

**[manuscript]**

[Holtzman Deposit, Box 1, no.12a]

---

*[niet in handschrift van Mondriaan; Jo Steijling?]*

I

No axiom but plastic principle.

These times see the impossibility of having /  
universally available principles. They ack- /  
nowledge the untenableness of a fixed /  
view about the perceptible: of an un- /  
shakable conception. They do not accept /  
any human opinion as serious or true. /  
They see everything in "relativity". An opin- /  
ion grown out of art, philosophy, science /  
(the doctrine of relativity a.o.), as well as /  
through practical life itself. People /  
begin to break with "tradition". They will /  
no longer build on "doctrines", not even /  
on logics. But understanding the rela- /  
tivity of everything, we have an intuitive /  
feeling of the absolute. Moreover, the /  
relativeness, the changeableness of things /  
creates in us the desire for the absolute, /  
the unchangeable. Our entire human /  
egoism will the unchangeable. This /  
being unattainable in time, we go back /  
to relativeness again and try to per- /  
petuate this: as this ⟨– is impo⟩ appears /  
impossible, the unchangeable is sought /  
again, even with neglect of the relativ- /  
ity. So it has been in the course of cen- /  
turies. The desire for extremes caused ///

## II

the tragedy of life. Up to now culture has /  
been entirely based either on relativity, or /  
on a traditional representation of the ab- /  
solute which has become an axiom (dogma). /  
The representation of the absolute was “form” /  
just as the relative is “form”, constantly /  
varying. In art the one and the other have /  
always been [“dressed in form”]. So rela- /  
tiveness dominated. On account of this /  
art has been more or less descriptive /  
(lyric) even in symbolism. In symbolism /  
the pure plastics (originally appearing /  
not as art, but as truth in a pure /  
“symbol”) became impure, hence /  
untrue because “elements of form” became /  
“form”. In these times an opposition is /  
noticeable against this “representation”, this /  
“disguise of the absolute”, as well as /  
against the domination of the relative. /  
In plastics even ⟨– the⟩ masses are uncon- /  
sciously driven to accentuate the absolute /  
and to leave capricious nature more /  
or less. And this principally from out- /  
ward motives: through the new neces- /  
sity. The products show it as well as /  
the general search for clearness, /  
purity in everything. ///

### III

The relativity in our surroundings first /  
chiefly natural is more and more assuming /  
a mathematical aspect. So the absolute /  
begins to express itself more clearly around /  
us. There is coming equivalence between /  
man who ⟨− has⟩ outgrows the chiefly /  
natural, and his surroundings. In the /  
midst of all relativeness an other relative- /  
ness is gradually forming in which also /  
the absolute expressed itself. This superior /  
equiponderance expresses the countenance /  
of the future. In this the search for /  
extremes has been removed : equivalence /  
between the relative and the absolute /  
becomes possible. But much purer than /  
in our ⟨+ material⟩ surroundings equiponderance be- /  
tween the relative and the absolute has /  
been achieved in art, (the region of intuition. /  
The most free art, the art of painting, could /  
be most consequential. Very gradu- /  
ally but also very quickly the natural /  
apparition has been abstracted : form /  
as well as colour. In Cubism was /  
made more rigid and often interrupted. //

Piet rigid is het eenige woord dat te vinden is voor strak. Ik /  
zal Tilly nog eens vragen! Streck – strak / enz. !! ///