

[Mondrian's handwritten corrections - in normal hand and in print letters - are indicated with indications used for documentary editing; typewriter corrections are inserted]

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Although (- t) the evil of oppression clearly manifests itself in life, /  
it is not always clearly discernable in relation to its basic causes, for /  
it is veiled by all manner of particular complications in the appearance /  
(- -2-)

of things. It is the same in art if life (+ or nature) is followed in terms of repress- /  
entation: oppression dresses itself in all kinds of particular forms and relations, /  
so that it seems non-existent. (xxx) → But (these are not the limitations of → in art) time /  
and move (+ ment are fixed, thus) (- [xxx]): contemplation (+ is) easier and oppression can be ¬  
studied in /  
a purer way. //

Because of the (+ its) camouflaged appearance of oppression, there is in life /  
and in Art, the danger to accept (+ of accepting) (- [xxx]) oppression: oppression (- (+ [xxx]) ¬  
does /  
not always cause revolt. (- (+ [xxxx]) (- and [xxx] [xxx] times [xxx] [xxx] evil [xxx] [xxx] [xx] /  
[xxx]). And (are → is) there not in human nature (two contradictions that have → a powerful ¬  
opposition:) /  
(- power:) the desire for oppression and the desire to become free of it? /  
This causes that long and continual struggle which life and art show until /  
human equilibrium is neared. //

[correctieteken: witregel invoegen]

Plastic Art is an abstract, a free domain of life (+ ,) (its → the) causes and /  
consequences (+ of its expression) are purely for study. It does not tolerate oppression and /  
can resist it, for it is not bound by material or physical conditions. /  
(- It is disinterested.) [correctieteken: geen nieuwe alinea]

Writers and thinkers have deeply (complained → explored) the facts and causes of /  
the (terrible → tragic) realities in (+ actual) life (+ ,) (+ created by oppression,) (- [xx]) (+ but) ¬  
Plastic Art remained ("neutral" → in different to them) /  
[verwijzingssteken:] ↑ (- was good to externalize) (+ tragic) events, (persons → personalities),  
battlefields; (to do → it did) war ¬ camou- /  
flage (+ ,) (to entertain the troops → made propaganda.) But the function of Art (in → is) ¬  
neither (- photo-) (+ des-) /  
(- graphic) (+ criptive) (or → nor) cinematic. Nor it is only a means of enjoyment amidst an in- /  
complete life (: → ,) nor a simple expression of (that → (- [xxx] that) life, even in its beauty- /  
ful aspect. (+ All) (these are → this is) incidental. Art is the esthetical establishment of /  
(+ pure) life (- (+ [xxxx]) - unity and equilibrium - free from all oppression. By this fact it /  
can show the evil of oppression and the way to combat it. //

[correctieopmerking:] double space //

(- [xxx]) Plastic art (is the most really → establish a the true image of reality,) for its ¬  
primary function is /  
to "show", not to describe. It is for us to "see" what it represents. It /  
cannot tell us anything new, (+ concerning the essential nature of art,) but its (- presentation) ¬

⟨+ we respond to the truth⟩ ⟨- can evoke conviction⟩ ⟨- ⟨+ [xx]⟩ /

The culture of Plastic Art can enlighten ⟨+ that of⟩ mankind, ⟨+ for⟩ it manifests ⟨human → this⟩ //

\*⟨+ on occasions when it did not⟩\* //

\*⟨- ⟨+ [xxx] remained perfect life⟩\* //

*[linkermarge, verticaal]*

*[verwijzingssteken:]* ↑ It has allowed it self to be used /  
for immediate ⟨[xxx] as → and⟩ external purposes, /  
it has represented ///

culture, but being free, advances it. //

When we view the terrible events of war, pessimism comes over us and /  
it is difficult to think of <the future → culture> <. → ,> <t → T> the effect of actual events /  
weakens our confidence in life's progress. Where is to be found, in /  
<- spite of all> <+ despite this>, a true optimism concerning humanity's future <. → ?> //

If we can understand the culture of Plastic Art as a continuous growth /  
toward the full utilization of Art's freedom <+ to express <- life> pure life,> th<a → e>n one ⊃  
way to optimism is /

open to humanity. <- To [xxx] be [xxx] understand that [xxx] expression of /  
of complete life <- <+ [xxx]> is <- <+ [xxx][xxx]> the pure [xxxx] of life [xxxx].> Art's culture /  
[correctieopmerking:] <+ paragr.> [correctieteken: nieuwe alinea] reveal's life to us as continual growth, ⊃  
irresistible progress. <- [xxx]> /

<- force of [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] by the [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx][xxxxx] /  
<- [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] /  
<- [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] [xxx][xxx][xxx][xxx] <+ from seems> /  
<+ But subjective factors prevent many to see this.> /

In spite of all, human culture <- must> show<+ s> what Art's culture <- demonstrats:> /  
demonstrates: <- human> progress. <- Many to not see this factor [xxx]> <- <+ [xxx][xxx][xxx]>. /  
<- [correctieopmerking:] <+ paragr.> <- [xxx][xxx][xxx] <+ They see it <- but> only it as a continual ⊃  
change.> <+ hey see it> //

<- [correctieopmerking:] <+ paragr.> Plastic Art shows through its culture, first, a growth toward the /  
culmination of limited form, and then, after the fulfilment of this /  
accomplishment a dissolution of this form and a determination of its <+ the> /  
then freed constructive elements (planes <+ ,> <+ colors> and lines). If we <undersand → observe> /  
this fact, we can fully state that our <+ whole> culture <- as a whole> reveals this /  
process equally. //

The question <of → whether> this process in life and Art as a progress or a /  
decay is solved <+ answered> when we consider it as the freeing of life and art from /  
obstacles <- :> toward a clearer manifestation of their real content. Seen /  
from without, this freeing is an abstraction; from within <+ actually> it is a Real- /  
ization. In abstract art, we see this <- <+ [xxx][xxx][xxx]> clearly. <[xxx][xxx] → The> elements of /  
limited form are no longer <[xxx] of → veiled in> this form, but appear as the /

Expressi(on → ve) (itself → means). This fact is undeniable progress. For all art reveals (–, ) / (although → that) limited form is narrative, symbolic(–al), (+ and) that its co(+ n)structive / elements - planes, (+ colors) and lines - (– are what) establish Art. (The use → Nevertheless, ¬ the loss) of limited /

form (– is [xxx] (results from)) is (– seen out of a subjective → from the) viewpoint (– and / is) (+ of realism) a Decay. We find (– an) analogous decay in life: at first, the diminution / (+ of the phys)ical aspect of man; then the fact that humanity as a whole (– is / [xxx]) (+ differentiates) (+ itself) from natural primitive life. Whereas everyone knows that / in spite of (+ this) (– physical diminution and retirement from nature (natural prim- / itivity), this) humanity (– as a whole) develops, it is recognized enough that this / (is just → is partly) through the facts which appear as decay(+ ?) Plastic Art shows that / (– [xxx] [xxx])

(W → w)e can conclude that a (D → d)ouble (A → a)ction is manifested in life and ¬ (A → a)rt: /

an action of decay and another of progress (+ growth). A progress of (I → i)ntensification / (+ and) (D → d)etermination of the (I → i)inner (A → a)spect (+ of forms, and) a decay in ¬ the way of (+ reduc)ing the(+ ir) /

(E → e)xternal (A → a)spect. (– of forms) Art and human life show that this (R → r)eciprocal / (A → a)ction does not destroy form but (M → m)anifests it in its (highest → intrinsic) value. / (+ Creating more equivalence of the opposite factors (– of), this action) / produces the possibility of approaching equilibrium. //

[correctieopmerking:] double space //

In Art, when we think of the masterpieces of the past, the statement / of progress may seem to be untrue. (\*– (+ arts culture [xxxx]\*) But then we have to see that ¬ (the → in art the) cul- /

ture of particular forms is (+ culminated and) completed, and that Art has undertaken the / culture of pure relationships. This means that the particular form (+, ) (– is) /

freed from its limitation and (– is) reduced to (+ more) neutral forms. (– [xxx][xxx]) /

(–(+ [xxx]) (– [xxx][xxx] which only) can (establish → now better develop,) pure relationship. ¬ Art is /

freeing itself of the oppressive factors that veil its pure expression of /

(L → l)ife. When this is so in Art, it must also be true for human life. //

[opmerking in linkermarge:] repeat is't part but better //

[correctieopmerking:] paragr [correctieteken: nieuwe alinea] //

(The culture of → Whereas all) Plastic Art shows that (– in) its (+ culture contains) [xxx] ¬ [xxx] two parallel /

cultures: that of limited forms and that of their relationship, (+ it must be stated that (– it is to ¬ state that)) they go /

together until the (G → g)reat (O → o)ppression of limited form is ended: when (plane, line ¬ and color → the elements of form) /

(+ more or less) are freed. Then (– through these plastic Means (+ Relationship) can be ¬ established ///

[*verwijzingssteken:*] ✕ The principal occupation with relationship of more neutral expressive means is ⟨− clear⟩ to be / ⟨+ clearly⟩ seen in Modern Art. //

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⟨− more clearly⟩ ⟨R → r⟩relationship ⟨B → b⟩comes a ⟨New → special⟩ Culture. ⟨− the culture of Limited Form ends⟩ This change ⟨− in Culture⟩ is created by the ⟨W → w⟩hole of ⟨m → M⟩odern ⟨a → A⟩rt, / but it is realized in Abstract Art. [*verwijzingssteken:*] ✕ //

Whatever our conception might be, this change ⟨M → m⟩ust ⟨B → b⟩e recognized. / This recognition alone can prevent errors in conception and regression / to the past. ⟨+ Where as⟩ an analogous change ⟨M → m⟩ust ⟨+ have⟩ taken place in life ⟨+ ,⟩ / ⟨+ this change must be ⟨+ equally⟩ recognized. ⟨− [xxx]⟩ / ⟨− [xxx][xxx][xxx]⟩ ⟨− ⟨+ [xxx]⟩ ⟨− this change must be ⟨+ equally⟩ recognized. //

⟨⟨i → In ⟨+ thru⟩ age-long xxxxx culture⟩ Human life, oppressed by material and physical factors, by particular / forms, frees itself ⟨+ from these factors,⟩ by ⟨+ means of⟩ purification of these forms and by the determin-

ation of relationship ⟨− in ⟨+ three⟩ age-long xxxxx culture, from these factors). /

The changing of conditions of h⟨i → u⟩man life ⟨[xxx] → as well as⟩ experience, education, / science, ⟨− technique ( ) technics ⟨− ⟩⟩, ⟨+ all this⟩ is reducing the brutish primitive force of / men to ⟨R → r⟩eal ⟨h → Human⟩ ⟨F → f⟩orce. ⟨+ In spite of all,⟩ ⟨A → a⟩ less animal physical constitution and a strong-

er mentality is creating a ⟨+ more⟩ “human” ⟨+ being⟩ ⟨− human equilibrium⟩ ⟨− ⟨+ [xxx]⟩ / ⟨− that will [xxx] [xxx] [xxx]⟩ /

⟨− [xxx] [xxx] [xxx]⟩ ⟨− “human”⟩. But it is well to remember that Art’s culture / advances that of ⟨m → M⟩an, and that periods of timely ⟨+ temporary⟩ regression seem to be an / indispensable ⟨+ inevitable⟩ necessity. By the weakness of men, in spite of all intuition, / even Art’s culture shows these periods. //

[*correctieopmerking:*] double space //

Progress is a continuously “real” change. Every new period appears as / a sudden mutation after a long evolution ⟨+ [xx]⟩ ⟨+ by construction and destruction⟩. Simple / “changing”, is an external / action, ⟨+ important and⟩ necessary, but insufficient to progress. ⟨− ⟨+[xxx]⟩ ⟨− [xxx][xxx][xxx]⟩ / ⟨+ changing in line of progress⟩ ⟨− [xxx][xxx][xxx]⟩ is what progress requires. Possibilities / to express ⟨L → l⟩ife’s beautiful content, stronger and purer, are to be ⟨found → created⟩. / New possibilities astonish the masses, but ⟨+ even [xxx]⟩ the masses have helped to ⟨− find⟩ / ⟨+ create⟩ them. [*correctieteken: geen nieuwe alinea*] //

⟨− In spite of all⟩ Human Progress is ⟨+ to⟩ conquere⟨− ring⟩ Oppression ⟨, → .⟩ ⟨i → I⟩t / ⟨follows → goes ⟨+ takes⟩⟩ /

⟨xxxxxxxxx⟩ ⟨− unconsciously (?)⟩ the way of the Progress of Art. Opp- / pression ⟨is killing → destroys⟩ itself, but not without humanity’s continual fight / against it. ///

⟨+ after pag 6 follows 9⟩ //

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⟨+ At present,⟩ ⟨H → h⟩istory and actual events show the facts of mutual oppression: /  
⟨P → p⟩olitical, ⟨E → e⟩conomic, ⟨S → s⟩ocial, ⟨F → f⟩amilial. Art suffers with life. Art /  
suffers from ⟨public ignorance ⟨+ of the⟩ → ignorance of the public⟩, educated by incompetent ¬  
writers and /  
critics, museum ⟨directors → committees⟩, etc. ⟨- Causes and consequences⟩ However, ⟨+ com-⟩ ¬  
⟨+ the complicated, causes and consequences of this situation can be understood⟩ /  
⟨- plicated, are to be understood⟩ ⟨+ Then we see all as ⟨+ inevitable⟩ necessity.⟩ by studying ¬  
the forms and relationships /  
that life and Art show. //

⟨+ Art suffers because the public ⟨+ ignorant⟩ is made /  
maleducation caused by of incompetent ⟨+ teachers⟩ writers /  
and critics, museum committees, etc.⟩ ///

<- Part 3> (italicise underlined) //

The Art of the Past and Modern Art.

<- Where Modern Art is condemned.> <w → W>e have to see whether <+ modern art>  $\neg$  <- it> is really / progress and not decay. We have to compare the two expressions, the old / and the new, of one sole Art. But where is the boundary between the / Art of the past and Modern Art? Following Art's culture, <+ from the past to the present>, we  $\neg$  see a gradual / detachment from the natural vision and a progressive determination of <- [xxx]> / <+ Plastic> Art's real <- content> <+ expressive means>. First <W → w>e see no sharp limit  $\neg$  between the Art of the past and / Modern Art. The two expressions dissolve into one another, until, in / modern time, a real difference of expressive means (forms, colors, <[xxx] → spatial) / relations,) is created. //

However, everyone feels a difference in the conception of these ex- / pressions, even where the subject in both are identical. It cannot be / otherwise, men of the past, living under quite different conditions, / obviously must have <+ had> distinct conceptions. //

<- [xxx]> <i → I>t can be said that much that was veiled <- [xxx]> in the past is / now <+ (>more<+ )> <clear → clearer> and certainly Plastic Art shows that as well as life. / Human culture-science, technics, the whole of daily life has continued / its way with results: another reality is created from the remains of the / past. Plastic art, as well as daily life <+ ,> <- shows [xxx][xxx]> <- <+ [xx][xxx]> <+ is> as rising / out of the dark to the light. If this statement seems contradicted by / the terrible <+ destructive> <events of actuality → actual events>, <+ reality and art show that> it  $\neg$  is nevertheless true. But we have / to remember that <L → l>ife <+ as continuous growth>, is free from time and space, and that it  $\neg$  creates by / destruction and construction. //

<- Even> <t → T>he greatest <- antique> Art <+ of antiquity> reveals itself to the man of  $\neg$  our time more / or less as darkness; even when the work of <A → a>rt <[xxx] → is> <no need darkness → not  $\neg$  dark> <+ or tragic:> / a white marble statue, <+ peaceful, dreamy Romanticism, the devout religious conception> can  $\neg$  be as oppressive as a dark, murky picture, <- [xx]> / <- peaceful, dreamy Romanticism, the devout religious conception> <- as well> / <- [xx]> dramatic history or the <[xxx] → actualities> of daily life. ///

Generally, all particularities of the past are ⟨- as⟩ oppressive as /  
darkness to our actual life. ⟨+ ( ) In its oppressive darkness ⟨+ ) ⟩, the Past /  
has a tyrannic influence ⟨+ upon us⟩ which is difficult to escape. The worst is /  
that there is always something of the Past within us. We have memory, /  
we have dreams – outside, hear the old carrillons; enter the old museums, /  
churches; see the old buildings everywhere. Fortunately we can also /  
enjoy the new constructions, the marvels of science, and technics of all /  
kinds, as well as Modern Art. Under normal conditions we can enjoy /  
real Jazz and its dance; we can see the electric lights of luxury or /  
utility; the wonderful shop⟨s → -⟩fronts --- these thoughts alone bring pleasure. /  
And then we feel the great difference between Modern Time and the Past. //

⟨+ ( ) In spite of all, ⟨+ ) ⟩ Modern life and Art are annihilating the oppression /  
of the Past. Progress in ⟨+ communication⟩, production, concurrence in trade, the struggle /  
for livelihood have created a lighter environment, even where the in- /  
evitable remains of the Past dominate. Electric-light advertisements, /  
posters, technical constructions of all kinds, compensate for the /  
dearth of ⟨⟨n → N⟩ew architecture ⟨+ sufficient⟩ → sufficient New architecture⟩. //.

In ⟨- this terrible⟩ war many relics of the Past are ⟨- or still be⟩ destroyed, /  
among them beautiful specimens of Art. Obviously it is hard to see these /  
⟨- things⟩ beautiful things disappear. But ⟨L → l⟩ife, ⟨+ ⟨- [xx]⟩ as ⟨- [xx]⟩ continious ↯  
progress,⟩ is always right. ⟨- It will⟩ /  
⟨c → C⟩ertainly ⟨- construct⟩ another ⟨- [xxx]⟩ environment, nearer to ⟨- us⟩ *[verwijzingsteken:]* ↑. ↯  
But where? /

On the same places? In the same countries? -- All is ⟨+ in⟩ darkness. ⟨+ However⟩ we must ↯  
⟨-⟨+ have to⟩ /  
understand that xxxxxxxxxxxx the new constructions must not be created /  
in the spirit of the past; they must not be repetitions of what has /  
previously been expressed ⟨- [xxx] [xxx] there before⟩. It must be clear that ⟨+ all⟩ /  
⟨- they⟩ ha⟨ve → s⟩ to be the true expressions of Modern time. //

Just like our ⟨surroundings → environment⟩, Modern art reveals change. All Modern /  
Art shows a conception that conforms to our time, and this is ⟨- [xxx]⟩ true /  
even of Academic Art that continues to express itself in the traditional //

*[verwijzingsteken:]* ↑ our actual mentality will be created. ///

way. //

It would be erroneous to limit Modern <- and> Plastic Art to too narrow /  
frontiers. At present, two principle expressions are revealed: one that /  
uses more or less xx naturalistic /  
forms and colors; the other <that uses → employs> more or less <+ (> geometric <+ ?> and < + )> ¬  
purified /  
<- expression> means of expression. These expressions appear under differ- /  
ent names, but all <- these> names are approximate, partial, and therefore /  
misleading. //

It appears as though the two expressions oppose each other, but when /  
we observe that they both show in different ways the same search for /  
freedom, then we see their unity. Deliverance from the oppression of the Past is shown by /  
all Modern Art. //

Modern <- Plastic> Art opposes itself against <the way → the> method of expression /  
of the Past, but it continues its real content. Thus it continues what the /  
Art of the Past had begun: the transformation of <- the> natural vision<. → ,> <<B → b>ecause /  
of the oppression in its epochs, <w → W>hat the art of the Past has done /  
nearly invisibly, → What the Art of the Past, because of the oppression in its epochs has done ¬  
nearly invisible) Modern Art xxxxxxxx accomplishes more or less visibly. //

All Art of the Past shows an exaggeration of the tension <- and> of lines /  
and forms <+ ,> change of the natural colors and proportions <+ :> <- always> a <- [xxx]> /  
transformation of reality's natural aspect. <[xxx] → art was> never a copy of nature. /  
Such a copy would not have been strong enough to evoke human emotion. The /  
living beauty of Nature cannot be copied: it can only be expressed. //

Modern time creates a greater transformation of reality: sometimes by /  
<- [xxx]> means of freer composition, freer colors and forms (academic /  
art, realism, surrealism, and xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx sometimes by a more <- [xxx]> /  
consequent transformation <+ of forms and their relations> (abstract art). Bound together by ¬  
unchangeable /  
plastic laws <+ ,> Modern Art's different tendencies continue the struggle for /  
a more and more real establishment of Art's true content. <+ But to <+ do> this, /  
freedom is necessary.) ///

<- Part 4.) Art and Life Need Freedom. //

[*verwijzingsteken:*] 8 man is an individually //

Plastic Art shows that whatever conceals its real content /  
suppress(ing → es) <- of) Art. Art's progress contains and therefore requires /  
deliverance from this oppression. Art's culture is the continual search /  
for freedom. xxxxxxxxxxxx It is as Human life: continually in /  
search of freedom of thought and action. But Human culture is long <-[xx] [*verwijzingsteken:*] 8 /  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx for it is complicated by the fact <+ that men are different and) that continually ⊃  
<- ,) new people /  
are born. Each new generation has to obtain its own experience, to begin /  
its individual culture from that point which progress has already reached. /  
<- Apparently) <t → T)he choice <+ seems to be) between Past or Present, but in reality it is /  
Progress that must be followed. It is obvious that <- [xxx] [*verwijzingsteken:*] [ <+ note) progress ⊃  
is <+ ?) /  
impossible(, → .) <b → B)ut progress continues - it does not wait. Fortunately, <- [xxx] /  
[xxxxx] <+ all is going in) accelerated <- [xxx] tempo more and more, <- and) the light of /  
Modern Time makes the way clearer. //

The inequality of men <+ is also) manifest<- s) <- itself) in Art and is an obstacle /  
to simultaneous progress. [*verwijzingsteken:*] × <+ note) Instead of continuing <+ and developing) ⊃  
Art's real progress, /  
young artists xxxxxxxxxxxx would search out something "new." /  
But while Art is intuitive creation in a free domain, all obstacles are /  
<(more easily overcome → overcome more easily) than in life. //

It is right that a new generation should be opposed to convention and /  
go its own way. But <(it → there) is a danger<- ous) <(in that it → when there is) conflict<- s) ⊃  
with <- the) exist- /  
ing progress, and this is what often happens in Art <+ [x] <(an → in) life. It arises out /  
of personal convictions, <+ and) it also happens from personal interests. Thus /  
progress can be delayed. xxxxxxxxxxxx //

[*correctieopmerking in marge:*] no paragr. //

The inequality of men <+ however) does not involve <+ the) degradation of <(human life ⊃  
→ society). /

<+ If freedom exists, progress can be continued. However, /  
<- But) egoism is not excluded. The difficulty of maintaining and creating /  
<+ in a certain degree.) <+ and requires it <- But not to be to ⊃ an egoist to the detriment follows) /  
an existence and livelihood evoke <- it. [xxx] this inevitable struggle,) //

[*verwijzingsteken:*] [ <+ note) because of the inequality of men, simul- /  
<- tanious individually has) common //

[*linkermarge, verticaal*]

[*verwijzingsteken:*] × Artists are mutual<+ ly) different and /  
continually new artists are born. <+ out) ///

⟨- [verwijzingssteken:] ⊢ An other factor that) //

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Particular interest⟨- s) ⟨+ is one of the factors which) prevent social life from being free. ⊃

⟨-[xx]) Art is /

disinterested. For just this reason it is free. ⟨- It only [xxx]) /

⟨- ⟨+ Nevertheless) ⟨- ⟨+ [xxx]) ⟨- establish the beauty of compete ⟨+ all [xx]) life [xxx] [xxx] ⊃  
[xxx] [xxx]) /

⟨- [xxx] ⟨+ can) the [xxx] is not always ⟨+ [xxx]) [xxx] of artists ⟨+ ?)⟩ ⟨- In its search for ⊃ ⟨+  
[xxx]) /

⟨- particular (personal) interests, social life lacks unity ⟨+ freedom) [xxx] [xxx] [verwijzingssteken:] ⊢ ⊃  
[xxxx]) /

⟨- [xxx] us to be more or less self interested, ⟨+ This is [xxx] [xxx] our freedom) but it does not ⊃  
require) /

⟨- it to be to the detriment of others.) //

Humanity is constantly developing toward ⟨unity → freedom). More and more, the /  
world becomes conscious that unity must be created - just as in Art - by /

the establishment of purer forms and purer mutual relations. ⟨- In spite) ⟨+ Time) /

⟨- of all [xxx] [xxx] [xxx]) ⟨+ shows that humanity is, even with all its) deviations, ⟨- Humanity) ⊃  
⟨- is) ⟨+ is) always going in /

the right way. Beside that which we consider as wrong, better social /

forms and mutual relations are ⟨born → evolved) - the consequence of necessity. But /

as long as there are tyrannical powers that would create a false unity /

by force, no better world order is possible. Humanity, as well as Art, /

needs freedom. Just as in Art, where ⟨unity → freedom) can be approached by the equiv- /

alent relations of varied forms, social life can also approach ⟨unity → freedom) /

despite the inequality of men. But ⟨- ⟨+ Plastic Art in its culture) ⟨+ the culture of Plastic Art ⊃  
shows that) real ⟨unity → freedom) requires ⟨- individual) /

⟨+mutual) equivalence. //

Plastic art shows that real freedom is not mutual equality but /

mutual equivalence. In Art, forms and colors are of different dimension /

and position, but have an equal value. ⟨+ In the same manner, ⟨B → b) more mutual ⊃  
equivalence of /

individual elements, our life can be better than it is now. ⟨+ Whereas ⟨- Art)) By its /

freedom ⟨- ,) Art always creates a certain mutual equivalence of its com- /

posing forms ⟨+ ,) ⟨- and) we clearly see the need for this freedom in human life. /

Because of ⟨+ the) inequality among men, ⟨+ however) a certain constraint must ⟨govern → ⊃  
establish) our /

social life, and reality shows that this can exist without tyranny. /

⟨- That [xxx] important) ⟨+But ⟨- however) the most important) constraint is that which social ⊃  
life ⟨+ it self) imposes upon the ⟨+ individual.) /

⟨+ It is logical that to feel this constraint a certain /

state ⟨- [xx]) of ⟨+ individual) development is needed. ///

<- Part) 5- Art's Real Content //

Not only history and actual events, but above all, Art's real content /  
 <+ clearly> shows the evil of oppression and the need for freedom <- in a strong light.>. /  
 The problem, "What is art?", cannot be <[xxx] → solved> by explaining our personal /  
 conceptions, for these will vary according to individual <tendencies → feeling>. /  
 Actually, Plastic Art is manifested by two principal tendencies: "xxxxxxx /  
 "realistic" and "abstract". The first is viewed as an expression of /  
 our esthetic feelings evoked by the appearance of nature and life. It /  
 has been stated that <- [xxx]> the latter <- viewpoint, art) is a<+ n> <more objective → abstract> /  
 expression of <+ color and of> form and space, by means of more <objective → abstract> and ¬  
 often geom- /  
 etrical forms <+ or planes>; it does not follow nature's aspect but its intention is /  
 to create a new reality. //

These definitions are incomplete and often misleading. Even the most /  
 Abstract Art does not arise from an inner <- [xxx]> source alone. Like all /  
 Art, its origin is in the reciprocal action of the individual and /  
environment, and is inconcievable without feeling. <- <+ It is a concrete expression of space> ¬  
 Realistic art is <+ ,> <- <+ also> /  
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxx <+ as well as abstract art> an<- other> expression of form and space. Thus, the /  
 difference between the two results from different conceptions and the use /  
 of different expressive means. <Notwithstanding → Inspite of> particular definitions, /  
 Art <rep[xxx] → shows> only one necessity, that is the <creation of → expression> <+ of the ¬  
 beauty of <- [xxx][xxx] life> vitality, obscured in life.> <- [xxx] [xxx]> /  
 <- [xxx] [xxx]> <- So it ought to be in daily life> <- <+ And this is also requird for life.> //

<- The classic definition of Plastic Art: the plastic expression of the) /  
 <- [xxx] [xxx] is, [xxx] [xxx] [xxx] true. We feel beauty of the [xxx] <+ [xxx]> Plastic) /  
 <- expression <+ [xxx][xxx][xxx] in life [xxx] [xxx] [xxx] [xxx] [xxx]> /  
 <Life → Beauty> <+ however> <- [xxx]> for us is relative. <+ Men is mutual different <- [xxx]> ¬  
 The). <- The> fact that the perception, feeling and conception /  
 of Beauty <- in so called> continual<+ ly> progress<+ es>, <- is> <+ [xxx] parallel with> <- [xxx]> ¬  
 <- life> <+ progress> is too much /  
 <ignored → neglected>. The attachment to a merely conventional conception of Beauty /  
 hinders true vision of it. Where the conception of Beauty does not /  
 change in a progressive direction, there is something wrong in ///



xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx <- because all our senses are active and> xxx /  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxx <- participant.> However, <- we see> <+ The appearance of nature and  $\neg$   
all reality> <- reality in> /  
<+ we see, by different causes <- [xx]> (changing of light etc.) not always identic.> /  
<- <+ changes> <- [xxx]> Time and space which are changeable.> A work of art is constant. /  
<- <+ [xxx]> <- The Plastic expression of life> <+ Pure [xxx][xxx]> <+ life reveals it self> <- is  $\neg$   
to [xxx] it> as <- [xx]> dynamic /  
<- <+ [xxx]> <- equilibrium [xxx]> continuous movement. [*verwijzingsteken:*] I A study of Plastic  $\neg$   
Art /  
<reveals  $\rightarrow$  shows> that <dynamic equilibrium i(s  $\rightarrow$  t) establish<- ed>  $\rightarrow$  it establish dynamic  $\neg$   
equilibrium> <- <+ [xxx]> by a rhythm of forms, /  
lines, and colors in a manner which evokes esthetic emotion. It depends /  
upon our individual conception as to "how" it will be established and as /  
to "how" it will be seen. Plastic Art <+ has,> by purely plastic means <+ ,> <- has> the /  
power to establish dynamic movement without employing "real" movement. /  
xx /  
Nevertheless, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx <+ while> we see <- in> Plastic Art as an express- /  
ion of dynamic movement, then it is logical that in Modern sculpture /  
mobile constructions are created. //

The expressive means by which <+ the> rhythm <+ of forms, lines, colors> is established are  $\neg$   
not only <+ these> /  
<- the mutual relations of> forms, lines, and colors, but <+ included> also the empty space  $\neg$   
between them. [*verwijzingsteken:*]  $\times$  In /  
single forms, the proportions of the different parts of these forms /  
represent the xxxxxx relations that create rhythm. It should be /  
emphasized that forms, colors, lines, space<+ s> are as important as /  
the relationships, xxxxxx and conversely, all means of expression /  
determine the character of the rhythm. It is the same in social life: /  
the con<+ s>tituent elements are as important as their mutual relations. //

[*correctieopmerking in marge:*] double space //

<- The> <+ We have seen already that the> culture of Plastic Art, since its origin, shows a  $\neg$   
progressive /  
determination of relationships, <+ until> today, xxxxxx relationship <+ even> appears /  
only by means of the elements of form, purified color and determined space. /  
On the other hand we see a progressive <decomposition  $\rightarrow$  reduction> of forms and colors /  
and a growing determination of space. This reduction of form and color /  
-- a freeing of form and color from their particular appearance in /  
nature -- <was  $\rightarrow$  is> necessary to free rhythm, and consequently Art. Clear<+ er> /  
<- <+ [xxx] The relations between form, lines and colors and /  
space is that what [xxx] determines the rhythm> //

[*linkermarge, verticaal*]

[*verwijzingsteken:*]  $\times$  Plurality of forms, lines, colors, /  
empty spaces create relationship. ///

rhythm produces clearer equilibrium. //

In nature and reality generally, the appearance of things is so /  
xxxxx expressive, so "living," that the tendency is to feel only /  
harmony and to ignore rhythm. If Art is to give us the feeling of /  
reality, it cannot follow reality's aspect. Art has to accentuate /  
<R → r>hythm, but in such a manner that rhythm dissolves itself in unity. //

<- Seen objectively> <t → T>he purest <R → r>hythm <is → must be> the purest expression ⊃  
of <L → l>ife. /

But the processes of seeing and creating are always more or less sub- /  
jective. <- <+ [xxx]> xxx <+ In> Art, although <- the> individual emotions are always ⊃  
differently evoked, /

<the consequent → all> expressions of rhythm are xx <- all be> true. <Seen → But> objectively, /  
all particularities of forms and colors oppress pure xxx rhythm. <- But> /

<- in reality> <- <+ [xxx] [xxx]> [xxx] [xxx] <- <+ [xxx] [xxx]> [xxx] [xxx] [xxx] [xxx] /

Whatever our feelings and conceptions may be, <[xxx][xxx] → the culture of Plastic Art> shows /  
the way of progressive <- art> expression<-s>. This <- truth>, however, can only assist us /  
to strengthen our conception and to control our feeling -- it cannot /

make us create Art. So it is <in → for> Human life. Nothing can tell us what /

we have to do. <-(<+ [xxx]> <Philosophy, Religion → Religion, Philosophy,> science, <+ and> Art, ⊃  
express the <+ general [xxx]> paths /

of Human progress. These paths can be a help or a hindrance according /

to xxx individual development, but cannot dictate <this development → it>. xxx /  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx //

The Art of the Past established rhythm not only veiled in subject- /  
matter and particular forms, but oppressed it by the spirit of the Past. /

When we <- [xxx]> were <+ growing> free<- d> from this oppression, Modern Art was born. /

In Modern time, Rhythm is more and more accentuated, not only in Art, /

but also in mechanized reality and in the whole of life. Marvelously /

determined and full of <life → vitality>, it finds expression in the real Jazz, /

Swing, and Boogie-woogie style <+ (music and dance)>. As a consequence of <- [xxx]> the /

accentuation of Rhythm <+ and the reducing of natural forms and colors,> we see <- [xxx][xxx]> ⊃  
the subject <diminishing → lose> ///

[*verwijzingssteken:*] Z ⟨- In⟩ ⟨t → T⟩hus ⟨- way⟩ Plastic Art expresses action in a real plastic / way. It creates it by the tension of the forms, lines, and the / intensity of colors – In this fact find it its force.)

-1⟨+ 8⟩-

⟨+ its im⟩portance in Plastic Art. For some, this fact is a gain; for others, / a loss. For some the subject is a help; for others it is an obstacle / to the enjoyment of the real content of Art. ⟨- Seen⟩ ⟨o → O⟩bjectively, the subject / is more or less tyrannical. It pushes Plastic Art back upon literature, / psychology, philosophy -- narrative. To enjoy the pure plastic expression / of a work of art, one has to rule out all psychological factors that the / subject ⟨+ subject or subject-matter⟩ awakens. //

All Modern Art is distinguished by a greater relative freedom from the / oppression of the subject. Impressionism took more account of the / impression of reality than of its representation. Since the Impressionists, all Art shows / a relative negation of nature's aspect; the Cubists delivered a further / blow⟨; → ,⟩ the Surrealists transformed ⟨- it⟩ ⟨; → ,⟩ the Abstract artists excluded ⟨+ it⟩. /

Whether obscured or clarified, ⟨R → r⟩hythm expresses dynamic movement / by the continu⟨ing → al⟩ opposition of ⟨composing → the⟩ elements of composition. ¬

[*verwijzingssteken:*] Z /

In art, we distinguish between oppositions of position and dimension. / The principal, the most exact, and the only constant opposition of position / is the right angle, in which two straight lines are opposed. ⟨- Correct⟩ ⟨+ By its dynamic ¬ action, in all Art⟩ /

⟨- opposition prevents the Rhythm from being static.⟩ ⟨+ the function of Rhythm is to ¬ prevent static expression.⟩ //

In art, as in life, it is the equivalence and not the equality of the / opposite factors that creates unity. Art shows that differences in power / and capacity are ⟨+ exist⟩ necessary, but that the abuse of these factors is fatal. / Art and life show that ⟨- the⟩ oppositions produce the continual destruction / and construction of forms necessary to approach the establishment of / complete life. In Plastic Art the opposite factors annihilate each / other in such a manner that there is no oppression; the result is unity. / In Human life we see oppositions mainly as ⟨g → G⟩ood and ⟨e → E⟩vil. The reciprocal / action of these oppositions forms the rhythm of Human life: it brings / life toward unity. Thus, ⟨even → seeing⟩ Evil ⟨supresses → performing⟩ its ⟨+real⟩ purpose, ¬ the acceptance ///

of it becomes obvious. But ⟨+ Plastic Art ⟨reveals → affirms⟩ ⟨- again⟩ that to create unity⟩ ¬  
we have to oppose ⟨it → evil⟩ with all our force ⟨- , ⟩ /  
with what is called ⟨G → g⟩ood. ⟨- if we are not to be destroyed by [xxx], then /  
our force is not strong enough, the evil prevails until it [xxx] /  
[xxx] [xxx].⟩ //

In Plastic Art we see the mutual oppression of forms and colors /  
annihilated by the creation of mutual equivalent values. ⟨+ Whereas⟩ in Art this /  
is a moral struggle, in life the struggle is physical as well. In life, /  
the physically strongest seems to dominate. How is oppression to be /  
vanquished? How is equilibrium to be created? How are equivalent /  
values to be established? Time must solve these problems. For those /  
who can see it, ⟨this → the way⟩ is revealed in life and in Art. Life being ⟨+ intrin- /  
sical⟩ equilibrium, ends oppression through the resistance created by itself. ⟨- The [xxxx]⟩ Then, ¬  
⟨+ Thus⟩ a new ⟨+ and /  
better⟩ life is certain. [*verwijzingssteken:*] **H** //

Febr: '40 //

Febr: '41

Jan: '42 ///

-----  
Piet Mondrian //

[*verwijzingssteken:*] **H.** The ⟨- increasing temp⟩ liberation ⟨of → from⟩ op- /  
pressive factors ⟨is → can ⟨+ also⟩ be⟩ clearly ⟨- to⟩ observed /  
in the development of architecture. //  
⟨+ In general⟩ The architecture of the past (had) absorbed /  
painting and sculpture in order to create /  
works of art. In this way ⟨+ the architecture was oppressed by⟩ painting /  
and sculpture ⟨+ and ⟨- these⟩ p. + s.⟩ were oppressed by ⟨- the⟩ archi- /  
tecture. Modern architecture ⟨+ attempts to⟩ freed itself /  
from this oppression through practical /  
⟨- and econ⟩ technical, economical and /  
material causes. ⟨+ Through reciproc action, it developed its essential character homogeneous⟩ ¬  
⟨- It became⟩ /  
with ⟨- the⟩ painting and sculpture. However, /  
in this way the ⟨purified → purification of⟩ modern architecture /  
did ⟨+ has⟩ not reach⟨+ ed⟩ ⟨- to⟩ ⟨+ the⟩ completeness necessary /  
to satisfy our moral /  
⟨- and⟩ ⟨+ as well as our practical⟩ ⟨- physical⟩ exigences ⟨+ needs⟩. //  
| follows on back-page | ///

[achterzijde 'vermijzingsteken H']

In order to reach completeness in a new /  
way, modern architecture has to realize /  
in its buildings the essential content /  
of painting and sculpture. <- This [xx] which /  
<(are → is) the establishment of <(right → pure) relationship /  
through <(+) its> <- pure> means of expression: form and /  
color. This signifies it has to make <- its> /  
proportions equivalent and <(+) not> to employ /  
color (no <(+) merely> more) as decoration but as a /  
constructive part of its buildings. //  
'Transformation of the traditionnal means /  
of enrichment – paintings and sculptures – /  
is insufficient. <- but> <(+) These remain <(+) are> harmful> nuisible to true <(+) pure> /  
architecture. <- Transforming> Replacing <(+) displacing> <(+) esel> pain- /  
tings through <(+) with> wall- <(+) mural> paintings is destroying /  
still more <(+) the> <(construction architectural → architectural construction). //  
<(+) Only> Planes in pure color can <(only [xx] [xx] → conform to the) new /  
constructive means. <(In → While in <(+) to)> this way the <- quali> /  
capacities of the “painter” <(can be used → are needed) <- <(+) employs), the /  
capacities of the “sculptor” <- to> can be usfull /  
<(in → as well) to the pure expression of <(planes → volumes, planes) and /  
space. <(In this way → In this way) <- <(+) only the use of) the capacities <- of) /  
obtained in painting and sculpture can /  
<(reach → lead to the) completeness <(of the constructive crea- /  
ting of → of) the technical <(excigences → part) of a buil- /  
ding. For those who <(should → would) live in this <- [xxx] /  
architecture, <(+) the existance of) pictures and <- sculptures) statues – /  
and with them their oppression – would be ended. //  
<(+) We see “art” as the substitute that compensates /  
us for the lack of beauty in life. //

sentence here ///