power, a wealth, a richness. Such power may seem illimitable, able to take care of anything. Drugs, hallucination, leathargy are all the fashion as a kind of trust. The stunning impact so much sought today in art on which we rather lazily like to lean, the restriction of statement to the non eloquence of shock, marches with the impact of our urban environment best achieved as by the array, for instance, of filmy flashing lights that defy a definite space.[419]

Late abstraction, to Stokes's psychoanalytic mind, consisted of an embrace of automatic desire and gratification, in which there were no meanings or mediums to get between ourselves and pleasure. "It has suggested to me the condition of being snatched back into infancy" he writes – a return to a state before we knew what it meant to be an individual thing.[420]

As such, the saddest irony in postmodern art, for Stokes, was that it became the opposite of what Cézanne – supposedly its progenitor – had wanted. He had wanted to really try to understand the world around him. But the real world, for these painters, did not seem enough. It is its latent possibility for such a transition into abstract purity that makes Stokes's position on formalism so complicated. He felt that what it initially sought to express had promise: a new worship of our relationship with the world around us, in place of other, less concrete deities. But it could not resist transfiguring into something else:

> It is possibly sad, therefore, that the slow deliberation in transmuting what [Cézanne] saw, the basis of art vis-à-vis the subject matter, had to be overrun by those who followed, in favour of the greedy apprehension of its fruits, or else employed with little other compulsion than to ensnare them, rather than

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[417] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.148
[418] ibid. p.176
[419] Ibid. p.160
[420] Ibid. p.162

it should have remained more often the mode of utmost homage to the motif as a thing apart.[421]

The move towards more abstract or impressionistic images was initially the expression of a new understanding of subjectivity – of the physically present but necessary separateness of things. But, unable to resist the pull of 'oneness', the abstract movement greedily and compulsively transformed Cézanne's discovery into an advocation of pure subjectivity, and eventually, to new extremes of the super or supra-human.

In some ways, it is predictable that Stokes would react so badly to this as a movement. He was recovered from this kind of thinking by child psychoanalysis, whose aim was the opposite of such grandiosity. Psychoanalysis' aim is to return adult languages to that of the child – not the language of the child as materialism saw it, not a language of absolute immediacy, but the language of loving and hating, of wanting and resisting, as told in symbolic actions, both of the body and in words. Secretly, though, Stokes felt that the paintings and objects of the avant-garde, like all art forms, were still speaking this language. Stokes believed that all art sprung out of this well of inner conflict in need of resolution:

> the making of art is a compulsive fruit of conflict, grief, loss, of a sadness or a lack too old and bitter, too keen though hidden, to carry for long any romantic overtone. These feelings, the spring of art whatever an artist's overt temperament may be, correspond with our own feelings of loss and confusion: none of us has escaped them.[422]

As the beginning of this chapter testified, Stokes saw a kind of sadness and loss in art forms that considered themselves transcendent. He considered them, rather, to be an expression of discontent with the world, and uncertainty as to what might come in its wake. It is not fair, then, to write off these works as impossible and facile. It is also not helpful to see them as pure dispatches to meaning. It is better to see them as asking important but desperate questions about meaning in modernity to which they mostly had no answer. If "the palpable textures of modern painting express the division and disintegration of culture", the aim of art for Stokes was to own these feelings, not to reproduce them by means of denying their presence.[423] "By the way" he writes, in the year of his death, "those of us who continue to represent, by that now prosaic limitation, are opters out also of a different kind".[424]

[421] Gowing (ed.), *Critical Writings III*, 1978, p.187
[422] Ibid. p.150
[423] Ibid. p.148
[424] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.158

The Future and Art: What Would Reparation Mean After Modernity?

"All values must remain vulnerable, and those that do not are dead."

– Gaston Bahelard[425]

The previous two chapters set out to demonstrate how Stokes's late work brought Klein's insights about the destructive nature of reparation to bear on the representational and cultural crises of late modernity. Particularly, Stokes sought to understand why these ostensible attempts to recover collective meaning seemed to turn precisely against it. He identified two major forms of striving which became self devouring. The first being mechanical efficiency – a fantasy through which the human subject hoped to either sublimate or 'work away' the aspects of the world and the self that it could not incorporate. And the other, in the avant-garde drive towards an experience of pure, untainted subjectivity. Though this form of reparation was less destructive to others, it was destructive to collective meaning insofar as it cut off the possibility of truthful or uncorrupted communication. In re-casting representation as a form of tyranny on the subject, the avant-garde, in Stokes's account of modernity, gave new meaning to the impulse Sontag originally criticised in academics: "interpretation excavates, and as it excavates, destroys; it digs "behind" the text, to find a subtext which is the true one".[426]

Having experienced both of these feelings at different times in his life, Stokes felt that these two positions were only really oscillations from one another. This was the dualism that Stokes described in his earliest text, *The Thread of Ariadne*, when he claimed to have no faith in either 'systematisation or its denial'. At both ends of this reparative scale, what was desired was an impossible state of oneness that led the subject into greater states of destruction. Rather than trying to compile the world into the 'oneness' of a descriptive system, artists began searching behind and underneath them in search of oneness instead. The dualism he observes, and that leads him to see modernity as a 'schizophrenic' moment, is the same dualism that Gillian Rose, in 1996's *Mourning Becomes the Law,* argued was increasingly destructive to the possibility of new philosophical thought: "the unsparing revulsion against the fallen idols and the rush to espouse their formerly degraded 'others' perpetuate dualisms in which all the undesirable features of the original term are reinforced and reappear in its ostensibly newly revealed and valorised 'other'".[427] It is a back and forth logic, which forces us to flit between extremes which inevitably could not meet the desired ideal. These are the workings of what Klein called paranoid or manic reparation: an impossible desire for 'rightness' and 'wholeness' induced by fear and idealism in equal parts. And though purely mechanical and purely affective languages were in some respects opposites, Stokes saw both as a means of reclaiming an impossible level of control or safety for the subject.

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[425] Gaston Bachelard, trans. Maria Jolas, *The Poetics of Space*, (Boston:Beacon Press, 1969), p.59

[426] Sontag, Susan, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, (London: Penguin, 2013), p.6

[427] Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.3

To some extent, these respective reparative drives were different responses to drastic and disruptive changes in the landscape that catapulted its subjects into a state of anxiety, marked by an excessive sense of fragmentation and loss of control. Thus far, such attempts to recover or repair the self and meaning for the modern world had largely created more destruction. Was there, as such, a possible way out? The last chapter of this thesis looks at those of Stokes's essays – predominantly written during the late 1950s and 1960s – that speculate on a possible future, both for culture and representation, beyond this cycle. In other words, it looks at the possibility of what chapter two termed 'true reparation', and how that might manifest itself in representational and cultural terms. In doing so, it takes a particular focus on Stokes's posthumously published lecture *Psychoanalysis and Our Culture* (1974), alongside his late essays on aesthetics, as a fruitful comparative conjunction for understanding Stokes's belief that certain art forms could model possible futures for the psyche and the cultural milieu.

In the light of his critical account of both the development of science, the rise of machine power, and of aesthetic responses to it, Stokes's late work might be read as a pessimistic assessment of culture trapped in a cyclical, damaging, and inescapable struggle for self-perfection or peace. The potential for nihilism that was inherent to the psychoanalytic perspective had not escaped Stokes. In *Inside Out* he had admitted that "the Freudian discoveries lead to an estimation of the nature of man which at first sight is hard to bear".[428] In his late work, Stokes felt that if he was to propose a fruitful critical perspective built on its insights, such a perception would have to be faced, and as such, he began 'Psychoanalysis and Our Culture' with a redress of this problem. He would not begrudge humanity a nostalgia for the naivety of animal life, he wrote, given

> the very many pretenses and disciplines that have now slipped to reveal
> widely the abysses of human nature, a shift of control in which the findings of
> psychoanalysis, generally misconstrued, have undoubtedly played a part,
> particularly in the matter of the outmoding of religion as well as of idealistic
> or optimistic standpoints at the very time that the negativism of man has been
> extensively felt as incorrigible.[429]

Psychoanalysis – and particularly analysis such as Klein's that were derived from Freud's second topography – might be viewed as innately pessimistic, in that it stripped the subject of possible fulfillment at the same time as reinforcing the predominance – and the violence – of the drives towards it. Klein's work on the death drive or the manic reparative drive proposed a mythology of continuously thwarted reconciliation, in which the child strives for wholeness despite his incapacity to achieve it. As such, it might seem logical to propose that psychoanalysis was in some ways a theory of hopelessness – one that set out to reveal the violence inherent to human ideals of self-betterment and redemption, but with no promise of their replacement or reform. Indeed, Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* had explicitly undermined the possibility of progress: after his proposal that all human striving was the attempted recovery of a state that could only be reached in self-destruction, "many of us will also find it hard to abandon our belief that in man himself there dwells an impulse towards perfection, which has brought him to his present heights of intellectual prowess and ethical sublimation. [But] I see no way of

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[428] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.169
[429] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p.132

preserving this pleasing illusion".[430] Over the course of his life's work, Stokes himself had used his psychoanalytic insights to deny the possibility of self-transcendence promised by science, as well as that promised by art. As such, Freud's, Klein's, and his own work, might be considered a part of the shift Gillian Rose later described, towards "despairing rationalism without reason".[431] In 'Psychoanalysis and Our Culture', Stokes is candid about his repeated slip into such nihilism, and his concern about its effect for the future of culture: "I'm certain there is an urgent feeling we share, namely unease about, lack of belief in, the future; a very terrible ingredient in our living to which we have become accustomed".[432]

Ultimately, however, Stokes's essay set out to emphasise that he considered this a misunderstanding of the psychoanalytic world-view, and most especially of the Kleinian one. As chapter two explained, Klein did take up the objectless striving that Freud described as a part of her psychic model, but she categorised it as an illusionary or manic form of repair, and in the process introduced a more complex reparative impulse that was *real*, and which held genuine possibilities both for self-realisation and for cultural renewal. As such, though Klein's work was derived from Freud's much darker late model of the mind, she had arguably also saved it by transforming his philosophy of disillusionment into a revival of the possibility of progress, both individually and collectively. If the subject could eventually resist and overcome the temptations of omnipotence and manic defenses, she proposed, they would earn a more complex form of fulfillment. This might be a long and repetitious process: for Klein, the process of splitting and repairing – of idealism and disillusionment – was a cycle the subject went through many times on its way to 'reality-sense': moreover, it was "carried out in such a way that each step in the unification leads again to a renewed splitting of the imagos".[433] It was also a process that even the adult subject would have to re-experience in moments of grief and disruption, and would often fail to immediately overcome. But for Klein this process was not pathological nor devoid of progress; it was a genuine struggle for self-betterment. As Stokes put it in *Smooth and Rough*, "each man struggles to cohere"; "man's greater consciousness implies both an increased fragmentation of experience and a restorative unity: the ego is now stronger, now more split. Processes of thought divide experience: they construct as well a mosaic from what has been broken".[434] Each time that the individual psyche managed to incorporate disillusionment and loss, it represented an advancement in the individual's development, producing a stronger ego with renewed confidence in its ability to recover from despair: "As the adaptation to the external world increases, this splitting is carried out on planes which gradually become increasingly nearer and nearer to reality. This goes on until love for the real and the internalised objects and trust in them are well established".[435] A model of this process might be read in Woolf's autobiographical essay, 'Moments of Being'. Recalling her childhood, Woolf recalls moments "of peculiar horror and physical collapse", brought on by the shock of unbearable negative realities – such as the suicide of someone she knew. But as she grew older, her capacity to incorporate such new knowledge increased; "I was conscious—if only at a distance—that I should in time explain it. [...]I feel that I have had a blow; but it is not, as I thought as a child, simply a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a

[430] Ibid. p.132
[431] Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law,* 1996, p.7
[432] Ibid. p.147
[433] Klein, Love, Guilt and Reparation,
[434] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.235
[435] Mitchell, Juliet, *The Selected Melanie Klein*, (New york: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.152

token of some real thing behind appearances".[436] From the experience of horror or loss, Woolf gradually felt, would come a more complex understanding of things. And as her capacity to tolerate it increased, so the horror of something 'other' transformed from a merely disruptive force to a sign of imminent growth.

As such, Stokes's paranoid-schizoid image of culture is less pessimistic than it sounds. Rather than envisaging the human condition after modernity as an inherently dark and melancholic one, he proposed that – in the wake of accelerated transformations that the human condition was struggling to get on terms with – culture itself was coming through the same process that Klein observed in every child, and which he himself underwent in his early career: a retreat into defensive fantasies of omnipotence and, when they failed, feelings of estrangement and nihilistic despair. Such extremes were the expression of a reactive struggle engendered by rapid social change, and Stokes hoped this was a process that, collectively, culturally, we would emerge from. Practically speaking, this meant that Stokes was able to conceive of new representational forms beyond the seeming abyss of abstraction, as well as new cultural and architectural landscapes in which the divided and conflictual aspects of human living were re-integrated. In *Smooth and Rough*, he speculated that, "perhaps translation from the terms of a more modern city would be easier".[437] In other words, he hoped that once culture had caught up to its own discoveries, its own moments of 'peculiar horror and physical collapse', there was potential for a future urban landscape which more readily reflected the inner world of an organic being: "Will there not grow eventually a down-to-earth vision of living – I do not suggest that we can as yet begin to entertain it – wherein major components are no longer deeply split from one another?"[438]

But the vagueness of Stokes and Klein's described 'reparative' or 'integrative' state might lead to suspicion about its viability. Was this not simply a cyclical 'coming around' to the same naïve and idealistic fantasy of sublimation Stokes had inhabited at his career's beginning, in which he imagined that the conflictual 'parts' of culture and of the self would somehow re-fuse into full understanding? Would such a state be viable without facilitation by illusion or ignorance? Indeed, where Klein has not been read as a melancholic, she has sometimes been read as an idealist. Mary Jacobus writes that "Klein understands twinning wistfully, in terms of a dialogue between 'those un-understood and split off parts which the individual is longing to regain, in the hope of achieving wholeness and complete understanding' – the never-to-be-completed process of integration that preoccupies her late work".[439] There is, in other words, an unfulfillable idealism in Klein. Although it is unclear whether Jacobus means to imply that Klein herself sees the process of integration as a necessarily unfinished one, or that, much like the Tempio, her own description of reparation remained incomplete because it could not feasibly be 'completed'. Indeed, though I will not have space to address the full complexity of this disagreement here, it is worth noting that Klein's idealistic emphasis on integration is one of the charges brought against her by Lacanian psychoanalysts. Rather than moving towards potential integration or repair, Lacan stressed the continual importance of self-disruption as a guard against the conservative illusion of coherence, both within the self, and between the self and the world. As a means of preventing dangerous ossification, he was focused on what Adam Philips calls being "eccentric to

[436] Virginia Woolf, Ed. By Jeanne Schulkind, Moments of Being, (London; Pimlico, 2002) p.85
[437] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.227
[438] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.138
[439] Jacobus, Mary, *The poetics of Psychoanalysis*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.149

yourself".[440] In this, Lacan was not alone; in the postmodern period, he was one of many thinkers to place an emphasis on the unassimilable, partly as a moral imperative against the violence of visionary wholeness inherent to recent historical events. Steiner posits this shift as one of the major problems of the postmodern period, that is, "an ambivalent, ironic stance towards the dogma of progress" both individually and collectively.[441] Indeed, Steiner inadvertently frames the central tension of Klein's work on the psyche in cultural terms: if in Klein's work it is not certain that the child can achieve reparation without a relapse into destructive idealism, "it is not certain that one can devise a model of culture, a heuristic program for further advance, without a utopian core".[442] If the hope of reparation was so often used as a shield against actually achieving it, and moreover, had become the justification for violent idealistic defenses, how could an appeal to potential repair be justified?

To see idealism in Klein, however, would be to ignore that her 'integrative' or 'reparative' orientation is nothing like the originary state of synthesis it might call to mind. It became apparent to Stokes over the course of his life that states of recovery or 'integration' were often compulsively pictured as a return to wholeness, to a state beyond conflict. But Klein made it clear that such longing was for an infantile and illusionary state. As such, to read Klein as an idealist is to misunderstand the complexity of the state she imagines (in Lacan's case, perhaps ironically, in order to prop up the systematic coherence of his own model). Klein's integrative state is often the subject of contradictory descriptions – understandable, given its ambivalence – that are apt to mislead. Segal, for example, often refers to the work of integration as the "[creation of] a world which is whole, complete and unified".[443] Likierman, on the other hand, describes it as a "a composite identity made up of self-aspects that are gathered over time into a more inclusive and stable identity".[444] While Stonebridge questions whether Klein's work to some extent "insists on leaving the ego shattered by anxiety".[445] It is ambiguous, in other words, as to whether Klein intends the self and the world, through this process, to become whole or not. Such confusion arises, it seems, because integration for Klein was a complex state of ambivalence that is hard to hold in one's mind – one in which the subject is both fractured *and* whole. Such an ambiguous state was what Fritz had found so difficult to process; the world seemed made up of things which were both divided and continuous, separate and unseverably interrelated. The realisation of this state, with regard to relations, elicited both feelings of love and hope of reconciliation to others, and at the same time, a sobering knowledge of their difference from oneself. This was the state that the child had to come to terms with in regards to the maternal body: though the child was able to recover love for the mother, they could not undo the knowledge of her badness and mortality. Instead, they must grow to understand and love her newly compound form.

As such, Klein suggests that after experiences of collapse and reintegration, we do recover a sense of wholeness, but it will not resemble any state of wholeness we previously knew. Her theory was essentially one of increased complexity: it was about the capacity of the ego to incorporate new and disruptive elements without completely

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[440] Rosen-Carole, Adam, *Lacan and Klein, Creation and Discovery: An Essay of Reintroduction*, (London: Lexington Books, 2011), p.29; Philips, Adam, *Terrors and Experts,* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), p.xv

[441] George Steiner, Bluebeard's Castle, 1971, p.70

[442] Ibid. p.71

[443] Stonebridge, Lyndsey & Phillips, John (ed.), *Reading Melanie Klein,* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.216

[444] Likierman, Miera, *Melanie Klein: Her Work in Context*, (New York; A&C Black, 2001), p.116

[445] Stonebridge, Lyndsey & Phillips, John (ed.), *Reading Melanie Klein,* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.200

breaking. This process, Klein wrote, was "extremely painful", and the weak ego would resist it by any means possible.[446] But since the ego could not erase the loss and disillusionment, its only defences were either to remain in a state of mourning, or to escape into temporary and illusionary ignorance. Only through the painful process of integrating the loss was the subject able to honestly reconnect with the world. As such, her psychic model was neither nostalgic nor melancholic, but one of continuous, difficult but unavoidable progress. Though the ego is continuously broken down and remade, the scars of those divisions remain, and as such, the ego can only move forward and not back.

On an individual level, it is not hard to imagine how Klein's progression of the self plays out; though she transfers it into a childhood setting, her work is a parable about the subject's recovery from grief. In Stokes's work, however, it is also possible to see how Klein's thought might also play out fruitfully in a cultural context. The defensive splitting of mechanical structures from emotional life that formed a major part of his vision of modernity is a good example of how such an integrative process might play out as a cultural phenomenon:

> fantasy has an aesthetic truth defined by and defining scientific truth. This interdependent relationship will become the ultimate object of contemplation. Far, far more will be allotted to fantasy than was suspected in any previous age; in ages far less notable for science, for their grasp of reality. A paradox. Fantasy now becomes more pure as impartiality becomes more pure. Love and life cannot be ousted. They will grow yet warmer in the hearts of men when the dusty embers of universal systems based upon partialities and compulsions are raked out thoroughly. The essence of man's cultural development has been a gradual submission to, and control of, reality, resulting in an increased substitution or a complicated deferment of emotional outlet.[447]

In Stokes's imagined future world, the attempt to eradicate the irrational aspects of life would result in the awareness of their lack and, eventually, give way to the recovery of them. But the resulting state would not be a repeated muddling of the rational and the emotional; rather, it would be one which understood more fully the ineradicable relationship between them, *without* simply collapsing them back into one another. Such a culture would understand the role of fantasy and of the unknown in scientific discourse without relinquishing its faith in objective study; it would recover its faith in the interpretation and rationalisation of art, whilst also understanding that the work could not be reduced to such frameworks. Such development would also mean irrevocable losses: for example, the dream of complete self-knowledge promised by science, and the loss of untainted religious faith or poetic self-mythology. But such losses would eventually give way to an ultimately more nourishing and newly meaningful picture of both the world and the self.

What is perhaps most difficult to understand in Klein, of all the forms of ambivalence she describes, is this co-existence of pain and pleasure involved in her model of self-development. As Meg Harris Williams and Donald Meltzer – who was in conversation with Stokes during the last years of his life – emphasise, Klein fundamentally altered the psychoanalytic attitude to pain: "her forward-looking, developmental orientation, as compared to Freud's essentially backwards looking,

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[446] Melanie Klein, *The Collected Works of Melanie Klein*, (London; Karnac, 1975), p.274
[447] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol. 2*, 1978, p.168

psychopathological interest, is her insistence that a certain level of mental pain, different though it is for people, is essential for the development of the personality".[448] It is for this reason that Meg Harris Williams named her book on the post-Kleinian model of the mind after Keats's famous metaphor, 'The Vale of Soul-Making'.[449] An adjustment to the 'vale of tears' – the Christian conception of life as a painful and difficult experience that would be relieved upon admittance to heaven – Keats proposed a new model of redemption, in which suffering was crucial to the development of one's soul, and thus redemptive even without the promise of a further realm. In his famous letter, he asked: "Do you not see how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a soul? A Place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways!".[450] Keats had expressed a similar regard for the spiritual value of loss in his conception of 'negative capability' – the ability of the artist to tolerate the experience of confusion in the pursuit of artistic truth – which was eventually taken up by Wilfred Bion, in his adaptation of the Kleinian model.[451]

It is unclear whether Stokes had read Keats, but their world-view was strikingly similar. In 'Psychoanalysis and Our Culture', Stokes too discusses the religious positing of "what is called a "vale of tears"", reflecting that such mythologies were inherently more meaningful to humanity than so-called 'rational' religions, precisely because they were about the struggle between life and death. Stokes – like Keats – fundamentally believed that this struggle was at the root of all meaning, and gave "the scaffolding for the last word stillness or finality of great works of art".[452] As such, any attempt to mitigate or end it through a state of resolution or regression would be, though easier, detrimental to the human spirit. Such a perspective, much like Klein's reparative orientation, was not always easy to sustain; Stokes and Keats alike often suffered with the knowledge that we must continue the quest for self-betterment despite the lack of potential salvation at its end. In his famous letter, Keats wrote of the poignancy of this contradiction:

> Man is originally a 'poor forked creature' subject to the same mischances as the beasts of the forest, destined to hardships and disquietude of some kind or other. [...] what must it end in? – Death – and who could in such a case bear with death – the whole troubles of life which are now frittered away in a series of years.[453]

This was the essence, also, of another of Stokes's late essays, in which he reflects on the literary poignancy of Freud's late model. Inherent to the child's acceptance of the demands of reality, Stokes reflects, was the acceptance of death, and the knowledge that "life is but the giving up of a game that must be lost".[454]

Such a perspective is perhaps why Klein had been read as a psychoanalyst of melancholia. But to read Klein as herself an idealist *or* a melancholic is what results from grasping the logic of her thought without really achieving the state it describes. Such positions, contrary to the aims of reparation in Klein's work, still entertain the idea that

[448] Donald Meltzer and Meg Harris Williams, *The Apprehension of Beauty:The Role of Aesthetic Conflict in Development, Art and Violence*, (London; Karnac, 2008), p.19
[449] Meg Harris Williams, The Vale of Soul-Making: The Post-Kleinian Model of the Mind, (London; Karnac, 2005)
[450] Jack Stillinger, *Romantic Complexity: Keats, Coleridge and Wordsworth*, (Urbana; University of Illinois Press, 2006), p.37
[451] John Keats, *The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats, Cambridge Edition.* (London; Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 2012), p. 277.
[452] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.134
[453] Ibid. p.37
[454] Ibid. p.59

true comfort and self-possession can only be found in resolution. Dejection at the failure of wholeness or immortality only confirms one's fantasies of it, and the failure of the subject to find meaning beyond it. As Sanchez Pardo points out, in the Kleinian model, "the delusions of inferiority of the melancholic are in fact delusions of grandeur, an obvious manifestation of his omnipotent feelings".[455] Conversely, a reparative orientation to the world is one in which complex, imperfect and, importantly, *mortal* objects offer comfort, where the increased complexity arising from contradiction, though painful, also elicits increased love of the world. As such, Stokes insists that above all "psychoanalysis does not endorse a profundity of indifference rather than of underlying conflict".[456] First of all, it is through conflict that we become more complex and essentially individual beings, and this was itself a worthy struggle. And secondly, the fact of contradiction – for example, that we must strive to live in the knowledge of death – was the root of the value therein. Both Stokes and Keats imagined a possible future world which would find a new form of faith or mythology based around the development of the psyche or soul, rather than its escape from struggle and contradiction. To Keats, this seemed "a faint sketch of a system of salvation which does not affront our reason and humanity – I am convinced that many difficulties which Christians labour under would vanish before it".[457] Similarly, Stokes asked "of what account is forgiveness by a Saviour compared with the very rare non-manic forgiveness of the self, by the self, a long and most arduous pursuit?".[458] "The universal religions" he wrote, "are based on conceptions of original negativism and the hope of salvation", the original and most meaningful story behind human living.[459] But this did not necessarily need to entail a story of the human freedom from it: "I do not judge it to be impossible that a ritual symbolising the psyche's evolution and disparities could be created".[460] In other words, Stokes hopefully speculated that a new human mythology could be created, which honoured and celebrated the difficult progress of the soul. Indeed, Stokes felt that the development of psychoanalysis as a mode of thought was itself a symptom of this emerging complexity in self-perception. And in a demonstration of the love-in-disillusionment that Klein had described, he eventually felt that compared to the complex world view it had afforded him, a straightforward apprehension or attainment of infantile 'wholeness', even if possible, would feel not like a triumph but a loss. "Speculative psychoanalysis is bound to become even more complicated than the old metaphysics" he wrote in a notebook, for "our whole creativeness goes into distortion: it is therefore infinitely multiple; it cannot be cleaned away; and were we ever able to clasp the things-in-themselves, they would seem a nothingness".[461]

Stokes's aesthetic writings of the late 1950s and 1960s dealt not only with the manic reparative fantasies of the avant-garde – those he saw as a manifestation of the infantile

[455] Sánchez-Pardo, Esther, *Cultures of the Death Drive: Melanie Klein and Modernist Melancholia*, (London; Duke University Press, 2003), p.27
[456] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost,* 1973, p.133
[457] Keats, *The Complete Poetical Works and Letters*, 2012, p.277
[458] Stokes, A Game That Must Be Lost, 1973, p.141
[459] Stokes, A Game That Must Be lost, 1973, p.134
[460] Ibid. p.140
[461] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 12,* ref number TGA 8816.12, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

conception of repair – but also with art-forms that he felt modelled the mature reparative attitude that Klein had described. Indeed, it was eventually through their contrast that Stokes attempted what Donald Meltzer and Meg Harris Williams describe as "the differentiation of true and false art".[462] Stokes had been trying to articulate such a distinction since his recourse to carving and modelling in the mid 1920s. In that original formulation, Stokes had tried to pinpoint the difference between 'plastic' and materially grounded works of art: between those that seemed to promote the transcendence or control of the self over its material, and those which engaged truthfully with their material. In some ways, Stokes's distinction had not changed. What he had been trying to articulate was a kind of sincerity, a truthful engagement with reality and the self, anchored by the limits of the real and thus freed from the untrammeled impulses of the mind. Through Klein, however, Stokes came to realise that a sincere or truthful work of art was one that respected the 'profundity of underlying conflict' – one that was borne out of the development of the soul through struggle, at the cost of coherence and self-satisfaction.

Besides his work on Cézanne, in his late life Stokes published an explicitly psychoanalytic book on Michelangelo (1955), an essay on Monet (1958), and an essay on Turner (1963), alongside many other short lectures on the nature and future of art. All of these works in some way champion the developmental value of the artwork as the place where individual and cultural conflicts are worked into a newly complex object. The work of these artists, he felt, were a successful "reflection of the ego's accumulated structure, of the erotic, aggressive and anxious relationships, the vast concourse of relationships to objects that flow from all the ego's functions".[463] Though the artwork was a self-contained object and therefore, to some extent at peace with itself, it was by no means peaceful. Such an artwork must be aware of the presence of conflict both within and outside of itself. As such, it must not only be a 'whole', but acknowledge the possibility of disintegration, disruption and ambiguity – all of the means by which a self-contained object might lose its integrity. Only in such an object, Stokes proposes, could we find a model for meaning that was reflective of the human condition. Soutine's landscapes, for example, "temper violence with containment", and "since we too possess the seeds of disintegration, those paintings serve us well".[464] In this respect, Stokes adopted a similar to stance to the appreciation of art as his friend and correspondent, Henry Moore who, in an article for the Observer of 1957, wrote that "there is one quality I find in all the artists I admire most […] I mean a disturbing element, a distortion, giving evidence of a struggle of some sort". Such work was more profound than that which aimed only for a sense of resolution: "the classical style has a pleasing quality, a happy fixed finality is its aim – a resolved world. Rembrandt on the other hand, shows in every painting marks of an unending struggle, as though he were being impelled all the time to solve something".[465]

Such artworks, Stokes felt, were not only honest, but hopeful, insofar as they were a testament to the possible creation of meaning in the face of loss, and of possible

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[462] Meltzer, Donald and Harris Williams, Meg, *The Apprehension of Beauty:The Role of Aesthetic Conflict in Development, Art and Violence*, (London; Karnac, 2008), p.xvi. Meltzer and Harris Williams make this distinction through the categories of 'depressive' and 'narcissistic' art, but they are attempting to explain the same difference as Stokes: the difference, that is, between art made in a spirit of self-protection or self-aggrandisement, and that made in the spirit of understanding the world and the self, potentially at the cost of one's safety or self containment.
[463] Adrian Stokes, *The Invitation in Art*, Kindle Edition, (London; Routledge, 2007), Location 1037
[464] Ibid. Location 1037
[465] Henry Moore, ed. By Alan Wilkinson, *Writings and Conversation*, (Berkley, The University of California Press, 2002), p.117

continuation in the face of disaster. They "[bear] witness to intact objects even when the subject matter is disintegration".[466]

> After a bombing in the last war, we were able to look at elongated, piled up displays of what had been exterior, mingled with what had been interior, materializations of the serene Analytic Cubism that Picasso and Braque invented before the first war; and usually, as in some of these paintings, we saw the poignant key provided by some untouched, undamaged object that had miraculously escaped. The thread of life persists in the case of early Cubist paintings.[467]

Here, whether accidentally or not, Stokes makes a neat reference to the central image of his first text – that of Ariadne's thread acting as a guide through the maze of a destructive culture. Through such art then, Stokes was able to see 'a way out'. Indeed, the continuation of meaning in the face of disaster was the essence of what Segal outlined as a specifically Kleinian aesthetic. In her essay, she argues that to enfold experiences of destruction and loss into partially coherent or meaningful forms was to attest to continued life after tragedy, to the possibility of recovery generally, and of emerging whole from disaster.

It seems important to stress, however, that Stokes did not consider the above artforms to be examples of the reparative attitude that should necessarily be emulated. The artists Stokes championed had achieved a 'working through' of conflicts that were apt for their individual circumstances and for their time. In late or post-modernity, for example, art could not merely imitate Cézanne; the reality it was tasked with working through had changed, and if the artist did not come to terms with the conditions of his moment, then his work could have no "urgency or power".[468] Though Stokes was unconvinced by the dead end of abstraction, he also knew that if the artist of late or post-modernity merely returned to the forms of the past, it would only manage an empty nostalgia: "the fury has gone from this past recovered in terms of homely landscape [...] the past is there petrified: we see ourselves as if dead, completed".[469] In his essay 'Landscape, Ritual and Art' Stokes had argued that ritualistic continuity was important to art – the envelopment of the past-in-the-present. but he recognised that, like the Kleinian ego, culture could only move forwards. Just as we could not undo the disenchantment wrought by the enlightenment, nor unsee the potential violence in the human psyche, Art could not fully recover from the representational extremes that reflected these discoveries. As such, Stokes was not concerned with a straightforward return to representation, or to the pastoral – indeed, his late work criticised romanticism as much as abstraction – but with new forms that integrated the newly mechanical landscape with the aspects of life that it could not erase. In this respect, Stokes seems to have considered Picasso an isolated figure in a mid-century art scene which he felt had largely been co-opted by mechanical and visionary ideals:

> Later work by Picasso is more disturbing since he has broken off and recombined parts of the body, often adding more than one view of these part objects [...] but the furor of his genius is such that the sum of misplaced sections does not suggest the parts of a machine: on the contrary, in the

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[466] Adrian Stokes, Reflections on the Nude, (London; Tavistock, 1967), p.37
[467] Sayers, Art, Psychoanalysis and Adrian Stokes, p.240
[468] Adrian Stokes, *Three Essays on The Painting of Our Time*, (London; Tavistock, 1961), p.155
[469] Stokes, *The Invitation in Art*, Kindle Edition, 2007, Location 1101

translated bodies [...] of Guernica, there exist both horror and pathos as well as aesthetic calm.[470]

Though Picasso's cubism was reminiscent of the mechanical landscape, he also reconciled that landscape to the human feelings of disorientation it caused. Such a reconciliation also reflected the formal nature of his art, insofar as Picasso combined the abstract values of form and colour with an appreciation for the scenes of ordinary material life.

Indeed, Stokes considered the reconciliation of abstraction to materialism or realism – both in art and in life – an important act of 'integration' for the post-modern moment. He had already demonstrated the urgency of such integration for the meaningful use of language. But in art, too, the potential for representation must be recovered, beyond the extremes of realism and abstraction. In this respect, Stokes held the members of the Unit One movement in high regard. During the war years, Stokes was living among this group – officially a 'unit' between 1933 and 1935, but at work well after that – which Paul Nash had started as a means of cementing a specifically British tradition of abstraction. The movement included Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth – neighbours to Stokes both in London and St Ives – and Henry Moore, with whom he had a casual correspondence. In later years, these artists also became associated with the Cornish painter Peter Lanyon – whose works Stokes saved from destruction after his death in a gliding accident – and William Coldstream – a frequent visitor to St Ives – from whom Stokes commissioned a never-to-be-finished portrait of Klein. These artists had different merits – and appeared to be, ostensibly, of different mediums and movements. Moore was primarily interested in sculpture; Nicholson was interested in abstract reliefs; and Lanyon and Coldstream were painters of landscapes and portraits respectively. However, in some form or another, they had all managed to reconcile the undeniable discoveries of abstraction – the logic of colour and form – with the material and emotional realities from which it could not be removed.

In a review of Ben Nicholson for *The Spectator* in 1937, Stokes reflects at length on the changes in usage of the word 'abstract': "I take it that the most durable use of the word in this context points to those aims that are constant in visual art throughout the ages". But in his late life, he felt that it had come to be a byword for the removal of man's faculties from nature.[471] Ironically, in doing so, Stokes felt that such art had actually abandoned what ought to be common to art in general: the discovery of that friction and balance between man's faculties and nature, and between the universal and the particular. In Ben Nicholson's work, Stokes seemed to find expression of this friction, and as such, an appreciation of ostensibly abstract art that he was not expecting to find. Though Nicholson's reliefs relied on the intersection of forms, free from pictorial content, Stokes wrote that "all but one of the pictures he terms " Still Life," because they are imperfectly abstract in the sense above."[472] Nicholson's work dealt with the play of forces, and in this sense, they incorporated an understanding of lines and colours as a language of their own. But he also understood that such interplay could only be made meaningful by its relationship with the particular. "Any problems dealt with in "abstract" art" Nicholson insisted "are related to the interplay of forces and, therefore, any solution reached has a bearing on all interplay between forces: it is related to Arsenal vs. Tottenham Hotspur quite as much as the stars in their courses".[473] While art was to an extent an expression of abstract formulations, those formulations were given their

[470] Stokes, Three Essays on the Painting of Our Time, 1961, p.155
[471] Adrian Stokes, 'Mr Ben Nicholson at the Lefevre Galleries', *The Spectator*, 19 March 1937, p.17
[472] Ibid. p.17
[473] Ben Nicholson, Typescript entitled 'Notes on 'Abstract' Art', 1937-48, Tate Archive Collection, p.1

associative power by the material and particular things they brought to mind. It might seem at first glance that Nicholson's white reliefs belong to the same kind of mind as Malevich's White on White series. But far from declaring his departure from the dead weight of objects, Nicholson was clear that "the circles which occur in [his] work originated with a plate on a table and not with any idea of infinity at all".[474] In practice of course, Malevich and Nicholson were engaging in the same creation of meaning. All that was different was Nicholson's apprehension of the complex truth of what he was doing. As chapter 4 stressed, Stokes did not believe it was truly possible to escape the world of objects and ordinary emotions, even where the artist claimed it was so; Malevich's work would always recall things, like plates on tables, even when he believed himself to have disowned them.

The re-itegration of the abstract with the real moved both ways – it required the reaquaintance of realist art with those aspects of selfhood and experience that disallow a full or literal rendering of the object, or involve the interference of subjective states in the real.[475] In a 1961 interview about his time in Cornwall, Peter Lanyon recalls a moment during the Spanish Civil War when he became disillusioned with "painting what was infront of [him]", having gotten caught up in the repititiousness of his "tricks and ways of doing it". Like Kandisnky, he suddenly felt that "the outside world was no good [to him] at all": "I was left with just the plain white surface of the board". In this instance, Lanyon credits Stokes for introducing him to Nicholson, who was able to help Lanyon "understand that there were actual plastic values which I had lost due to my cleverness in looking at the landscape".[476] As such, the artists of the Unit One movement and their associates more generally seemed to embody, for Stokes, this friction or dialectical rebounding of opposites, to produce a more meaningful object. Ben Nicholson retained that "in whatever way this question [of art] is approached, the same problem of establishing a balance between freedom and order remains".[477] There was a tension in Nicholson's art and in his thinking which he seemed not to want to dissipate, not only between forming and deforming, but between theorising and being. He, like Cézanne, found it difficult to write or to read about art for extended periods of time because the language threatened to pull him in, possibly to delusional fantasies about his own actions (he wrote to Stokes, about his essays on abstraction, that he could not read all of it, his head began to swim). Stokes recalls him telling "that his mother, herself an artist, distressed by high-flown talk, would find herself wanting to scrub the kitchen table. I have always considered his remarking of it [...] to be the most telling anecdote I know about Ben Nicholson".[478] In the same way that self-reflection could free the subject from automatic action, to scrub the table or to till the earth were a way of warding off the dangerous plasticity of thought that came with such self-reflection. In this way, the artists surrounding Stokes during his time in St Ives made it their aim to find a precarious sense of balance or suspension between the opposing impulses that constantly exert their pull on the human psyche. In these years Stokes himself had

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[474] Kite, Stephen, *Adrian Stokes: An Architectonic Eye,* (MHRA, 2009), p.157
[475] It is worth noting here that Clive Bell similarly critiqued any defection by art into one of these two extremes: "The world into which Cézanne tumbled was a world still agitated by the quarrels of Romantics and Realists. [...] To Cézanne one account would appear as irrelevant as the other, since both omit the thing that matters – what philosophers used to call "the thing in itself," what now, I imagine, they call "the essential reality"."
Bell, Clive, *Art,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) p.213
[476] All quotes taken from 'Peter Lanyon c.1961: Interview by Lionel Miskin',
http://www.artcornwall.org/interviews/Peter_Lanyon.htm
[477] Ben Nicholson, Typescript of an interview with Ben Nicholson by The Times 12 November 1959, Tate Archive Collection, p.2
[478] Kite, *An Architectonic Eye,* 2009, p.156

resorted to a talismanic tending to physical objects, as though to stop himself from drifting apart from them. "When re-writing all of this," he writes in his diary, "I must not start in quite so rapidly with a philosophical, contemplative attitude to the external world. [...] All that seems nonsense when engaged in practical things"; "It suggests a too long sitting at a desk and too little digging".[479] Like Cézanne , he sought to ward off the self-aggrandisement that comes from the attribution of excessive value to the world of one's own mind, over and above that outside of it. At the same time, however, "certainly it is at a desk, at least a week away from digging and planting, that such a thought is possessed. It is an abstraction, an isolation or exaggeration. But I do not take it back".[480] Abstraction, too, was necessary to the generation of meaning. Henry Moore had said something similar, stating that "all the best sculpture I know is both abstract and representational at the same time".[481] In a later letter to Moore, Stokes wrote that due to his understanding of the relationship between abstraction and the body, it seemed to him that Moore was "the only English artist to have conquered as well as used our climate": "we need the help of images that embody at one and the same time solutions both for the regard and the recoil from the body".[482]

It is worth noting that, inherent to this perspective, and crucial for Stokes's development both as a thinker and an art critic, was a renewed perception of the value of the 'ordinary'. It might be fruitful, even, to frame Stokes's work as a quest for the ordinary – a journey of self-betterment whose purpose was to find the value in particular and every day objects, without recourse to ideals. As Richard Read writes, Stokes had "a strong yearning for normality in his work" – a desire for groundedness that, in his early writing, was expressed by the image of the mensa table, whose beauty derived from the fact that "it is solid and its feet are on the floor". [483] Stokes recognised an essential respect for such normality in both the art works he championed in his late life, and the frameworks of child psychoanalysis. In Psychoanalysis and Our Culture, he reflected on the personality of the child analyst, their lack of fanfare for what he felt was a deeply important task. But he also speculated that the child analyst did not crave such fanfare: "away from the sessions, the seminars and the meetings, their requirement is for what I have heard described as 'ordinary life'".[484] One major component of all of Stokes's critiques – whether of philosophical frameworks, mechanical fantasies and of the avant-garde alike – was his distaste for any language or self-image that claimed to defect from the ordinary, to reach something more than or beyond what was there. Similarly, in her late essay, 1963's 'Some Reflections on the 'Oresteia'', Klein reframed the battle between

[479] Stokes, Adrian, *Notebook 16,* ref number TGA 8816.16, (Tate Archive Collection, Tate Britain, London)

[480] Ibid.

[481] Henry Moore made many comments to this effect – discussing the conflicting influences over his work of classical and primitive sculpture, for example, or of tenderness and violence: "I feel the conflict still exists in me – but not causing me any difficulty in working, as it did immediately after returning from Italy (1925) – in fact I ask myself is this conflict what makes things happen? [...] Goya could make beautifully tender portraits of children and yet painted the violent 'Saturn devouring a child' [...] Michaelangelo's art shows conflict – the bombastic insensitive swagger of his 'David' and the slow lazy melancholy of 'Night and Day'. Only at the end of a long life, in his greatest and last works are these qualities mixed to become a noble rich-blooded maturity of strength mingled with melancholy".

Moore, Henry, ed. By Alan Wilkinson, *Writings and Conversation*, (Berkley, The University of California Press, 2002), p.117

[482] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be lost*, 1973, p.135

[483] Read, *Art and its Discontents*, 2002, p.xxi

[484] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be lost*, 1973, p.142

depressive and paranoid-schizoid orientations as one between hubris and the fall from it:

> In Gilbert Murray's definition, 'the typical sin which all things, so far as they have life, commit is in poetry Hubris, a word generally translated as 'insolence' or 'pride' ... Hubris grasps at more, bursts bounds and breaks the order; it is followed by Dike, Justice, which re-establishes them. This rhythm – Hubris-Dike, Pride and its fall, Sin and Chastisement – is the commonest burden of those philosophical lyrics which are characteristic of Greek tragedy ...' In my view the reason why hubris appears to be so sinful is that it is based on certain emotions which are felt to be dangerous to others and the self.[485]

Kleinian psychoanalysis, Stokes wrote, encourages "a good object closely related to negativism or bad objects", but such an object would also be "a good object of an every-day and physiologically founded status that parades a homeliness far removed from the noble enthronements of the past to which it was the footstool".[486] The struggle between hubris and justice – or, as we might say, transcendence and earth-boundedness – was a timeless struggle within the individual ego. But in a modern landscape increasingly saturated with images of human supremacy, Stokes felt that it was particularly important to create meaningful objects that resisted this urge.

Although Stokes insisted that artworks were historically situated attempts to work through the conflicts of their time, he also insisted that these struggles were nonetheless representative of one ultimate unresolvable conflict that he thought common to the art of all ages: that between the objective and the subjective, between the artist's knowledge of his own solipsism, and his belief in the existence of the real. The great work of art, Stokes writes, "combines a sense of fusion with a sense of object otherness".[487] It understands, that is, that its object is both apprehensible and unassimilable. In her 1967 appendix to her essay on Kleinian aesthetics, Segal wrote that this was an element of the Kleinian model Stokes had helped her to see. "I am in agreement with Adrian Stokes, who says that the artist seeks the precise point at which he can maintain simultaneously an ideal object merged with the self, and an object perceived as separate and independent".[488] In other words, it was not just about the reconciliation of destruction and creation *within* the object, but between objects as well. "The tragic element in the aesthetic experience resides, not in the transience, but in the enigmatic quality of the object [...] its central experience of pain resides in uncertainty, tending towards distrust, verging on suspicion". Despite this, however, there emerges, in true art, both doubt and faith in the object's continuousness with oneself: a belief that objects belong to the same world as oneself, can be understood by oneself, at the same time as an exaltation in its self-sufficiency. This was also a shift of perspective fundamental to Klein's reparative attitude. It was important, not only that the child learns to accept the separateness of objects from themselves, but also to be concerned to preserve it. As Likierman puts it, "the shift involves the transformation from self-interest in safety and comfort to concern

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[485] Klein, Melanie, *The Collected Works of Melanie Klein,* (London; Karnac, 1975), p. 280
[486] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be lost*, 1973, p.133
[487] Gowing, *Critical Writings vol.3*, p.188
[488] Stonebridge, Lyndsey & Phillips, John (ed.), *Reading Melanie Klein,* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.220

for the welfare of the loved object".[489] It involves relinquishing the pursuit of one's own gratification – the gratification of self-sufficiency and safety of wholeness – to deriving gratification from the self-sufficiency and safety of others. In Klein's reparative parable about the boy who revolts against his mother and ends up turning the world on himself, the boy is only reconciled to the world when he demonstrates a desire to save other objects from its cruelties (and from his own). The boy's concern for the potential destruction of a squirrel overcomes his self-concern – in this moment, he recognises other objects and creatures not as persecutors or threats to his own integrity, but as fundamentally 'like' himself in their vulnerability. It was such a perspective that Cézanne had ultimately and perfectly modelled for Stokes: the combination of love and distress in Cézanne's paintings had belied both his intimate connection with the outer world, and his knowledge of its essential difference.

In his very late work, and particularly in 'Psychoanalysis and Our Culture', Stokes had begun to transform this aesthetic position into a possible basis for the recovery of collective meaning, and even religious feeling in social life. This might seem contradictory, insofar as Stokes had spent the majority of his career critiquing rational and non-rational 'religions' and false ideals of transcendence. But Stokes was not generally a nihilistic or destructive thinker. He was also deeply concerned with the capacity to create something new from disillusionment, and felt that there had to be a way to recover the meaning that the events and epistemological shifts of modernity had destroyed. He goes as far as to say, in his penultimate essay that "there is a duty, I feel, to defend the poetic elements in the psychology of religion; or, rather, it would be so were we unable to extract from psychoanalytic sources themselves any power that could restore to culture, and more particularly to art, a constructive sense of the transcendental"; "this will seem a strange word to employ" he writes, but "it depends on the character of the notion of the transcendental that can be permitted to flourish".[490] The important question to ask, Stokes felt, what *kind* of reparation and what *kind* of transcendental.

In his late work, Stokes essentially conceived of the 'transcendental', not as a realm beyond the world – whether beyond the mortal realm or above materiality – but as the existence within the world of a common substance or shared reality. The "transcendental does not only refer to an unshared power or state beyond us" he argues, "but also to shared fundamental aims. We cannot experience other people's experiences but we recognise and even understand them in terms of our own […] we sense them in view of what is held in common even though as individuals they are entirely beyond our powers".[491] Similarly to Eliot, he had come, post-Bradley and post-Klein, to an immense respect and amazement at the fact of collective meaning – its possibility in the face of difference and doubt. All of the works and artists that Stokes championed in his late life were possessed of this quality. Through a communion with the material world, they demonstrated conciliatory feelings of faith and goodwill towards the world and other people. In a review, he wrote that Nicholson was, to his mind the "leader of the very few real abstract artists in England. That is to say, I have always been able to discover in his non-representational work, and in- very few other works of this kind, the slow elucidation and isolation of factors that are constant in all that is pleasurable in the process of visual perception".[492] By abstract, Stokes does not mean removed from life, but simply that Nicholson's work had managed to embody what was common to all

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[489] Meira Likierman, 'Loss of the Loved Object: Tragic and Moral Motifs in Melanie Klein's Conception of the Depressive Position', *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 1995, 12(2)

[490] Stokes, Adrian, *A Game That Must Be Lost: collected papers,* (London: Carcanet, 1973), p.134-135

[491] Ibid. p.135

[492] Adrian Stokes, 'Mr Ben Nicholson at the Lefevre Galleries', *The Spectator*, 19 March 1937, p.17

truthful or nourishing works of art – what could be 'abstracted' from the particular as a general feature: namely, a sense of "the transcendental, the communal".[493] For Stokes, true works of art throughout all ages possessed this essential expression of belief in a shared reality, and the generation of shared meaning. In this respect, then, Stokes's perspective on art was not so different to Clive Bell's: Bell had suggested that works that had 'significant form', works that were moving, had a particular quality in common. And initially, Stokes had dismissed his thought: "there would be nothing to art could it be exercised in despite of temperament. Not even the framework ordained by culture can be used to contrive for aesthetic expression a rule of thumb".[494] Stokes merely meant to say, however, that no rational formula or common set of qualities could be isolated from true works of art. In his later life, Stokes believed that the quality Bell was trying to identify could not be discovered through any kind of abstract or equational thinking because it was the aesthetic manifestation of a moral attitude.

It was through his identification of this reparative quality that Stokes was able to observe a 'true' artistic sensibility in objects and paintings of vastly differing aesthetic traditions, and similarly, to consider some examples from these traditions to be mere imitations. He wrote in a letter to David Sylvester "I believe I have long presented Ben [Nicholson] with a problem that irks him. The basis of it is that I seem for thirty years thoroughly to understand and admire his painting, yet I do not declare unilaterally for abstract art and all that is written about it. I hang up paintings by Bill [Coldstream] for instance".[495]Though Nicholson and Coldstream's work seemed to belong respectively to entirely different traditions, they represented a similar working through and integration of difference: the relationship between objectivity and subjective perception. In other words, though they represented different vision of reality, Stokes felt that they modelled the same essential position towards the *apprehension* of it. Both Nicholson and Coldstream recognised the existence of their object as something both objective, solid, and blurred or transmuted by subjectivity. As such, for Stokes, their very different works were testament to their quasi-religious belief and fascination with, a shared but veiled reality.

Through such works, and through Klein, at the end of his life Stokes was able to honestly say that he maintained hope of the possibility of finding new forms of collective meaning after the cultural and epistemological upheavals of modernity. Moreover, he retained hope of finding a renewed sense of enchantment after its metaphysical disillusionment. In order to do so, however, he felt that there must be a widespread understanding of the nuances and confusions inherent to reparative action. Ideal structures, especially those that strove for wholeness, "[exalt] the good object into an ideal object, place it far beyond us, beyond our power to qualify or destroy it". In this case, "the transcendental becomes defence and escape".[496] In other words, a conception of the transcendental as an unreal object, a place or a state beyond present possibility, could only give rise to destructive actions in the here and now. Klein's work, in this respect, had led him to see that there was redemptive possibility in every day living. As Money-Kyrle puts it in his introduction to Klein's works, she helped to "lay bare the delusions behind archaic morality", in order to propose a new one marked by complexity, ambiguity, and tolerance towards the failures of the self and of the world. In Psychoanalysis and Our Culture, Stokes reflected

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[493] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.139
[494] Adrian Stokes, *Painting and the Inner World*, (London; Tavistock, 2013), p.6
[495] Adrian Stokes, letter to David Sylvester, 21 August 1965, among Stokes papers before their relocation to the Tate Archive.
[496] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.135

on the modern day obstacles to such a perspective: "so hurtful, so dangerous, to the difficult truth [is] the euphoria of the simplifiers and seceeders".[497] But Klein's work had presented him with hopeful possibilities for self renewal, that were all the more rewarding for their effort: "a difficult goal that belongs to life, well-being and happiness rather than to the hope of heaven".[498]

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[497] Ibid. p.143
[498] Stokes, *A Game That Must Be Lost*, 1973, p.141

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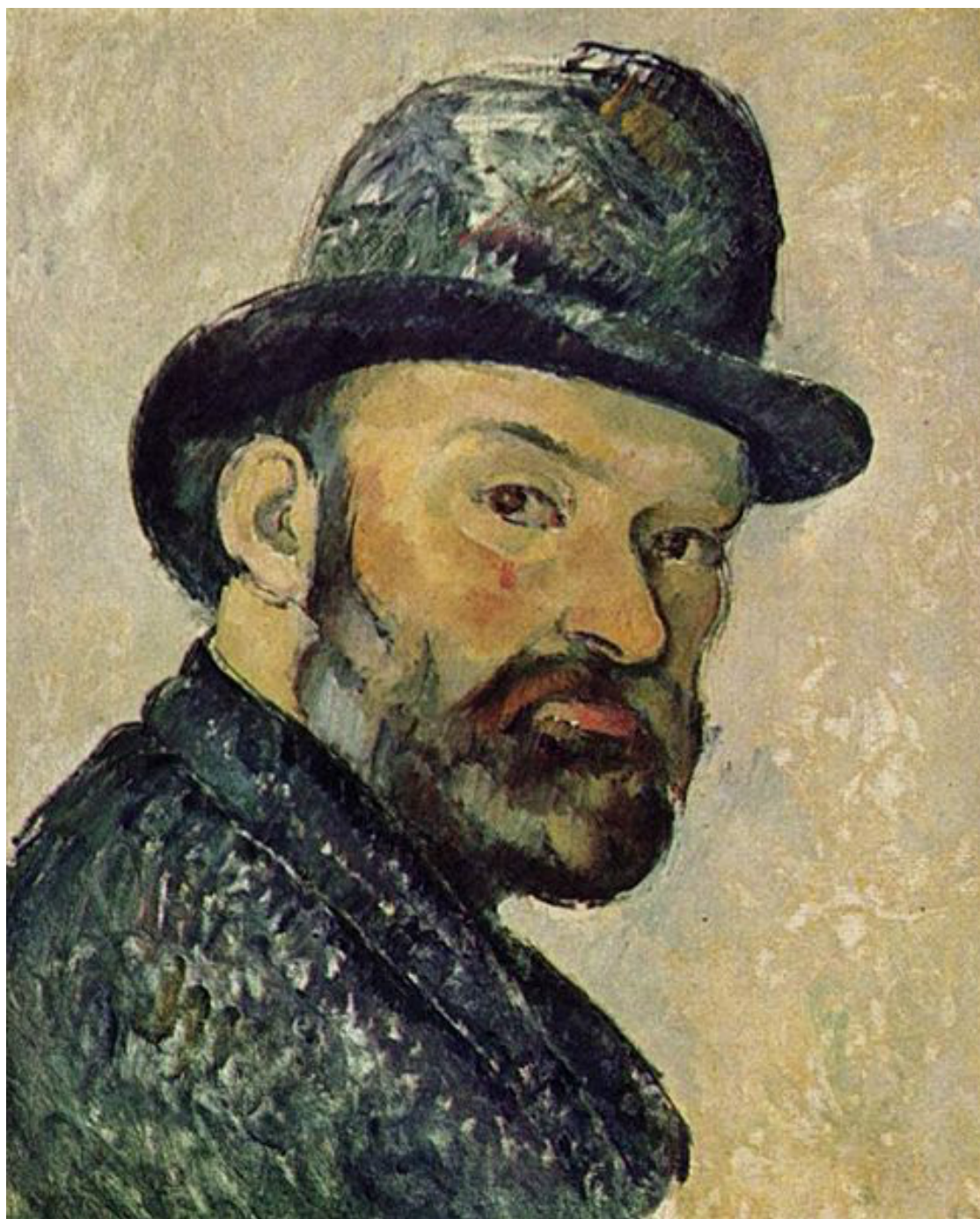
Paul Cezanne, *Self Portrait*, circa 1883 – 1887, Oil on canvas, 44 × 36 cm
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
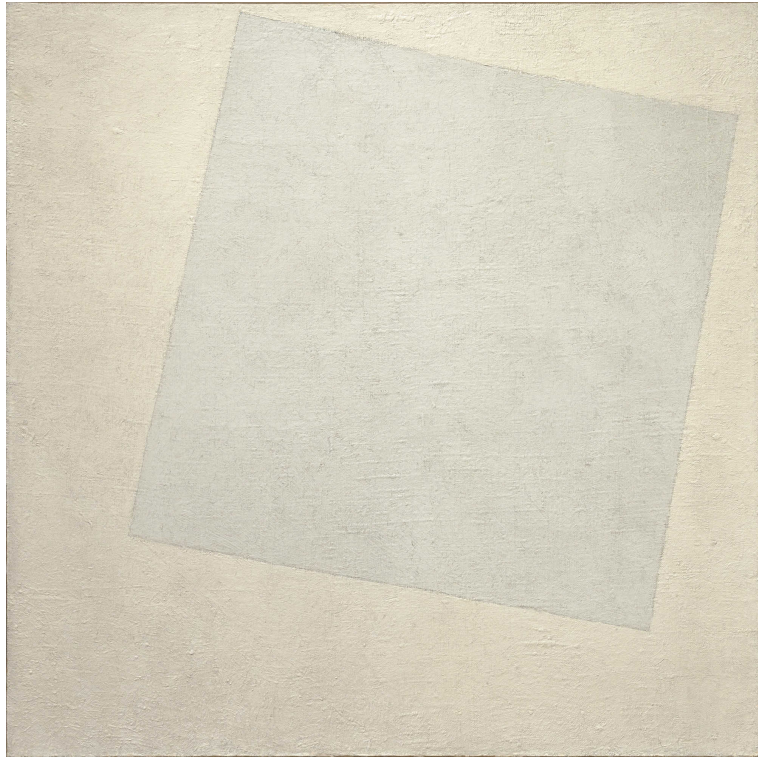
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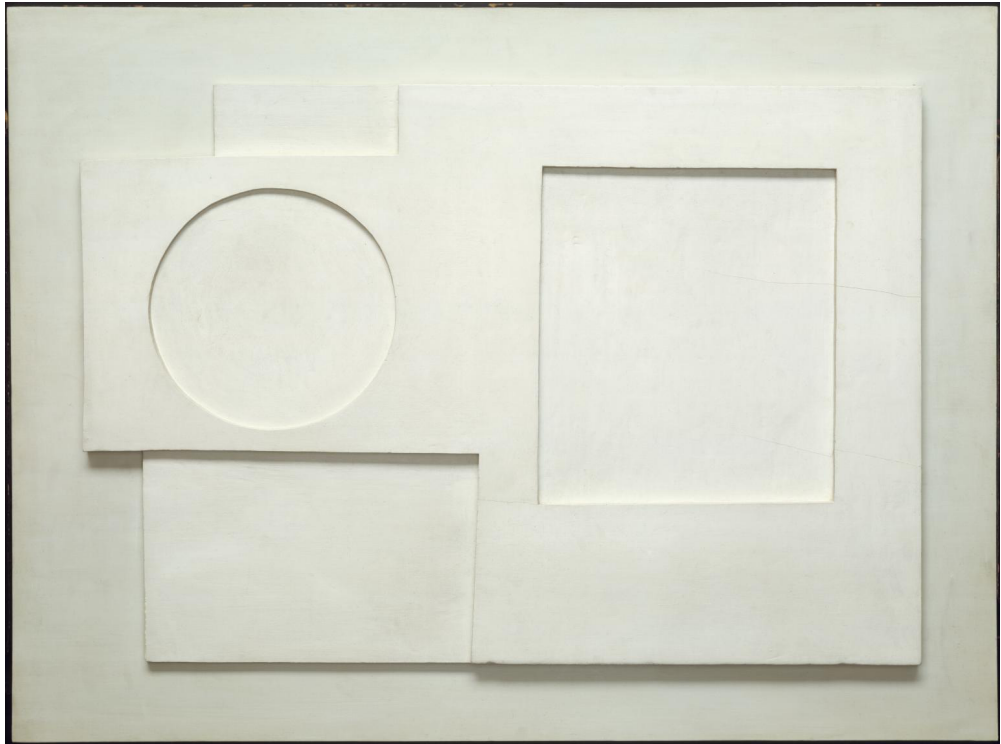
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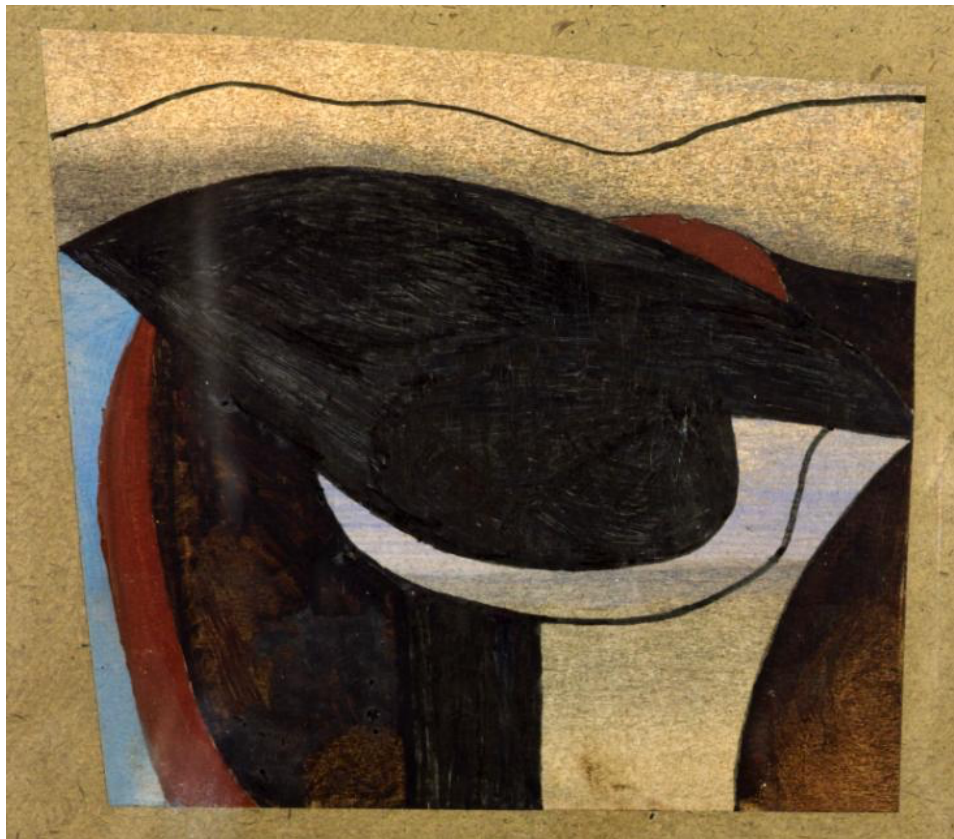
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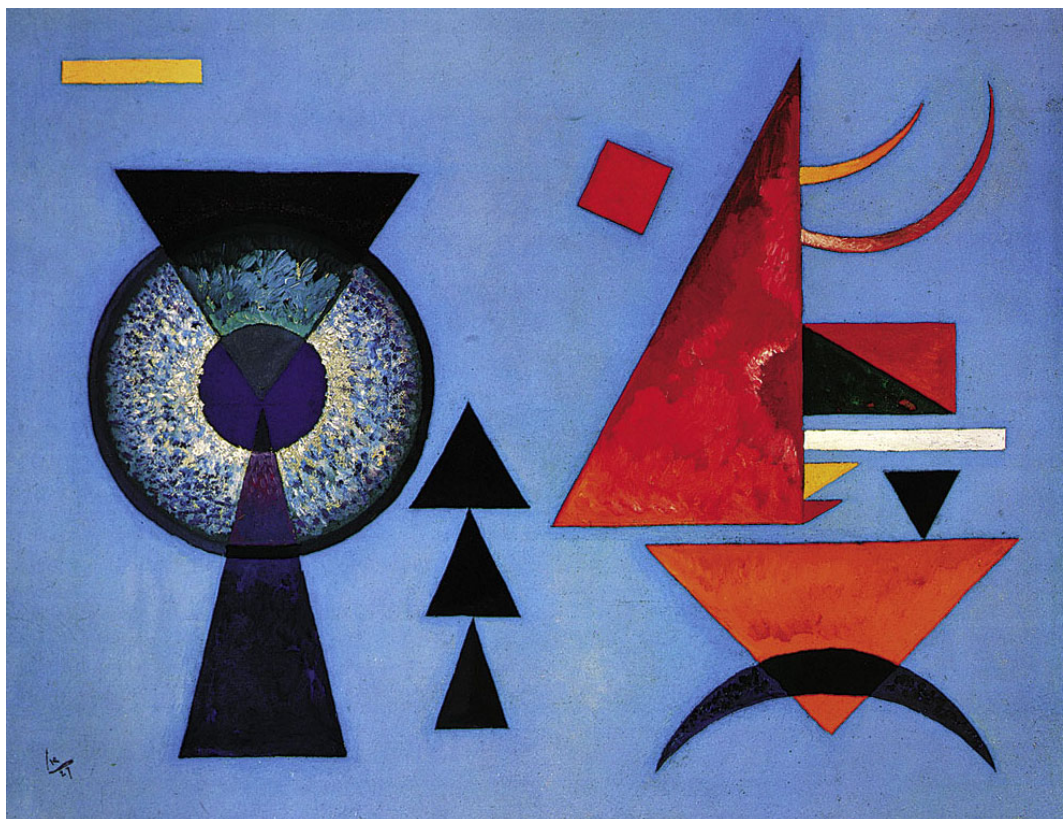
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