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"Absolute-contradictory Self-identity"--Nishida Kitarō, Translated by Christopher Southward

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From the Selected Works of Christopher Southward

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Nishida Kitarō--Absolute-contradictory Self-identity.pdf

Translated by Christopher Southward, *Binghamton University--SUNY*



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That which we call “the actually existing world” must be a world in which thing and thing interact; we can think the form of reality as this interdependence of things, which is to say that we can think it as the result of their interactions. But to say that a thing acts must be to say that it negates itself, so that what we call a thing necessarily disappears. We can think the formation of a single world by the interaction of things as an affirmation of things *qua* constituents of that world. For example, to say that things interact within space must be to say that things are spatial. If we think something like physical space at the limit of that interaction, then we can also think physical force as the [basis of the] transformation of spatial things. But when we think things exclusively as constituents of a totality [全体的一], we find that the acting thing disappears, action ceases, and reality vanishes. The actually existing world must in all respects be a unity of multiplicity [多の一], which is to say that it must be a world of the mutual determination of singularities [個物と個物との相互限定]. い | thus hold that the actually existing world is a world of absolute-contradictory self-identity.

The world of absolute-contradictory self-identity must be a world of passage from the made to the making. Just as the field of conventional physics has always maintained that such a world is formed by the interactions of immutable atoms, this means that it is not to be thought as a unity of multiplicity [多の一]. If we were to think the world as such, then we would find it to be nothing more than repetition of one and the same world. But neither can we think the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity as a teleological world [合目的的世界], that is, as the development of totality [全体的一の発展]; to do so would preclude the possibility of the interaction of singularities [個物と個物とが相働くということはない]. Thus, the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity must be a world that is thinkable neither as a unity of multiplicity [多の一] nor as a multiplicity of unity [一の多]. Because the things given in it are in all respects made, which is to say that they are dialectically given, the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity must be a world that proceeds as a passage from the made to the making through self-negation [自己否定的に作られたものから作るものへと動いていく]. We can no more think the substratum of this world as totality [全体的一] than we can think it as a multiplicity of singularities [個物的多]. A creative world that proceeds truly of its own accord as phenomenon-*qua*-existence must be a world of the sort described above. While everything that really exists is a being [有であるのである] by virtue of its having been determined, which is to say that it has been made, it is therefore changing and ephemeral, so we can say that it is being-*qua*-nothingness [有即無]. Thus, I have said that this is a world of absolute nothingness and that, as a world of infinite movement, it is a determined world without determinants. As outlined above, the world of contradictory self-identity must always be thought as a world in which the present determines the present itself. But this world can be thought neither in terms of *a priori* causality, which is to say that it is not a unity of multiplicity [多の一], nor as *a posteriori* teleology, which is to say that it is not a multiplicity of unity [一の多]. If it is fundamentally impossible to think time as an *a priori* category, then neither can it be thought as an *a posteriori* one. If we think the present as a point in a linear succession of instants, then what we call the present does not exist, and, thus, neither does what we call time. **Being that which has already passed with respect to the present, the past is at the same time that which has yet to pass, and, being that which has yet to come, the future is at the same time that which, with respect to the present, has already appeared,** so that, as contradictory self-

identity, past and present are mutually opposed, and it is on this basis that what we call time comes into existence. Because this is the form of contradictory self-identity, time flows from past to future and from the made to the making through infinite movement.

We must think the instant as a point in linear time. But, just as Plato posited the instant as something outside of time, we can see that time emerges as a continuity of discontinuities. We can say that time emerges as the contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One [多と一との矛盾的自己同一として成立・・・]. As a concomitance of innumerable instants, what we call the concrete present must be a unity of multiplicity [多の一]; it must be the space of time. We can think the temporal instant as being negated within that space, but the notion of a singularity that negates multiplicity must itself be a contradiction. To say that the instant is negated is to say that time disappears; it is to say that the present ceases to exist. Thus, if it is the case that each temporal instant emerges as discontinuity, then it would be impossible for time to emerge, and what we call the instant would disappear. Within the present, time must emerge concomitantly with the instant. As both a unity of multiplicity and a multiplicity of unity, time emerges from the contradictory self-identity of the present. This is because time must emerge from the determination of the present by the present itself. To say that we approach Eternity within the temporal instant can only mean that the more the instant, *as* instant, becomes the true instant, the more it becomes an instant of the present of Eternity, which is the contradictory self-identity of the Absolute as a multiplicity of singularities of absolute-contradictory self-identity. To say that time emerges as the self-determination of the Eternal Now is simply to state the inverse of this process.

When I say that, within the present, the past is both that which has already passed and that which has yet to pass and that the future is both that which has yet to come and that which has already appeared, I do not invoke an abstract logic whereby past and future simply link or become one. Rather, what I mean is that past and future become one through mutual negation. The place where past and future are one as mutual negation is the present; as the contradictory self-identity of the present, past and future are mutually opposed. And because this is the intended meaning of the notion of contradictory self-identity, past and future are, all the more, non-linked moments, so that the past always flows into the future. Moreover, as the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity-qua-singularity and of singularity-qua-multiplicity—that is, as temporal space—the present assumes a singular form, so that we must think time as sublated. We can say that, as the self-determination of the Eternal Now, we touch upon eternity, which transcends time. But because Eternity is a determined entity that would be negated as contradictory self-identity, time flows from present to present. To say that the One is a unity of multiplicity [一が多の一ということ] is what is meant by the term “spatial” [空間的], and to say that [time] flows from the Many to the One [多から一へということ] is what is meant by the term “mechanical” [機械的], that is, the flow [of time] from past to future. Conversely, to say that the Many is a multiplicity of unity [多が一の多] is to think the world in terms of causation [動的に]; it is to think it in terms of temporality [時間的に]. But, to think the world as a passage from the One to the Many is to think it as development [発展的に], that is, to think it teleologically [合目的的]; it is to think the world as a passage from future to past. As the contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One, a world that passes from the made to the making must be a world that passes from present to present. Reality has form, and the things found in reality are thoroughly determined, which is to say that, as actually existing things that are determined through contradictory self-identity, they work [here, 動き行く] according to the self-contradiction of reality itself. It is implausible to think either the One or the Many as the source of this work. Determination itself must involve self-contradiction.

It follows from the preceding that, as absolute-contradictory self-identity, a world that passes from the made to the making must be a world of *poiēsis*. At the mention of “production,” we tend to think human beings as the exclusive subjective makers of things. But however artificially we construe the notion of production, the fact is not only that things emerge objectively, but also that this emergence must itself be objective. We can make things because we have hands, which themselves must be the result of several tens of millions of years of biological evolution from made things to making things. Metaphorically speaking, this is what Aristotle described as “ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ,” that is, “Nature makes.” Yet this is not to say that human production is a function of Nature. It is not hands that make things. But if that is the case, then what is it to make things? To make things must be to recombine things. In order to build a house, a carpenter must work within the qualitative limits of his materials and alter their connections, which is to say that he must modify their forms (a possibility within Leibniz’s so-called world of “composites”). The actually existing world must be a world whose form is determined as a unity of multiplicity [多の一]. If we think this world exclusively as a passage from the Many to the One, then no room remains for anything like what we call “production.” But even if we were to think the world as a passage from the One to the Many we would remain thoroughly bound to a teleology world [合目的的世界]. This would be nothing more than a world of natural function; it would be nothing more than a life-world [生物的世界]. While we can think the basis of this world as neither the Many nor the One, we can think it instead as a world of the absolute-contradictory self-identity that is the mutual negation of the Many and the One in which singularities are at once formal [形成的] and make things themselves, so that this making everywhere becomes the formative activity of historical Nature [here, 歴史的自然の形成作用] as a passage from the made to the making.

With the irretrievability of time, the present, as the space of time, flows from present to present, and just as we conceive the emergence of time as following from the self-determination of the present, what we mean by the notion of the passage of the world from the made to the making as contradictory self-identity is that objects have the status of having been made. Conversely, to say that objects are produced is to say that the world passes from the produced to the producing. To say that we human beings are *homo faber* is to say that the world is historical, and to say that the world is historical is say that we human beings are *homo faber*. Thus, just as in the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity we can conceive of approaching, in the present of time, something that transcends time, then, as the passage from the produced to the producing, the world of productive being is always a world in which we find form in reality. It is to say that, in the interval created in the passage of time from past to future, it is a world of disembodied consciousness. A world that passes from the produced to the producing has an aspect of consciousness, and onto this consciousness sense is said to be projected. We produce actively-intuitively, which is to say that production must be conscious. Within the realm of the consciousness of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, the productive self is considered rational; it is considered free. That which we call the individual sense of consciousness emerges from production.

We can assume the substratum of the world to be neither singularity nor multiplicity, but if we posit the mutual negation of multiplicity and singularity as the basis of the passage of the world from the produced to the producing, then the majority of people might reject this model of the actually existing world. The majority think the world as being grounded in multiplicities; in terms of atomic theory, they see the world as causal necessity, that is, as a world of substance. In a sense, the world of contradictory self-identity must thoroughly be a conceivable world. But it must be a world that can be thought only from the standpoint of the

contradictory self-identity of reality. What we call reality is not merely given; that which is merely given is that which has been thought. Being situated in the world, we set to work on it from the standpoint of reality. What we call working isn't simply a matter of resolving to do something; rather, working is a matter of making things. We make things. Being made by us, objects alienate us and, in turn, make us. But, over and above this, even our own industriousness derives from the world of things. What I have referred to as "the standpoint of active-intuition" can be thought as reality. Thus, we usually think physical space as reality. The place in which the producing and the produced contradictorily become self-identical, and where the present determines the present itself, can be thought as reality. Even that which we call scientific knowledge must emerge from this standpoint of reality. In the same sense in which we gain an external sense of our bodies through movement ([Ludwig] Noiré), that which we call the self comes to be known through the *poiēsis* that takes place in the historical-social world. The historical-social world must be a world that passes from the produced to the producing. In the absence of the social, there can be no passage from the produced to the producing; without the social, there wouldn't even be *poiēsis*. It must be the case that even the standpoint of what we call thinking is constrained by the historical-social standpoint.

Theories about the point of emergence for philosophy are abundant. Generally speaking, in present-day Japan, such theoretical standpoints as epistemology and phenomenology are in vogue. Considered from these standpoints, my concept of "place" must seem dogmatic. Yet, even these standpoints must be historically-socially limited. Today, we must return to origins and attempt to analyze the historical-social world into logic-ontology. We must rethink Greek philosophy from this standpoint and re-examine the epistemological standpoint of the subject-object opposition. What we call knowing is a possible outcome within the historical-social world. I am not advocating a return to an outdated metaphysics. I believe that, after Kant, Lotze returned to ontology and solved the problem of the epistemological process. However, Lotze's ontology was not of the historical-social type I propose.

In the self-motivation of the world as the absolute-contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, subject and environment are always mutually opposed; it is a world thought to proceed by shaping itself self-contradictorily, which is to say that it is a living world. But, even if we should say that the subject gives form to the world and that the world gives form to the subject, this, however, is nothing like what we describe as the process of form shaping matter. Singularities must be things that everywhere determine themselves; they must be active. To act must in every case be for a singularity to negate another and thereby do away with it; it is for a singularity to try and make of itself the world. Yet, acting must conversely be the process by which the self negates itself; it is the process by which the self becomes an element of the world. Whether we construe the world mechanistically as a multiplicity of singularities or teleologically as a unity of multiplicity, as long as we take it as the actually existing world, it must be contradictory-self-identical in just this sense. However, it goes without saying that whether we construe the world as mechanistic or teleological, singularities are never things that determine themselves; in fact, they don't even act. In fact, the world of the mutual determination of singularities must be a world similar to Leibniz's world of monads. While expressing the world, the monad is also a single standpoint within a world-view; it is manifestation qua expression (*exprimer = représenter*). Moreover, like the monad, the true singularity is non-percipient. The singularity must be that which gives form to itself; it must be expressively active.

We can construe the basis of the singularity as neither singularity nor multiplicity. As absolute-contradictory self-identity, the singularity that is situated in the world of passage from the produced to the producing must be that which gives form to itself expressively-actively. As

a singularity of the world of the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, when the singularity reflects the world, the self-determination of the singularity is desirous. But this desirous self-determination is neither mechanistic nor teleological. It is to act in consequence of its reflection of the world within itself. This is what we call conscious action. Even the instinctive mode of animal existence must essentially be something that has this quality. Thus, human action must primarily arise actively-intuitively; it arises from the act of perceiving things. Active-intuition is self-contradictorily contained in the object as a mode of existence. When we say that, as the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, it passes from the produced to the producing, the world is active-intuitive; the object is always desired. What I mean by the notion of physical form has nothing to do with the form of an inert thing. Rather, as the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, physical form is a mode of the self-configuration of the world in its passage from the produced to the producing. Even the Platonic Forms must be things of this sort.

In the absence of the self-contradictory perception of things, there can be no desire; in the absence of form, there can be no laboring. Though we speak of perception within the world of animal life, perception happens only dimly there; we might say that, as it is in dreams, animalistic perception amounts to nothing more than seeing the image of the thing perceived. This is because, for animals, movement is instinctive. Essentially, though we say that, for animals, perception is expressively active, the fact is that it is impossible for them to make things objectively. Moreover, animals have no objective world; naturally, animals do not work actively-intuitively. For animals, there is as yet no *poiēsis*. In their world, the produced does not alienate itself from the producer, and the produced does not produce the producing; thus, the animal world does not undergo the passage from the produced to the producing. The animal is nothing more than an organic-physical configuration. Thus, for the self to reflect the world monadically is, conversely, for human being, as a standpoint within a world perspective, to labor having perceived things in the objective world actively-intuitively; in other words, it is to labor in consequence of human being having perceived itself objectively. It is for the produced to produce the producing; it is the passage from the produced to the producing. Thus, human beings are *poiētic*, and this allows us to say that we are historical-material. Yet, because our laboring occurs from the standpoint of manifestation qua expression, we can say that human *poiētic* nature is a logical fact.

As stated above, singularities are always creative as such. In the movement by which it configures the world, the singularity functions as a creative element of the creative world, which, in its turn, creates the singularity itself. A world that passes from the produced to the producing as contradictory self-identity must be thought as a world that passes from form to form. Just as I stated earlier that reality determines reality itself, it must be a world that can be thought in terms of the self-determination of form itself. A world of the absolute-contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity must, from this standpoint, always configure itself; it must be a world of self-configuring action. In this sense, a form that configures itself is something historical; in the context of the historical world, it has a subjective role. By form, I do not mean a thing detached from reality, that is, a thing that can be thought as mere abstraction, which is to say, as inactive form. Even though I say that the world passes from form to form, I do not mean that it passes by way of simple non-distribution. What I have in mind is form that has its existence as the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity. We might even say that biological phenomena are utterly reducible to chemical-physical phenomena. But, if, on this basis, we define biological phenomena simply as the accidental unity of matter, then, in order to confirm this quality of unity within phenomena, we must think them as being formally active. The forms possessed by organisms must be functional; in organisms, form and function are

inseparable. What we call form is not only that which we see with our eyes; rather, it is something like both the instinct and the formative activity of organisms. Even something like what we call cultural society must have form. By form, I mean paradigm. We work according to kinds of form. But, in this case, it must be that we work by having seen actively-intuitively, and that we see by having worked. This must be the essence of the passage from the produced to the producing.

As stated above, the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, whose infinite movement is the passage from the produced to the producing, must thoroughly be a world of formative activity in its passage from form to form, which is to say that it must be a subjective world. An unlimited environment stands opposed to this formative activity. And while we can say that the subject forms the environment and that the environment forms the subject, [it happens that,] in the world of absolute- contradictory self-identity, what we call the environment is not simply a material thing; rather, it must be that which negates appearances. As opposed to the passage from singularity to multiplicity, it must be the passage from multiplicity to singularity. Through self-negation, the subject forms the environment and the environment forms the subject. This is not to say that appearance is matter and matter appearance, nor is it to say that things like appearance and matter differ in degree of form. To posit a passage from multiplicity to singularity is to think the world causally and deterministically; it is to construe the world as a priori; it is to think it mechanistically. Against this, it seems that to think the world as a passage from singularity to multiplicity would be to think it teleologically. Yet, to posit the world simply as a teleological thing is, as in the case of animal life, to remain constrained by temporality; it is to remain confined within determinism. In fact, the passage from singularity to multiplicity must be thought as a spatial occurrence; it must be thought as something like Bergson's notion of pure duration. We might say that to posit a thing as creative is to say that it always proceeds according to a vantage point situated in the future, which is to say that it does not originate in the past, [but] it happens that, through the self-negation of pure duration, the actually existing world exists self-contradictorily at a spatial point. In the world of pure duration, in which it is impossible to return even to the preceding moment, there cannot even be that which we call the present. Against this, the actually existing world exists at a temporal point. In other words, it exists self-contradictorily at a point from which it is self-motivated. Thus, in the present of the world that passes from present to present as absolute-contradictory self-identity, subject and environment always oppose each other, so that the subject forms the environment and the environment forms the subject through self-negation. And, because of this, the present of the actually existing world, being both the contradictory self- identity of subject and environment and the contradictory self-identity of singularity and multiplicity, passes from that which has been determined, which is to say that it passes from the produced to the producing. This is to say that the present of the actually existing world passes from past to future. That which has been produced is something that already exists in the environment; it is the past. Moreover, (in nothingness qua being, where the past is simultaneously that which is and that which has passed), the present of the actually existing world is that which forms the subject through self-negation.

If we were to posit the world as proceeding from either multiplicity or singularity, then this would preclude the possibility of a passage from the produced to the producing. Regardless of whether we posit the world as mechanistic or teleological, such a passage remains impossible; indeed, there would be no space into which we might introduce anything like production. And, yet, as the the self- negating identification of multiplicity with singularity, and also as the self-negating identification of singularity with multiplicity, in the world of the absolute-contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, the self-negating formation of

the environment by the subject is, conversely, the formation of a new subject by the environment. The receding into the past of the temporal present is the birth of the future. There is nothing in the historical world that can be said to be simply given. Those things that are given in the world are produced things; through self-negation, they are things that produce producing things. That which is produced is that which has passed; it is that which has entered into nothingness. But the entrance of time into the past is a bringing-forth of the future; it is the emergence of a new subject. In this sense, it is the passage from the produced to the producing. To say that, in the historical world, subject and environment always oppose each other through mutual negation is to say that they oppose each other in a manner similar to that in which, in the temporal present, past and future oppose each other through mutual negation. Thus, in a manner similar to that of the passage of the present from past to future as contradictory self-identity, subject and environment pass from the produced to the producing. But, at the same time that this passage is something like the monadic reflection of the world by the singularity, conversely, it is also something like a single standpoint within a worldview. This is to say that passage is the essence world of the self-identity that is the absolute-contradiction of multiplicity and singularity. Having been produced, producing things emerge in this world, so that the world goes on producing anew.

Thus, as the absolute-contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, a world that is self-motivated by self-contradiction is always self-contradictory in the present; the present is the place of contradiction. When considered from the standpoint of abstract reasoning, it seems unlikely that contradictory things ever unite; because they cannot unite, we say that they contradict each other. However, except that contradictory things come into contact with each other, contradiction cannot be said to exist. Opposition is, at the same time, unification; it is in that moment that dialectical reasoning exists. As the epitome of contradiction, we can think something like the opposition of time and the moment. But, just as we can think the moment as something external to time, along with the negation of opposition by this relation, we probably should also think it as a point in dialectical space that contravenes opposition. If we construe time as an abstract concept, then we might think it a simple linear progression of infinite movement from past to future. However, in the historical world, what we actually think as time probably should be treated as a mode of production. Time must be the passage from the produced to the producing; time is the passage from past to future. What we call the form of the temporal present is the mode of production of the historical world.

As a token of the counter-productivity of the mode of production of the historical world, what we think as reproductive time is something like what we commonly think as the time of linear progression. In reproductive time, what we call the present is devoid of content and has no form; it can be thought as a point within the ungraspable instant. Past and future can be thought to unite at a point within the ungraspable instant, so that that which we are able to conceive as physical time may be precisely the present. Within what we think as the physical world, there is no production; the physical world is nothing but the repetition of one and the same world—it is merely a spatial world of multiplicities. But, when we turn to the organic world, we see that the mode of production already has content, and this allows us to say that time has form. In purposeful action, the passage from past to future is reversed, so that what we see is a passage proceeding on the basis of a future-oriented viewpoint; what we call the passage from past to future is not simply a linear progression but a circular one. This is to say that a mode of production has a specific content; it is to say that, as the present of the contradictory self-identity of past and future, it has form. By form, here, we mean a kind of organicism. This form is the mode of production of the historical world; it is what we call the subjective. In the organic world, past and future already oppose each other in the topological

present, such that we can conceive the subject as forming the environment and the environment as forming the subject. Thus, within this dialectic, a multiplicity of singularities is not simply rendered a multiplicity of singularities, but forms itself. Even so, the organic world is not yet a world of absolute-contradictory self-identity.

In fact, in the contradictorily self-identical historical-social world, past and future always self-contradictorily and simultaneously exist in the present, such that we can say that the world is self-contradictorily a single present. Where the purposeful action of organisms is concerned, even though we say that past and future unite in the present, it remains that such unity is processual; it is not what we call the true present. Consequently, within this union, there is no true production; there is no creation. Within organic life, there is no way of separating the produced from the producing; simply put, the reason for this is that only human life is the life of subjectivity. While, in the context of the historical-social world, past and future and the produced and producing are always mutually opposed, each of these oppositions produces the producing. Rather than simply slipping into the past, produced things, in their turn, produce producing things; at this juncture, there is true production. To say that the world is a single present is to say that the world is a singular mode of production through which new things come into being; it is to say that the world is a vehicle that gives birth to new worlds. The singular mode of production of the world is the mode of production of historical creation, only this is not to say that things emerge causally from the environment; but neither does it fundamentally mean that the latent subjectively becomes manifest. As Bergson says, creation is not simply a sophisticated progression in which there is no possibility of returning, even for a moment, to the past. Rather, creation must be the fact of the contradictorily self-identical emergence of things from the contradictory opposition of infinite past and future. In the place where the linear becomes the circular, there is production; here, there is true production.

In the historical world, the past isn't simply that which has passed. As Plato had it, it is a world in which non-being is being. In the historical present, past and future always contradictorily oppose each other, and from this contradictory opposition, new worlds are born. I call this the dialectic of historical life. If we construe the past as that which is determined, and if, as thesis, it is given, then, against this, innumerable negations and futures are given form. Yet, the past is that which is determined contradictorily-self-identically; that which determines the past contradictorily-self-identically determines the true future; in other words, antithesis is given form. As contradictory self-identity, the world is creative, and, insofar as it is a living world, the formation of this sort of antithesis is inevitable. Thus, the deeper and more extensive this contradictory opposition becomes, that is, the more truly contradictorily antagonistic it becomes, [the more likely it becomes that] new worlds will be created contradictorily-self-identically; this is synthesis. Within the present, the more the infinite past and future contradictorily oppose each other, the more likely it becomes that there is expansive creation. To say that new worlds are created is not simply to say that the past and the world are negated, or that they disappear; as posited within the dialectic, it is to say that they are sublated. Within the historical world, infinite pasts have been sublated into the present. Even in becoming human, we retain our animality.

For us to posit that past and future self-contradictorily oppose each other in the present must imply that the present has form. Form is the mode of production of the historical world. Stated from the standpoint of the individual, this is to say that we see things actively-intuitively; it is to say that we are able to make the passage from the produced to the producing. Conversely, as the place of *poiēsis*, that is, as the place of active-intuition, human being constitutes the historical present. The forms of living things are functional. To say that living things act functionally is to say that they have form. From this it follows that, as a mode of

production, the contradictorily self-identical historical present possesses a specific form. Yet, as stated above, within the organic mode of production, the contradictory opposition of past and future does not yet truly exist; the true historical present does not yet exist. Here, there is no such thing as the determination of the present by the present itself as contradictory self-identity; nor is there any such thing as the determination of form by form itself. Therefore, organic action is not active-intuitive. Stated in Hegelian terms, this is still the condition of immediacy. This is to say that, as a single present, and within the historical-social mode of production, in which infinite pasts and futures are mutually opposed as contradictory self-identity, and being that which is always on the move, the present has its own form. Thus, we can say that the present determines the present itself, and that form determines form itself. If we think that which we call the present as something purely abstract, then the claim that the present passes from one present to the next may seem either audacious or unfounded. And, yet, it obtains within the dialectic that opposition serves as synthesis and synthesis as opposition, so that, in the absence of opposition, there is no synthesis and, likewise, without synthesis, there is no opposition. As two distinct processes, synthesis and opposition must everywhere become one. Thus, within a practical dialectic, synthesis is in no way a requirement of so-called reason; rather, it must be an inherent form of the real world, which is to say that it must be what we call the mode of production of the actually existing world. We can characterize this as an ideal mode in the context of the present world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, which everywhere unites infinite pasts and futures through mutual antagonism. Hegel's notion of the idea must be something of this sort. Synthesis does not negate opposition; as contradictory self-identity, it proceeds self-contradictorily.

We can say that, as the contradictory self-identity of past and future, and always harboring contradiction within itself, the historical present contains something that exceeds its capacity; it always contains something of the transcendent. The transcendent is always immanent. While the present possesses form and contains past and future, this containment by the present has the effect of negating the present itself, so that past and future must exceed its limits. Thus, whereas within this sort of world the individual expresses it in a manner like that of the monad, and just as we say that expression is but a glimpse within a perspective on that world, this world must be one that actively-expressively forms itself. A world in which the present includes things that transcend it must be a world that expressively forms itself. Being situated in a world in which past and present unite through mutual negation, we can say that this must be a world which, while expressively-actively apperceiving things, expressively-actively passes from the seeing to the doing. Being neither mechanical nor teleological, this passage is rather logical. Things that act according to contradictory self-identity, namely, material things, are logically real things. In a world in which time is understood as something purely linear, and in which what we call the present thereby does not exist, neither is there that which we call work. My meaning of the contradictory self-identity that is the synthesis of past and future within the present and the passage of the produced to the producing might be understood by allusion to our sense of self-consciousness. The ground of self-consciousness is that place which advances as contradictory self-identity and within which past and future unite in the field of consciousness of the present. That which we call the conscious unity of the self cannot obtain within a simple linear progression of time. To say that consciousness is singularity qua consciousness while its development is multiple must be to indicate the contradictory self-identity inherent in the meaning of my preceding statements. It could be that even those who deem it impossible to conceive something like contradictory self-identity are actually thinking contradictorily self-identically, and, yet, such people make no attempt to explain the objective world on the basis of the experience of conscious unity. Conversely, this is to say that, as an

individual of the world of the absolute-contradictory self-identity of singularity and multiplicity, the self is basically on the level of the monad.

In light of our foregoing statements, what we mean when we say that, within the historical world, subject and environment oppose each other and that the subject proceeds by forming the environment and the environment by forming the subject is that, as past and future oppose each other within the present, subject and environment pass from the made to the making as contradictory self-identity. In the context of the historical world, subject and environment are not merely given things. That which is given is that which has been made. Even that which we call the environment must in all respects be a thing of historical development. Thus, to say that subject forms environment within the historical world is not to suggest that form shapes substance. Even what we call the material world is something that forms itself on the basis of contradictory self-identity. Within the world of the historical present that is absolute-contradictory self-identity, various self-determining forms, which is to say, various modes of production, emerge. We can think these modes of production as the source of history, that is, as the source of the diversity of societies. What we call society must be a mode. Thus, in essence, society must contain the ideal, wherein lies its distinction from life-source. As long as it is ideally organic, that is, as long as it is poiëtic in a deeply significant sense, it is a living society.

By the notion of the ideally productive, I do not mean to say that a thing breaks away from the historical-material base and simply becomes culture. Rather, what I mean by this is that, in the extent to which the formative subject separates from the environment and perishes, the idea becomes the ideal; the subject forms the environment. Yet, even as the environment is produced by the subject, it is not merely a possession of the subject who made it, but something that opposes and negates the subject. Human life perishes under the malicious influences of the things we make. In order to live, the subject must everywhere proceed by reproducing life; as the elementary form of the historical world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, the subject must become universally productive; it must become the ideal constitutive force of the historical world. That which has been produced must have a universal character, which is to say that it must forge ahead by producing a universal environment. Only this sort of subject fully lives. To say that, as the kernel of history, the subject becomes universally productive is not to say that the subject vanishes, nor is it to say that it loses its subjective distinction and becomes purely universal. We can say that, within the mode of production of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, which we claim contains infinite pasts and futures in the present, and alongside their synthesis within a single universal environment, each of a multitude of subjects is poiëtically ideal and touches upon eternity. If it isn't the case that every subjective and particular thing is negated and becomes an abstract, universal world, then neither is it the case that every subject is teleologically synthesized as subject. Though we can conceive of the subjective existence of an element that doesn't necessarily conform to a culture, we can say that a subject which does not in some or another sense become ideally productive probably cannot survive within world history. The idea must be the principle of subjective life. Being a produced thing that always-already serves as environment while lacking the power to make making things, that which we call the idea is culture alienated from the subject. To view the world simply as a made thing is to assume the vulgar viewpoint of culture.

A world that passes from the made to the making thing as absolute contradictory self-identity is a world in which past and future unite within the present through mutual negation and in which, acquiring form through contradictory self-identity, the present forges ahead to form itself by passing from present to present. The world is always a world that passes from the made to the making as a single present. That which we call the form of the present as contradictory self-identity is the mode of production of the world; this sort of world is a world of *poiēsis*. Within such a world, and as the contradictory self-identity of that which we call seeing and that which we call working, to give form is to see; so we can say that to give form is to pass from the seeing to the doing. We see things actively-intuitively, so we can say that we pass from seeing to forming things. When we speak of working, we do so from the standpoint of the individual subject. However, none of us works from a standpoint that is external to the world; rather, when we work, we must already be in the world. To work must involve being worked upon. That which we call our working is neither simply mechanical nor teleological; to the degree that it is what we call 'forming activity,' *to form* is necessarily *to be formed*. It must be the case that, as singularities of a world that forms itself, we work through formative activity. Because past and future unite in the present through mutual negation, we can make the point that that which we call the contradictory self-identical self-forming of the world as a single present arises from the contradictory synthesis of the infinite past and the infinite future. What we mean here is that a world of this sort must thoroughly be thought as analogous to Leibniz's world of monads, which is thoroughly a world in which innumerable singularities determine themselves through mutually negating syntheses. It is a world in which the monad is thoroughly and immanently driven; it is a single temporal sequence in which, pregnant with the future, the present carries the past on its back. And yet, the relationship between singularities and the world is, in the end, precisely analogous with Leibniz's equation of manifestation with expression. In the same movement by which the monad expresses the world, it serves as a single viewpoint of its perspective. We can say that, as the absolute contradictory self-identity of singularity and multiplicity, a single world of this sort conversely expresses itself through **infinition**. A world that is integrated on the basis of the mutual negation of innumerable single things must be a single world that conversely expresses itself infinitely through self-negation. In a world of this sort, thing and thing expressively oppose one another; it is a world that is united on the basis of the mutual negation of past and future within the present. Insofar as the present always contains within itself that which exceeds it, it is a world in which that which is transcendent becomes that which is immanent, and where that which is immanent becomes that which is transcendent. In neither a mechanistic world that passes from past to future, nor in a teleological world that passes from future to past does what we call 'objective expression' exist. What we call the world of objective expression must be a world in which, wherever the Many is the Many, it is the Many insofar as it is the One, and in which wherever the One is the One, it is the One insofar as it is the Many. Insofar as that which has passed away has already entered into Nothingness and now *is* Being and where, within the contradictory self-identical present (the historical space), being that which has not yet passed, the future is simultaneously that which has already appeared, thing and thing interact by the one expressively-actively opposing the other. [And yet], they oppose and interact with each other neither in the fatal terms of a causal a priori passage nor in terms of the teleological necessity of a an a posteriori. Moreover, we can say that, as a single present, it is a world that moves absolutely-contradictorily precisely as a passage of present to present and as the formation of the world itself in its passage from the made to the making.

Let's assume the plausibility of thinking the passage from form to form of a world that proceeds by forming itself in terms of either a developmental leap or non-transcendence. We might even assume that there is nothing such as the motion of single things. However, this opposes my thinking. What we call singularities must be things that everywhere expressively determine themselves; they must be things that move expressively-actively. What we call the shape of the world must appear as this sort of mutually negating synthesis of single things; it must be something that appears as contradictory self-identity. We will have to say that this expressive activity of innumerable single things is conversely the self-expression of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity in accordance with the former's innumerable modes of [expression]. Let's once again consider [this self-expression] from the standpoint of our conscious unity. Each aspect of what we call our conscious appearance is independent and self-expressive. We might even say that each of these aspects seizes upon that which is individual as a demand. Moreover, unlike William James' notion of 'warmth and intimacy' [羊群の焼印]、what we are calling the 'Self' must be something that has form as the negating synthesis of these kinds of self-expressing things. In this sense, the self is what we call 'personality' and 'individuality'. Being neither transcendent nor externally situated, the self dwells at the site of conscious activity, so that each moment of consciousness seizes upon the becoming-complete of the Self as a demand. Moreover, what we call the 'pure self' dwells at the site that proceeds by negatively synthesizing each moment of consciousness. Even within our conscious unity, past and future are contradictorily synthesized in the present, and, as a single contradictorily self-identical present, the complete self is productive and creative as it proceeds from past to future. Even that which we call conscious unity is usually thought in abstract (psychological) terms as something divorced from the world, but perhaps we should think this in the concrete terms of the expressive-active things that constitute the self-forming world.

Within the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, about which we should say that each single thing everywhere expressively-actively determines itself as a single thing, when the multiplicity of single things are thought in the self-negating terms of simple convergence, then what is thought is the physical world. The physical world is a world of mathematical form that appears by virtue of mathematic notation. When it is thought that single things express the world, each in its own mode, then what is thought is a living world. Qua environment, those things constitute the world of organic life. In this world, single things are not yet truly expressive-active. When we say that single things everywhere expressively-actively determine themselves, what we are talking about is the human historical world. The world proceeds by absolutely-contradictorily self-identically forming itself as the present. Naturally, both the organic world and the material world have form, but their forms are neither productive nor creative. Thus, it cannot yet be said that what happens there are passages either from form to form or from the made to the making. We can say that there, at the site where past and future unite within the present and within that aspect in which the experience of time as a passage from past to future always vanishes, there exists an aspect of consciousness. The historical world is conscious. If we don't think through that which we call expressive activity, then what we call the passage from form to form is abstractly construed, and what we call activity and form are construed as mutually independent. However, something like 'work' emerges in the relations amongst activity, form, and all the world. We must even say this of physical phenomena (I think this point is clear in Roche's *Metaphysics*). I cannot think the form of the world apart from what I call 'a mode of production' and 'activity.' Many people are in the habit of divorcing that which we call 'activity' from its relations to all the world and thinking it abstractly. Even such things as physical and animal activity can be thought in these terms, but we cannot abstractly think that which we call 'expressive activity'. Within the world of absolute-

contradictory self-identity, in which it is thought that the subject shapes the environment and the environment shapes the subject, even what we call the material world is [by virtue of this formative activity], a made thing, so that, having the character of environment, the made thing proceeds by shaping the subject. This shaping occurs as passages from the material world to the organic world and from the organic world to the human world. Even though we say that that which we call contradictory self-identity cannot be thought abstractly, let us assume that what we call 'reality' is something that issues in this manner from the self itself.

Whereas what we call working [acting] in this world is to shape things, I actively-intuitively see things, so that what we mean by the passage from seeing to working [acting] is, as stated above, for single things to be single things insofar as they everywhere shape the world expressively. We stand this position on its head by saying that the expressive shaping of the world by single things requires us to posit it as integral to the self-forming of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity. What we mean by 'active intuition' is that we self-contradictorily shape the object and that, conversely, we are shaped by the object. This is to posit the contradictory self-identity of what we call seeing and working. Past and future combine within the present through self-negation, which is to say that, as contradictory self-identity, the present enfolds past and future, so that when we say that the present has form, the world that forms the purported Self is there. As a single present, the world proceeds by infinitely determining itself in its passage from the made to the making. As singularities of this sort of world, we are formal by virtue of [our work of] consciously expressing the world, which is to say that we proceed by self-contradictorily shaping the world or, in other words, that we are expressive-active (what we call expressive activity entails setting to work on the world as its mediators). It is in that mediating activity that we have life.

To see things actively-intuitively must be to apprehend things through the mode of production of the world. In this sense, to see things is to express the world. To apprehend reality conceptually in the Hegelian sense must be to do something of this sort. To apprehend things according to concrete concepts (as made-making things) must be to grasp things historically-productively. The essence of things apprehended from this standpoint [is constituted by] those concrete concepts. Concrete concepts are not made by abstract activity; rather, they are apprehended actively-intuitively. There, to make is to see; [making] is manifestation-qua-expression. As single things, we work the world out of reflection; [so that], by virtue of our active-intuitive construction of things, to set to work on the world is to apprehend reality in accordance with an historical mode of production, which is to say that it is to apprehend it through concrete concepts. Thus, we can say that even something like the artist's creative activity is an apprehension of the concrete concepts of things through a mode of production by virtue of execution (through art, it is to apprehend Beauty and Truth). And, yet, insofar as infinite pasts and futures combine in the present, the world that proceeds by forming itself through absolute-contradictory self-identity must be a world that has the transcendental tendency to be altogether symbolically expressed. What proceeds by actively-intuitively apprehending a mode of production—concrete concept—in accordance with this tendency of the world is experimental science. In that act of apprehension, what I mean by 'active-intuition' [takes the form of] scientific experimentation. Not even something like physics begins simply with abstract logic; rather, it begins with the reflection of the world upon itself, which is to say that it begins with manifestation qua expression. In manifestation qua expression, the world's mode of production is expressed only symbolically, which is to say that it is mathematic. What I mean by 'active-intuition' says nothing of a simple passive intuition, and while it may be possible simply to think action abstractly as something like negated passive intuition, this does not exist in the real world.

If the concrete concept is to be thought in the aforementioned terms of the mode of production of a world that moves contradictorily self-identically, then we can say that that which is theoretical is actual and that that which is actual is theoretical. Thus, Rhodes is always here, and, here, we must be entreated to jump. The reality of active-intuition is always the place of contradiction, and it is here that matters are determined. The veracity of thought is determined here, as well. When we say that we simply reflect the world as expressive-active selves, this is to say that we are conscious; it is thought that we are oriented. When this sort of activity, as activity, is simply formative, then the logic [according to which it is thought] is abstract. To speak of abstract activity is to say that the expressive-active self reflects the world symbolically (that is, it does so semiotically). Insofar as it constructs things expressively-actively from this sort of standpoint, and by virtue of its active-intuitive viewing of them in reality, that which proceeds by apprehending the mode of production of the world that forms itself is concrete logic. The whole of active intuition in no way presents itself all at once, unmediated. What we call intuition is neither more nor less than our selves as the formative activity of the world; it must be the case that it is constituent of the world.

Singularities are singularities by virtue of the fact that they everywhere form themselves expressively-actively. But this is to say that singularities possess themselves by way of self-negation; it is to say that they are aspects of the world that forms itself. The world forges ahead by forming itself as the negative synthesis of infinite expressive-active singularities. When we say that, within such a world, single things dwell in that world's self-formation, then single things are infinitely libidinous. To say that we are libidinous is not to say that we are mechanical; nor is it simply to say that we are teleological. Rather, it must be to say that we reflect the world onto the interior of the self; it must be to say that we mediate the self-formation of the world. Thus, even what we call the lives of animals must be something of this sort, which is to say that, because of this, animals must be conscious [beings]. Even with respect to animals, according as they become more advanced, they must come to share a likeness with the world. Of course, they liken themselves to the world neither consciously nor in awareness; and, yet, what we call the essential activity of animals must be some sort of formative activity. We might even speak of something like the unconscious, its theory having been expounded by [Eduard von] Hartmann and others. Animals are instinctual by virtue of the fact that they dwell unconsciously in a world that forms itself.

The world of absolute-contradictory self-identity is a world in which past and future are unified in the present by virtue of their mutual negation, so that the world proceeds by forming itself as a single present [and is] infinitely productive and creative in its passage from the made thing to the making thing. First, as a making thing that made a passage from the stage of the made thing, a world of this sort is organically productive as the passage from past to future. What we call the physical lives of organisms must be this sort of formative activity. Thus, animals are neither mechanical nor teleological here; rather, they must be formative. Their animal form notwithstanding, we can say this because they are conscious. And, for this reason, we can say that the behavior of animals is impulsive and that, because it unfolds within animal form, it is essential, which is to say that it is physical. For the animal, to see is to act, and to act is to see, that is, acting and seeing are constitutive [moments of the animal]. The system within which seeing and acting become contradictorily self-identical is the body. And yet, in animal life, the made thing does not yet in fact oppose the making thing; the made thing does not emerge independently from the making thing, so it is does not happen that the made thing makes making things. With respect to animal life, it cannot be said that the world in fact forms itself as a single contradictory self-identical present. There, the present does not yet have form, and the world is not yet truly formative. Organic life is not creative. [In animal life], single things are not

yet expressive-active, which is to say that they are not free. We said that, within the historical world, the subject shapes the environment and that the environment shapes the subject, but, in animal life, environment remains environment—it is not an historical subject. In animal life, the passage occurs not from the made thing to the making thing, but from the made thing to the made thing.

(It might be thought that, by saying this, I contradict myself since I clearly stated earlier that animal life is subjective, but, in the world of organic life, subject and environment have not yet truly become contradictorily self-identical. In fact, within the world of contradictory self-identity, insofar as the true living of the self of the subject lies in the act of the subject truly immersing itself in the environment and negating itself, it must be the case that to say that the environment forms the subject by enveloping it is to say that the environment negates itself, which is to say that environment becomes subject. To say that the making thing truly becomes the making thing by negating itself and becoming the made thing is to say that this is a passage from the made to the making thing. Within the world of organic life, subject and environment are always mutually opposed, so that for the subject to shape the environment is, inversely, for the subject to be formed out of the environment. Simply put, the reason for this is that to speak of 'the subjective' is to speak of 'the environmental'. We can say that the subject that is sustained by the environment by virtue of its immersion in it is the historical subject. For the historical subject, the fact is that the environment isn't a given but a made thing. Where this is so, we can truthfully say that the subject throws off the environment. The world of organic life is not yet a world, *per se*.)

Even the world of organic life is a world of contradictory self-identity for the sorts of reasons given above; but, as the passage from the made thing to the making thing, and by virtue of its achievement of contradictory self-identity, the historical world develops by virtue of a transition from an organic world to a human world. Historical life concretizes itself such that the world becomes something that truly moves of itself. This is not to say that this sort of development happens as the simple continuation of organic life. If this is the case, then nor is it to say that it occurs simply on the basis of the negation of organic life. Rather, it is to say that the world achieves self-contradiction. Thus, even organic life contains self-contradiction. However, organic life remains environmental; it is not yet truly a passage from the made thing to the making thing. At the limit of such self-contradiction, organic life transforms into human life. Of course, this transformation must be the result of hundreds of millions of years of painstaking work by historical life. At the extreme limit of the work-life that is the passage from the made thing to the making thing, the subject lives according as it immerses itself in the environment, and the environment reaches the limit at which it becomes the environment by virtue of its self-negating act of becoming-subject.

Insofar as past and future contradictorily unite in the present, the world proceeds by forming itself as contradictory self-identity by passing from present to present, which is to say that the world is productive and creative. The body is not organically material but historically material. As made things, we have bodies. The human body is a productive body. As organic single thingsⁱ, we are desirous because we [always-] already reflect the world through self-negation; we are formal by virtue of our instinctual activity. Within the world that we say passes from the made thing to the making thing as absolute-contradictory self-identity, we everywhere desire expressive-active form; we live the need to produce. For this reason, and as single things of a world of the contradictory self-identity of singularity and multiplicity, we are real single things. Our forming of the world expressively-actively is, inversely, a forming of the self itself as an aspect of that world; it is a forming of the self itself insofar as the world is a negative synthesis of innumerable expressive-formal multiplicities of single things. We can as yet say this

only with respect to the instinctual forms of organisms. Even what we call 'instinct' will have to be understood on the basis of the relations that hold between organism and world (as it is understood by behavioral psychology). If we do away with the correlation of human instinct with so-called material form, then the former must be historical-material, which is to say that it must be productive. Human action arises on the basis of our expressive-active reflection of the world; it arises by virtue of the fact that we productively-materially see things.

Within the productive-material self that works by virtue of seeing things productively-materially, that which we call 'seeing' and that which we call 'making' together constitute contradictory self-identity. That which we call the productive-material seeing of things is to apprehend things according to a mode of production, which is to say that it is to apprehend things according to concrete concepts. That is, as expressive-active selves, it is to apprehend things from the standpoint of the contradictorily self-identical present. Let's call this the standpoint of truly concrete logic. In that standpoint, that which is true is that which is real. One should also assume that abstract knowledge is something removed from this sort of standpoint. And, yet, nothing like 'objective knowledge' is to be found in isolation from the standpoint of this sort of experiment. It must be the case that not even the standpoint of academic knowledge negates the experimental standpoint but, all the better, it must culminate in it. Contradiction occurs in the place of our active-intuition; it happens at the seat of productive-materiality. For this reason, as contradictory self-identity, when we speak of the passage of the made thing to the making thing, the made thing, as made thing, transcends the given thing. We then assume that we've arrived at the limit, that is, at that which transcends the completely active-intuitive; [we assume that we've arrived] at the material. And, yet, this assumed limit is something of our own conjuring that must now be something that now returns to us. When we say that the world in which innumerable pasts and futures unite in the present forms itself as a contradictory, self-identical present, we mean to say that the world is everywhere symbolically expressed as the 'supra-material', that is, it is simply thought conceptually. And, yet, this is not to say that the supra material everywhere alienates itself from our historical bodies.

Within the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, if there is anything that is given to us in opposition, then it must be given to us as a problem. In this world, we are confronted by the problem of deciding 'what it is that we should make.' It is in that act of deciding that we have life. We are born into this world with struggle as our birthright. That which is given isn't simply that which should be negated, nor, on the other hand, is it either a mediating or mediated thing. It is the given thing that must be perfected, which is to say that it has been given materially. We do not come into this world empty-handed; rather, we are born into bodies. Alongside the solving of one problem by the fact that we are born into bodies, there arises the fact that (consider, for example, the development of eyes in insects), as contradictory self-identity, endless problems come along with the bodies we are given. To say that we are born into bodies is to say that we are born in order to bear endless problems. That which we say is truly directly given to the active self must be something that objectively confronts us as a mortal challenge. Reality must be that which both shelters and eventually destroys us. If it is not simply something material, then neither is it anything mediated. It must ask of us, "What are you going to make of me? And, will your making entail your dying?" In that place where the world confronts me as a single contradictorily self-identical present, there is the truly given thing. Both the truly given thing and true reality must be something that is made to appear. When we discover where the contradiction of reality lies, then we shall also discover the essence of that which is truly given to oppose us. Those things that we say are simply given are nothing more than abstractly thought things. Because we are material, we are self-

contradictory. The world that confronts us actively-intuitively is a world that confronts us mortally.

As single things of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, the self is expressive-active; it works from the standpoint of seeing things actively-intuitively and productively-materially. As the passage from the made thing to the making thing, we have bodies as made things, which is to say that we are historical-material. To say this must be to say that human beings are in all respects social. The industrious human being is a political animal, thus it is rational.¹ The family is the point of departure for human social structure; it can be thought as the cell of society. If we think it in terms of developmental theory, then even the human family appears to be grounded in something like the group instinct of animals. It has been said that the tendency among gorillas to cohabit with several female mates at once has also been observed the lifestyles of primitive human beings. However, according to Manilowski and others, the instinctual groups of animals and the societies of human beings must be, in a word, as fundamentally distinct from each other as are instinct and culture (Manilowski, *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*). The Oedipal Complex seems to illustrate how what we call the human family differs from the group structure of animals on the basis that the former is social. That which we call 'instinct' is the form of an activity that has its basis in organic structure. Even the collective activity of animals is supported by the contradictions inherent in instinct. This collective activity differs from that found in the social structures of human beings. In human social structures, no matter how primitive, that which we call the 'human being' must be present. Even while he is everywhere group-determined, the individual must have a propensity to work in isolation from the group. Thus, in opposition to the appearance of animal instinctual groups as given things, that which we call 'human society' must be that which proceeds as the made-making thing. Against the majority who think primitive societies in terms of collectives, I wish, from the beginning, to confer with the thinking of the likes of Malinowski. Even within primitive societies, there exists what we call 'crime' (Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*). But, insofar as what we call 'society' differs from the animal instinctual group, it must be something that indicates that which proceeds through the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity as the passage from the made thing to the making thing. If single things do not work instinctually-adaptively, then they must already be expressive-formative. Insofar as there prevails a strong sense of the significance of the incest taboo in primitive social structures, [human] society can be thought to arise on the basis of an instinctual repression. None of the entirety of relations among husband and wife, parents and children is instinctual; rather, at the site where each is institutionally constrained, we have that thing we call 'society'.

Where is the foundation of such a society located? As we have already said, it must lie in the passage of the made thing to the making thing, which is to say that it must lie in the contradictory self-identity of subject and environment. We can say that society begins with poiesis. Several characteristics come to mind in the distinction between primitive societies and something like the instinctual groups of animals. However, each of these must be thought from the standpoint of 'poiesis'. This is the reason why I think society historically-materially. Let us say that society can be thought as a unitary economic system. Societies must in all respects be material-productive. There, [in that material-productivity], lies the actual basis of society. And, yet, it goes without saying that that basis must be poetic. Human beings are distinguished from animals on the basis of the fact they we have tools. On this basis, then, the economic structure

¹ Here, Nishida uses the terms *homo faber*, ζῶον πολιτικόν, and λογὸν ἔχων, which I've translated, respectively, as "industrious human being," "political animal," and "[is] rational."

of society develops as the passage from the made thing to the making thing. Even something like familial regulation might everywhere be thought to have emerged from this sort of economic structure. While theories concerning the origins of the regulation of property abound, we must think this to have emerged on the basis of the historical-material form according to which we possess the body of the self through things.

The world that forms itself as contradictory self-identity must everywhere be a passage from environment to subject. We called this 'organic life', and insofar as it obtains in the human being, it is something that we never escape. Thus, if we go as far as to construe the world of human being as contradictory self-identity, then we see that this world is not simply instinctual but that it must be expressive-formative. This is to say that the environment must everywhere become subject by virtue of self-negation. In the world of contradictory self-identical human being, subject is subject by virtue of its immersion in the environment, and environment must be environment by virtue of its becoming-subject through self-negation. However, to say that this is the state of the world must be to say that the single things which everywhere reflect the world internally and are expressive-formative do and are so only as aspects of a world that forms itself. In this sort of world, single things possess the self as objective reality, which is to say that our possession of the self lies in our possession of property. And, yet, we certainly cannot simply say that our possession of property derives solely from the work of the individual; rather, [we say] that this possession must be admitted by the objective world and that, as things belonging to one or another person, they must be expressed, [that is], they must be verified by the subject. The world that forms itself expressively as the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity must be juridical. That we possess our bodies through things must be a juridical notion. Even Hegel (Cf. *Philosophy of Right*, §29) saw that to apprehend existence as existence through free will is the task of law. To say that, as the passage from made things to making things, we are poetic and historical-material must be to say not that human society is instinctual but that it is always-already juridical. The possibility of what we call poiesis must lie within a world that is legally constructed. According to an anthropological position, even the productive activity of primitive societies is in a broad sense legally supported. And, yet, we can say that the various social institutions are, conversely, modes of development of the possibility of poetic production, which is to say that they constitute a single instance of the historical mode of production. As the passage from the made thing to the making thing, the world of historical production must everywhere be, in terms of environment, material-productive. It is in such a world that the Machiavellian '*raison d'état*' has its basis, so that this basis must become the condition of possibility for the emergence of the historical-productive world.

As a made thing that forms itself as the passage from the made thing to the making thing, the world must be material-productive. Society must have an economic structure, and that structure must be a material mode of production. But this is neither to say that society is mechanical nor that it is simply teleological. We can say that the world is self-formative as a unified present. In that world, historical-formative activity must always-already be at work as contradictory self-identity. It must be the case that the world contradictorily self-identically touches upon the absolute. At the basis of the development of society, there is a religious element at work. Thus, primitive societies are mythological societies. In primitive societies, myth is a living reality that supports the human world (Cf. Malinowski, *Myth in Primitive Psychology*). It is said that ancient religion is more social institution than religion (Cf. Robertson Smith). I think that at the basis of societal formation lies something Dionysian, and I'm interested in such thinking as that of Harrison, who argues that the gods were born of Dionysian dance (Cf. Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Origins of Greek Religion*). It is thought that, because particular peoples live in particular geographical environments, particular cultures

are formed. It goes without saying that geographical environment is a significant factor in culture-formation. However, the geographical environment does not form culture, and even 'a people' must be latently present prior to historical formation. Even that which we call 'a people' must be something that proceeds by being formed due to the fact that it forms. When the world forms itself as contradictory self-identity, then what is formed is a world of life; it is a world of infinite form—a world of species. To animals, this world is a world of instinct, but to human beings, it is supernatural. Moreover, even for animals, as the passage from the made thing to the making thing, and to the degree that they are creative-formative, they constitute living species. That which we call 'a people' must constitute this sort of supernatural formative power. That which we call the passage from the made thing to the making thing must be ideal as the making thing that makes making things as long as the made thing is made from a species, which is to say that it is of the world; it is to say that the formation of the species happens according to a historical mode of production. For the world to advance everywhere contradictorily self-identically in such a direction is nothing other than for it to advance towards historical development. Even within instinctive animal behavior, as it is already thought, our action occurs on the basis of the fact that we self-contradictorily reflect the world, which is to say that it occurs on the basis of the fact that it is historical-material. Thus, this is to say that our action happens socially. Even personal conflicts between me and thee are products of social development. A child's self-consciousness must be something that develops on the basis of social relations. The reason for this is that that which we call 'society' is something that is established as the self-formation of the contradictory-self-identical present. Just as, within organic life, there is organic material—which is the same as the so-called 'body'—as contradictory-self-identical form, it happens that, within historical life, there is something called 'historical material', or 'society'. With respect to what we call 'active intuition', it happens that, as single things of the sort of world that forms itself as contradictory self-identity, we apprehend that world through an historical mode of production, and we do so in accordance with what Hegel referred to as 'conceptual apprehension.' This is to grasp reality poetically. As that which rests upon a base by virtue of absolute contradictory self-identity, this sort of active-intuitive, historical-material society must everywhere proceed by transcending itself self-contradictorily. And while we say that it proceeds by surpassing itself, nowhere is it the case that society separates from the actual material base. If it were so to separate, then this would be nothing other than an abstract world. We cannot simply negate the present of active-intuition from the standpoint of abstract logic. Negation must be something that emerges from the self-contradiction of the present. It happens that the given thing is given historically-individually. The contradiction of life occurs at the site of the formation of life, so that, everywhere life proceeds, it is contradiction. Insofar as life attains the [form of] human being, it arrives at a pole of contradiction. From the standpoint of contradiction, [human life] can nowhere escape contradiction. This is why theologians conceive of something called 'original sin'. As the descendants of Adam, who ate the forbidden fruit, we are born into the world bearing original sin.

3

As the contradictorily self-identical present, the world that forms itself is a world of the contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, so that, as single things of this sort of world, we human beings, who everywhere determine ourselves, must do so through infinite desire, which is to say that we must determine ourselves through the will to live. Thus, the world must be that which both gives birth to us and kills us. The world is something that

confronts us with endless pressures; it is something that everywhere threatens us. On the basis of the fact that we struggle with the threats by which world confronts us, we live. Perhaps we can think the world as something akin to that which is simply given to the abstract intellectual self. And, yet, those things which are given to us as singular selves must be given as things that mortally confront us. The world that is given to the singular self [個物の自己] is not a generic world; rather, it must be a unique one. The more singular we become, the more we can say that this is so. Then, conversely, the more contradictorily self-identically unique the world becomes, the more singular, we can say, singular things become. We can then say that [this movement] mediates active-intuition. Even the preparation of what we call 'species' must be something that happens on the bases of these sorts of processes.

Single things always oppose that which concerns absolute-contradictory self-identity, which is to say the self, as a matter of life and death. Within that opposition, and insofar as there contradictorily self-identically emerges what we call a single mode of production, single things live. Of course, we can say with a degree of certainty that the coexistence of several modes [of production] is always possible [in the lives of single things]. This [diversity of modes of production] is the source of the diversification of species. In the world of the absolute-contradictory self-identity of multiplicity and singularity, everywhere contradiction unfolds, individual species form. As long as [this unfolding] is active-intuitive, we are able to say that species-life forms. Species and life are always-already dialectical (that is, they are conceptual. Insofar the individual lives in dependence upon the species, and as long as the species lives in dependence upon the individual, this is the life of the species. Life is always unstable, so that, as long as there is instability, there is that which we call life. What we call 'dialectical development' does not negate given things through external causes; rather, being contradictory in and of themselves, it must be the case that caused things exceed themselves through internal causes. And while such things may be organic life forms, if their self-exceeding movement isn't mechanical, then neither is it teleological. As things that have formed as the result of an infinite dialectical development, even species that are today thought to have stabilized must be things that will someday change again and pass away. Although we might say that species stabilize, within a certain range, they are always in flux. Their appearance of stability is due solely to the fact that they have conventional form.

We might be accused of making spurious claims were we to say that animals are active-intuitive and conceptual. However, because even animal life engages in formative active activity as the self-determination of the contradictory-self-identical present, it must be the case that what we call their 'seeing' and 'doing' are inseparable. For example, even something like the animal eye is a thing that has resulted from [a series of] endless contradictory-self-identical formations, such that vision is a process that we should not isolate from the species-life of the animal itself. It happens that, at the site where reality is grasped by the animal contradictorily-self-identically, there is that which we call 'active-intuition'. At that site, there occurs a grasping of the creative mode of production of reality. Even those things we call species of organic life must be things that have emerged from such a dialectical process. Thus, we can think that firmly grounding that process is what which we call the 'idea'. 'Ideas' are not to be equated with 'the ideal'; rather, following Hegel's thinking on the matter, what we call 'the idea' must be dialectical formative activity. Intuition that has separated from action is that which has been thought abstractly, which is to say that it is nothing more than an illusion. Life is unstable. Within that instability there are always infinite courses available, such that life must be infinitely fantastic. The more contradictory-self-identical life becomes, the more justified we are in saying that this is so. The more profoundly individual we are, the more visionary we can say that we are. And, yet, our individual lives unfold contradictorily-self-identically within formative activity

and active intuition; it is there that the true self lies. As absolute-contradictory self-identity, we come face-to-face there with those things that mortally challenge us. When we remove ourselves from this sort of active-intuition, our actions become nothing more than mechanical and teleological. It goes without saying, then, that when we deny ourselves active fulfillment, our actions get reduced to the status of the purely formative.

Our species-life is something that has emerged as the result of infinite dialectical developments, but to act only conventionally and according to stereotypes is to lead ourselves simultaneously to the mechanization of the self and the death of the species. We must, time and again, be creative. By 'active-intuition', I mean to indicate nothing in the way of a passive and instantaneous manifestation of the entire self. In that sort of movement, what we call the 'self' disappears; it simply becomes universal. Rather, [I mean that], being everywhere singular, we absolutely-contradictorily self-identically oppose a world that challenges the self, which is to say that we are creative. Although I say that singularities always oppose that which morally challenges absolute-contradictory self-identity, which is to say the 'self', mortality itself must ground the existence of singularities. Single things must be things that live and die; otherwise, they would not be single things. Moreover, even within organic life, there must exist the life and death of single things. To die must be to enter into the nothingness of the absolute; to be born must be to emerge from the nothingness of the absolute. We can speak of these processes only in terms of the self-determination of the present of absolute-contradictory self-identity.

Even organic life must be formative; active intuition must already be included there. That which we call 'active-intuitive formative activity' is the mediation of absolute contradictory self-identity by the singularity insofar as it everywhere opposes the transcendent, which is to say the absolute. Sheer necessity necessarily arises from the standpoint of such a singularity. If this were not so, then there would be no escaping subjectivity. Concrete necessity must be something that arises from our self-contradiction as individual beings who live by virtue of things that negate us. Even as desirous, embodied beings, we are already self-contradictory beings of this sort. By "sheer necessity", we mean to say that things that everywhere exceed us must be things that actively-intuitively make claims upon us from without; they must be things that reveal themselves to us through poiesis (True practice must always be that which mediates active-intuition.). Because we are embodied [beings], we are self-contradictory at the core of our self-existence. It then follows that, because we are historical-material [beings], we are everywhere contingent. Sheer necessity does not simply emerge from logical contradiction. As the true absolute, those things that confront us are not things that are logically thought; rather, they must be things that actually mortally challenge us.

The world that passes from the made thing to the making thing must be a world that proceeds by forming itself as a single contradictorily self-identical present. A world of this sort, which everywhere passes from the made thing to the making thing with the active-intuitive present at its core, must be a world that contains an element of consciousness that can be thought to express itself infinitely. When infinite pasts and futures self-contradictorily unite in the present, the present must be standpoint at which time is erased. The self-formation of the contradictorily self-identical present must be that which seizes upon consciousness. That which we call "formative activity" is neither mechanical nor simply teleological; it must be conscious. Thus, when we say that the world everywhere forms itself as the contradictory-self-identical present, it can be thought that the present transcends the present itself, so that, insofar as it reflects that which transcends it, consciousness can be thought as having an orientation. With the contradictory-self-identical present at its core, it happens that the world can be thought to be expressed everywhere symbolically. But, because the world everywhere proceeds

expressively, or, to put it another way, because it is thought abstractly, that [movement of the world] is something which proceeds from the reality of active-intuition, so that the world always proceeds by seizing upon self-negation. We stand always in opposition to absolute contradictory self-identity; the more singular we become, the more we can say that this is so. For this reason, we can say that the world that proceeds by forming itself absolutely contradictorily self-identically is everywhere logical.

In the self-formation of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, and within the conscious aspect where time is thought to be erased, the world is everywhere unstable. We even can go as far as to say that active intuition is lost there. We can claim that we think and act freely. As absolute contradictory self-identity, we distance ourselves from things that confront us. A world of abstract freedom happens to exist. However, the course [of such a world] is one by which the world passes away; it is nothing more than a way according to which we lose ourselves. Our consciousness emerges as the contingency of the formation of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, so that, when we claim that past and future consciously and self-contradictorily unite in the present, we conversely mean that the world must everywhere contradictorily-self-identically form itself. The more consciously free we are, the more actively-intuitively we stand in opposition to absolute-contradictory self-identity. As singularities of a world that forms itself as the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, we contend with things that everywhere concern the mortality of the self. Within that contention lies the reason why our conscious activity must everywhere be a matter of necessity.

I say this repeatedly, but my notion of active intuition has nothing to do with such things as “instinctive” or “artistic” matters. Of course, we probably can say that instinct is [active intuition] in an undeveloped state, and art might be thought as the limit of a course that leads in that direction. However, active intuition must be the most basic and concrete means by which I can consciously grasp reality. Ideas don't simply emerge on the basis of abstractions. Rather, the fact that we apprehend things conceptually must mean that we do so actively-intuitively. We apprehend things conceptually on the basis of active-intuition (by “concept”, we mean “*begriff*”). What we mean by saying that we apprehend things actively-intuitively is that we see things by virtue of the fact that we make them; it is to say that we know things by way of poiesis. I previously stated that we make things and that, being both things that are made by us and things that gain their independence from us by virtue of that making, they, in turn, determine us. I also stated that we are born of a world of things and that, as the passage from made things to making things, when activity is self-contradictorily contained in objects, we actively-intuitively apprehend reality. Only in the world that forms itself as the contradictory-self-identical present is this sort of conceptual knowledge possible. When we say that the world forms itself as the contradictory-self-identical present, then a world such as that described above is the basis of knowledge. As the formal appearance of this sort of world, we apprehend reality actively-intuitively, which is to say that we apprehend it poetically. This apprehension is the essence of our conceptual knowledge. That which we call our conceptual knowledge today came to be grasped by virtue of the fact that we make things on this basis; it is something that was acquired on the basis of so-called “practice”. In general, the eye can be thought in terms of a basis of knowledge in isolation from its utility. But, just as Aristotle argued that we are rational because we have hands, I think that our conceptual knowledge is derived from them. Being both a motive mechanism and a grasping mechanism, the hand is a tool of production (Ludwig A. Noiré, *Das Werkzeug und seine Bedeutung für die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit* [The Tool and its Importance in the History of Human Development]).

When we pass from the animal to the human [stage of development], we become social. As I stated earlier, there are already what we call “individuals” in society. What we call

“society” emerges with poiesis as its focus. That which we call our “conceptual knowledge” is something that must have developed on the basis of substantive social production. [Likewise], the concept of the “thing” is something that must have been apprehended through substantive social production. It must be the case that the mode of production of things that are apprehended through social labor is the origin of conceptual knowledge. In the absence of language, there is no thought, [as] linguists have shown that language is integral to the collective activity of primitive societies. Thus, the more productive conceptual knowledge becomes in accordance with a mode of production, the more accurate it becomes. Even contemporary science develops on the basis of such a standpoint, and science, too, must be something that can nowhere escape it. Of course, it may be the case that science can everywhere be thought as that which transcends this sort of standpoint; we might even go so far as to claim that science negates this sort of standpoint. And yet, the nature of [science] must everywhere be such that, [even while] it departs from this standpoint, it is something that must return to it; it must be something that has a kind of technical significance. Moreover, although we might claim that science is purely knowledge-oriented, that which we call experimentation must be a means by which we actively-intuitively grasp reality. Of course, [because] science is not [about] simple experimentation, it must be the case that, within science, experimentation and theory are inextricably linked. Thus, even though we might say that theory is somehow pure, on the basis of what I call production, [theory] is something that must have developed through the active-intuitive apprehension of the mode of production of things; it is something that everywhere must have developed historically from this sort of standpoint. There is no science apart from the ground of active-intuition. Just as Minkowski has stated in his lectures on space-time relativity, this view emerged on the basis of physical experimentation, and [the two are] thus strongly related.

When we say that the world forms itself as the contradictory self-identical present of past and future, what we mean is that we contend with things that everywhere mortally challenge us as absolute-contradictory self-identity, which is to say that we contend with the one and only world there is. The more singular we become, the more justified we are in saying this. Thus, the more this becomes so, the more self-contradictorily identical we can say we become with the world. Within this standpoint, the world is an aspect of consciousness, so that, when it is thought that the self that is ours is a matter of conscious activity, the world can be thought as a single logical universal. The active-intuitive apprehension of things as this sort of singular self constitutes what we call an act of judgment. As singular selves everywhere within the present, judgmental knowledge of the objective world is established in the place where we actively-intuitively apprehend things at the threshold of the singular self. What does the singular self within the present signify? It signifies that which is described as the world of the contradictory self-identical present within which past and future everywhere contradictorily unite as singularity. In a sense, it is a singularity of the historical space as the absolute present. To apprehend things actively-intuitively, which is to say “poetically,” as this sort of singular self is to see things within historical space as the absolute present; it is to disclose the laws [underlying] things [and] to discern what I conceive as the so-called “the mode of production of the world.” There, [in the mode of production] lies the world of objective knowledge.

The active-intuitive self is everywhere singular, [so that] the more thoroughly absolute the present becomes, the more objective we can say is knowledge. For example, it is by virtue of the fact that they conduct experiments that physicists must apprehend things actively-intuitively as [paradigmatic] individual selves of the world of physics. And though we speak of “the world of physics,” this is not external to the [actual] historical world; rather, it is precisely an aspect of [it]. In the contradictory-self-identical present, the mode of production of a

formless world is uncreative, so that the same mode of production is repeated [REWORK: i.e., because such a mode of production does not develop historically, which is to say that it does not change; rather, it remains one and the same MOP]. When seen in this way, the historical world [appears as] a world of physics, such that it is one which must be thoroughly [circumscribed by the scientific standpoint of the latter]. As material beings, we are physically embedded in this sort of world, and from the beginning of historical life, we always-already socially-productively see the world in terms of physical laws. Contemporary physics, too, is a science that must have developed on the basis of this sort of standpoint. To say that we contend with the world as singular selves is to say that the world uniquely confronts us. What we know as the individual self lies in the place where the world uniquely confronts us. In the place where the contemporary world of physics uniquely confronts us, there is the individual self that is thereby circumscribed; [there], the knowledge of physics is actively-intuitively grasped. The world that forms itself as the synthesis of past and future and as absolute-contradictory self-identity, that is, as the absolute present, is everywhere logical. The abstract form [that emerges from] the self-formation of a world of this sort is that which can be thought as so-called logical form. Within the conscious aspect of the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, the world is unstable. Insofar as we transcend the causal restraints of the passage [of time] from past to future, we can be considered rational, that is, we can be thought to be free. When we posit active-intuitive reality as the material substratum [*hypokeimenon*], all manner of interpretations become possible. The more singular we become, the more aptly we can make this claim. The world is diversely expressed. Just as it is thought that monads express the world, we can say that the world is expressed in its entirety from the standpoint of the singularity. As long as the expression, which is to say the interpretation, of the world that occurs from the standpoint of singularities is demonstrated in terms of poiesis, this is Truth. As formal elements of a world that forms itself, we possess truth where we actively-intuitively grasp things. Let us claim that, within [that active-intuitive grasping], the world, by implication, demonstrates the world itself.

The more singular we become as formal elements of the world, [the more] out of step [we become] with the one and only world contradictorily self-identically forms itself. As the form of the conscious aspect of a world in which time is thought to be contradictory, self-identically negated as the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, knowledge must be formally logical. If we were to remove this active-intuitive nucleus from the world that forms the self itself as the contradictory, self-identical present, then the world would become formally logical. But, insofar as formal logic operates outside active-intuitive, historical-formative activity, these two moments are not phase-mediated; rather, formal logic must be all the more implicated in that activity. Knowledge is established not on the basis of the mutual opposition and phase-mediation of rationality and perception; rather, it must be the case that it is established as the self-determination of the concrete universal. When we say that the world forms the self itself as the contradictory, self-identical present, we can say that, in terms of conscious surface form, which is to say, logically, that the world is the concrete universal. For the monad to reflect the world is for it to serve as a single standpoint of the perspective of the world. It happens that objective knowledge is established as the concrete universal that is the contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One, that is, as the self-determination of the so-called concrete universal, [which is to say that] it is established as the passage of the made thing to the making thing on the basis of poiesis [and] in the place where existence is actively-intuitively grasped (The concrete universal of Truth must be something that includes singularities; it must be spatial.). What is implied by the process of active-intuition must be the process of concrete logic as the self-determination of this sort of concrete universal. Inductive, or scientific, knowledge is established on the basis of this sort of process.

As stated above, the sum of our activity arises actively-intuitively, that is, it arises on the basis of the fact that singularities reflect the world (In this sense, [our activity] is expressive-active.). Even what we speak of as our rational agency must everywhere be seen as historical activity. No matter how abstractly [rational agency] is thought, and insofar as it is objective recognition, it does not divorce itself from that which we call the standpoint in which things are actively-intuitively grasped. Of course, it goes without saying that, as the self-determination of the contradictory, self-identical present, [rational agency] must everywhere logically mediate the self itself. We are everywhere singular, [such that] the more objective knowledge becomes, the more justified we are in saying this is so. Conventional theories of recognition fail to see acts of recognition as historical formative activity within the historical world; that is, they do not think them in the context of the historical world's cumulative processes. Instead of viewing them as cumulative processes, these theories posit [acts of recognition] as isolated conscious acts; that is, they view them only as a sort of sampling of history. If we were to interrupt this tendency by an attempt to [introduce] the conscious plane [of history], then logic and intuition would be thought simply as mutually opposed and intermediating [moments]. However, as a cumulative process, what we call knowledge must be that which everywhere proceeds by actively-intuitively grasping reality as the historical-productive self on the basis of human poiesis. Problems arise not on the basis of abstract logic but from the terrain of historical life. And yet, by making this claim, we do not to think Truth pragmatically. What we call historical life is ideal as the self-formation of the contradictory, self-identical present.

Even while it is unmediated by the logic of judgment, what I mean by active-intuition does not signify a simple unmediated movement from one so-called passive intuition to the next. In the world of the contradictory-self-identical present, there must everywhere exist oppositions between singularities and the world; the world must be replete with oppositions between made and making things. Considered from this standpoint, intuition and action must everywhere be opposing moments. Within the space of that opposition, there must be something more than that which can be thought merely from a subjective standpoint as mutually negating opposition; there must be the opposition of the past and future of the absolute. The infinite historical past must infinitely approach us in the absolute present. To say that the infinite past opposes us in the present is to say that [the present] is expressive, and while they are treated as concurred objects of knowledge, to claim that things which everywhere oppose us approach us expressively, which is to say that they move us expressively-actively, is to say that things show themselves to us intuitively. Things that move the existence of the Self as such are things that are intuitively seen. We said above that, within the world that is the passage from made things to making things, the environment becomes the true environment on the basis of the fact that it subjectivizes the Self itself through self-negation, but a world in which the Self is self-contradictorily enveloped in the environment is a world that is intuitive for us. Action is self-contradictorily contained in the object of knowledge such that the world is one that proceeds [both] from the seeing to the doing and as one in which we are everywhere absorbed by it.

In the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, subject and object are not merely opposed, and, moreover, neither does the one mediate the other; [rather, they stand in a relationship that is a] life-and-death battle. In the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, that which is given to intuition is not simply that which negates our existence; rather, it must be that which negates us in spirit. If we were to say that [such things] either negate or kill us from the outside, then these would not yet be things that are truly given to us contradictorily-self-identically. While they give us life, these things also enslave us; they kill our spirit. To say that action is self-contradictorily contained in the object of knowledge must be to say that what lies

at the basis of [the object of knowledge] is just this sort of tendency. To say that the environment self-contradictorily subjectivizes itself is to say that it demonizes the self itself. Evil lurks in the depths of the intuitive world. The more singular in the Self we become, the more justified we are in making this sort of claim. When we say that things are intuitively given [and] claim that they are merely passively seen or, to put it another way, that action ceases, then this is nothing more than to view things from the non-dialectical standpoint of the known self. On the other hand, true intuition lies in the place where action confronts us. Thus, the more singular we are, the more agonizing is the world of true intuition. Even in the world of animalistic instinct, singularities are desiring by virtue of the fact that they reflect the world into the self, so that they act in response to seeing. However, because in [the world of animalistic instinct] singularities are not truly singular, there is not yet that which we call intuition. There is no such thing as the captivation of instinctual animals by Evil. What we call intuition is something that arouses action; it is something that appeals to us in the depths of the Soul. And yet, people treat this as nothing more than fantasy or dream.

When we say that the world forms the self itself as the contradictory-self-identical present, being that which has already passed, the past is that which self-contradictorily exists in the present; as Nothingness, it is Being. In opposition to our status as made-making things, the world is expressive. We can say that, in opposition to human beings, the environment is everywhere expressive. Thus, when we say that the environment threatens us as the passage from made to making things, it is expressive to us. In the extent to which it moves our active existence as the individual self, [the environment] is expressive. But the past is the past by virtue of the fact that it negates the self itself and proceeds towards the future. The sheer fact of the matter is that it is the past as the future and, of course, the reverse case obtains in truth. There is nothing in history that is merely given; that which is given is that which has been made, [that is], it is a made thing which is bound to be negated as the passage from the made to the making thing. As making things of a world that passes from the made thing to the making thing, we everywhere contend with [given things] as formal elements of a world that forms the self itself. Thus, [we] proceed by forming the world as the passage from made things to making things. It is there [in that passage] that my so-called “standpoint of active-intuition” lies. The more singular, which is to say the more idiosyncratic we are as formal elements of the creative world that forms the self itself as the absolute-contradictorily self-identical present, the more actively-intuitively we stand at the forefront of historical creation. On this view, we can say that action and intuition are everywhere in conflict. To say that the world everywhere threatens us as a single expression is to say that it threatens us in the depths of the self; it is to say that it demands our alienation.

What we mean by “formal” here must be that we creatively grasp the world as singularities of the absolute-contradictorily self-identical world. To grasp reality as historical creative activity is to do so according to concrete logic. That which we call “the mediation of judgmental logic” must be contained there. To be deeply entrenched in the standpoint of active-intuition is to be rational; it is to apprehend reality according to a mode of production. What we mean by the “concrete concept” must be the mode of production of reality; even scientific knowledge rests upon a foundation of this sort. Thus, to apprehend the world according to creative activity is [to apprehend it] ideally. The “idea” must be the creative activity of the world; we can probably say that Hegel’s notion of the idea is something of this sort.

The historical world that takes poiesis as its focus stands in opposition to the infinite past and future at the forefront of that creative activity. We can thus say that, as an opposition that is immanent to the absolute-contradictorily self-identical present, [poiesis] describes the

antagonistic relationship of subject and environment. Within the absolute present, this sort of subject-environment opposition can be neither mechanical nor teleological. Being everywhere expressive, the environment everywhere intuitively presses upon the subject and the making thing. We do not propose by the notion of “intuition” that things abscond with the Self; things and the Self are not indifferently opposed. To say that the Self creates things is not to say that it is carried away by them. Nor does it follow that, when the Self becomes object, the Self disappears. Thus, the Self does not merely act consciously. By virtue of production, the Self must, in fact, actively apprehend the Truth of things. If by “active-intuition” we were to mean simply that the Self is subsumed by things, then one might also assume that things negate logic. Rather, in active-intuition, the Self is everywhere active. The Self doesn't simply accept things as they are; rather, it actively apprehends them. As formal elements of the contradictory-self-identical world, we must be everywhere logical within it. To negate logic is to shroud the Subject in darkness. That which we know as the Self comes to light through active-intuition and poiesis. Art is considered illogical. Notwithstanding that we can think that which we call artistic intuition in opposition to active intuition on the grounds that the former establishes itself through the tendency of things to subsume the self, when we consider this from the standpoint of concrete logic, we see that artistic intuition must be one of the tendencies on concrete logic, so that art, too, must be logical.

Within the standpoint of creation, past and future must certainly be mutually opposed moments. However, it is not simple opposition but contradictory self-identical opposition that passes creatively from the made to the making thing. Because of this movement, the world is self-forming as the contradictory self-identical present, which is to say that it is conscious. Because past and future are contradictorily self-identical, the world is conscious. The world necessarily presses upon us as the past of the Absolute. But, being the past of the contradictory self-identical world, it does not simply oppress us causally. Simple causal necessity does not negate the self, rather, it must be something that reaches into the living depths of that which we call the individual self—it must be that which motivates us at the very root of Spirit. Within the standpoint of active intuition, and as historical past, things that confront us must be things that strive to negate that which we know as the individual self within those living depths. Things of this sort are truly given us in opposition. Things that are actively-intuitively given to that which we call the individual self are neither simply given qualitatively, nor are they simply means of negation, rather, it must be the case that such things threaten us maliciously. Things that truly mortally threaten us do so by captivating us with abstractions; they must be things that deceive us with antitheses of Truth. Against those things which, as mentioned above, come to threaten us mortally at the level of the individual self as the absolute past, and being situated at the standpoint of the absolute future, we are everywhere actively-intuitively formal: as creative elements of the creative world, we are everywhere creative (the thesis of this paper is that we always have the self in the transcendent.); it is there [in the transcendent] that the basis of rationalism lies.

It happens that the act of viewing the world actively-intuitively also conversely entails forming the world actively-intuitively. The past is a past that should proceed towards the future by negating itself, and the future is a future that should become past by negating itself. To say that, as the absolute past, the world everywhere intuitively captivates the life of the individual self at its foundations is to say that the world becomes non-creative; it is to say that the world negates itself. The intuitive self is self-contradiction. As long as the world lives, which is to say as long as it is creative and productive, it cannot but fall into self-contradiction. The active self is born out of the depths of just this self-contradiction of the world. To say that the world intuitively threatens the individual self is to say neither that it is mechanical nor that it is

teleological; rather, it must be to say that it threatens the free movement of the human spirit. [Moreover, the world] must be that which appeals to us not merely as an object of understanding but as an object faith that induces action. A world of this sort must be something that is everywhere logical. Were this not so, then it would be nothing capable of moving the individual human self, and we would not be able to claim that it is anything given in opposition to the active self. In the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, things that move us as made things must be things that threaten us through abstract logic ([as things] which must do so because this is their nature). We can think of them as things which have determined the world from the standpoint of abstract logic. In the place where the active self confronts the self out of the past, [the active self] is abstractly logical. We call this “reflection.” And, yet, as formal elements of the world of contradictory self-identity, what we know as the active self actively-intuitively and *poietically* bears concrete logic in the place where it proceeds by grasping the mode of production of the historical world. There is no future in the absence of that which we call “the past.” The past must serve as the basis of our action. Considered from the standpoint [which claims that the past serves as the basis of our action through a dependence upon determined things], human action must abstractly logical. To say that the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity everywhere confronts us actively-intuitively must also [be to say that it] moves us by means of abstract logic. And, yet, being everywhere a past that is immanent in the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, it is still formally active. As the self-formation of the contradictory, self-identical present, concrete logic mediates abstract logic, but, being mediated by concrete logic, abstract logic bears the sense (意識) of logic. Were this not the case, then [abstract logic] would be nothing more than mere form. What I mean by “actively-intuitively grasping reality” is not to suggest that we don't mediate abstract logic, rather, it must be to say that, as formal elements of the contradictory, self-identical world, we are singular, and that, the more creative we become, the more logically must things given us actively-intuitively in the absolute-contradictory self-identical present move us. Thus, while the world everywhere contradictorily-self-identically forms itself (自己自身), [it does so by way of] concrete logic. In this sense, art, too, is [a form of] concrete logic. I perceive art from the standpoint of human historical formation, that is, I see art not in terms of concrete logic, [but concrete logic in terms of art].

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It may be unconventional to say that things that are given us intuitively move us logically. Perhaps, I will be thought to belabor the point. Yet, insofar as it pertains to such considerations as intuition and raw data, [and], stemming from the standpoint of the intelligent self, future-[oriented] thinking does not derive from the standpoint of the concrete historical-social self, which also is to say that it does not derive from the standpoint of the active-productive self. When considered from the standpoint of the logic of judgment, we may be thought irrational when mention “given things”, or that we repudiate logic when we refer to “intuition.” However, as concrete human beings, we are born into the historical-social world, and, no matter where we go, there is no escaping this standpoint. Given things being historically-socially given, and intuitively seen things being seen actively-productively, [both given and intuitively seen things] move us expressively. Being things that are given within the world of the contradictory, self-identical present, they must be things that threaten the individual self. What we call “society” emerges as the idiosyncratic form of the contradictory-self-identical world. No matter how primitive it may be, [society] is never simply corporeal, rather, it must be the contradictory-self-identity of the Many and the One. As individual selves, we stand in opposition to absolute-

contradictory-self-identical and transcendental things. As Malinowski argues, even primitive societies must already include individuals. [That is], they include [formations] that differ from groupings found among animals. Primitive societies must be more firmly linked to such things as totems and taboos. Even so, that which we call “individual freedom” still exists in these societies, and, as such, so, too, does that which we call “crime.”

Things that are given us concrete human beings are nothing like that which psychologists call “intuition,” rather, they must be things that are given us socially; they must be given as things that surround us. They are things that are compulsorily given us as the idiosyncratic form of the contradictory-self-identical world; they are things given us as the self-determination of what I call the “dialectical universal.” [These things] are retrieved from the past as a matter of social convention. Although we might say that they are logical particulars, to the extent that we are historical-social [beings], and insofar as we are species-bound, it is essentially inevitable that we should be motivated by them. Perhaps we can refer to [this motivation] in terms of what Lévy-Bruhl called “pre-logic.” And yet, by virtue of that movement, it must be the case that even that which Plato calls “logic” is nothing but a property of the Idea. Simple abstract logic is, to an even lesser degree, the logic of Truth. Concrete logic must be the contradictory, self-identity of both [pre-logic and logic]. It goes without saying that, in order that logic become the logic of Truth, the “mythological” must be negated. Society proceeds by developing dialectically as a passage from the made to the making thing. And, yet, [we see] everywhere that, at its basis, and as historical-social form, [this passage] never loses its character as a process of active-intuition that is said to proceed by grasping reality through *poiesis*. To the extent that [this passage] is concretely logical, we are justified in making this claim. However, this is not to say that we think that logic is rooted in any sort of mystical intuition. [Rather], the fact of the matter is that [logic] everywhere proceeds by productively and practically enveloping us within reality; it proceeds by grasping the mode of production of the world that forms itself as absolute-contradictory self-identity. In that [grasping], [logic] must everywhere proceed by negating those things which repress us through *mythos*. It must proceed by exceeding both the simply particular and the simply historical thing. One might claim that, in that exceeding, that which is intuitively given us is negated. However, in a departure from the thinking of abstract rationalists, we claim neither that the historical past is negated [by this exceeding] nor that the particular simply becomes a particular of the universal. Those societies we call “primitive” will already have emerged as contradictory self-identity. Thus, our societies everywhere develop on the basis of this sort of standpoint. In other words, because they are characterized by contradictory self-identity, they develop as passages from made to making things.

Concerning things that are historically given, the more thoroughly individual we are as selves and as things given world-historically in the absolute-contradictory self-identical present, and to the extent that we cannot negate [historically given things], these things threaten the life of the self at its foundation. Things that threaten us intuitively become things that threaten us world-historically. The particularities of societies are not simple particularities, rather, they are modes of production of former historical worlds. It is thought that, as individual selves, we discard everything that is intuitive and become rational. However, what this is means is that, being all the more thoroughly formal elements of the self-identical world, we become active-intuitive. Just as [we do so] within primitive societies, we always stand in opposition to absolute-contradictory self-identity [within the self-identical world]. In other words, the more individual we become, the more justified we are in saying this is so. As formal elements of the contradictory-self-identical world, we become individual selves by virtue of the fact that we stand in opposition to absolute-contradictory self-identity. When we attain to this [stage of

development], we can say that we truly become individual selves. Thus, by virtue of the fact that we are the idiosyncratic form of the contradictory-self-identical world, it must be the case that we attain to this [stage of development] by means of concrete logic. Concrete logic everywhere mediates abstract logic. However, we do not [conversely] arrive at concrete logic through its mediation by abstract logic.

Hegel argued that, because the personality has an ideal existence, it must possess property. The concrete personality must be historical-material. Society emerges as the historical-productive activity that is the passage from made to making things, [such that] that which we call the self has its existence as a formal element of society, which forms itself precisely in this sort of contradictory-self-identical manner. In contrast to animal societies, human societies already contain, from the beginning, that which we call “individuals”, so that, within the contradictory-self-identity of the Many and the One, that which we call the “personal self” forms as a multiplicity of singularities in opposition to the totality. To oppose the One everywhere self-contradictorily as a multiplicity of singularities within the contradictory-self-identical world is, conversely, to unite with the One self-contradictorily. Thus, we are personalities by virtue of the fact that we stand in opposition to God, so that, by virtue of the fact that we mediate God [and the world], “I” stands in opposition to “Thee”, and personality stands in opposition to personality. As the self-formation of the contradictory-self-identical present, society everywhere forges ahead as a passage from the made to the making thing. This sort of process is neither mechanical nor teleological. [Rather], as the process by which the Many and the One become contradictory-self-identical, it must be active-intuitive. The Many is a Many of the One, and the One is the One of the Many, [such that], as movement qua stillness, and as stillness qua movement, each of [these ontological structures] must occasion the self-formation, which is to say the ideal formation, of the Eternal. That which we call “culture” emerges on the basis of this sort of occasioning. Thus, insofar as this occasioning is everywhere [constitutive of] species-formation, it becomes world-historical as the self-formation of the absolute-contradictory self-identical present. The society that forms itself through contradictory-self-identity ideally-formally becomes the State, which is to say that it becomes rational. As formal elements of this sort of society, we become concrete personalities. In this sense, we can say that the State is a logical entity and that our moral actions mediate it. There is no such thing as a state that is not cultural. Uncultured societies can never be designated as “states”. However, while it is ideal as the species-form of certain societies on the basis of that which is world-historical, culture is always more than this.

From the birth of organisms to the emergence of human beings, the historical world is the contradictory-self-identity of the Many and the One. Thus, [the historical world] proceeds as a passage from the made to the making thing. In animal life, multiplicities of singularities do not yet stand in opposition to the totality, which means that singularities have not gained independence [there]. [There], the historical development that is the passage from the made to the making thing can be thought as a process of the totality, which is to say that it is teleological. To say that singularities do not emerge is, conversely, to say that the One is not yet the true One; it is to say that [the One] is not transcendent with respect to the world that is a multiplicity of singularities, so that [the One] remains a One of the Many. In contradistinction to this, in the human world, no matter how primitive a society may be, it is always-already the contradictory-self-identity of the Many and the One. However, in primitive societies, singularities still do not truly become independent, [which means that] the totality is repressive. The totality is simply transcendent, [and] the Many is a Many of the One, whereas singularities are singularities by virtue of the fact that they are everywhere independent. Within the world absolute-contradictory self-identity, for the singularity to form the singularity itself is for the world to

form the world itself and, conversely, for the world to form the world itself is for the singularity to form the singularity itself. The Many and the One become the One through mutual negation, [which process] is a passage from made to making things. This sort of occasioning must be contained in the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity—it is a cultural process. Within this sort of standpoint, to give sustain a multiplicity of singularities is for the totality to live, and for the totality to live is for a multiplicity of singularities to live. As substantial freedom, society becomes ethical substance, [so that], as the formal activity of the historical world, our activity bears moral significance. True morality exists where the world forms itself through contradictory self-identity, where it forms itself ideally as absolute-contradictory self-identity, and where we actively-intuitively become creative.

In this sense, cultural processes must be ethical [processes]. We can even say that cultural development mediates the State, [the latter of which] constitutes substantial freedom. To the extent that we become creative as individuals of ethical society, our actions are moral, [and] as the productive activity of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, to the extent that it becomes ideological-formal, society is ethical substance. It goes without saying that the ideological-formal determines itself. To the extent that such [concerns] as art and scholarship are ideological-formal activities within this sort of standpoint, we can say that they have ethical significance. By contrast, the [social formation] aptly called “the State” must have its [functional] basis in administration. We might say that even Machiavelli’s notion of “virtù” as the essence of the State designates creativity. As the formal activity that is contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One, the State itself is a self-contradictory existence. Thus, contradiction is always implied in the reason of existence of the State, and yet, it must be the case that the reason of existence of the State lies in that [contradiction]. Everything that actually exists in the historical world must be self-contradictory. It follows, then, that culture emerges on the basis of the self-formation of such a reality. **[Work: 現在の十字架において薔薇を認めることでなければならない、然らざれば真の文化ではない。]** Even something like art emerges as the self-forming activity of contradictory-self-identical society. In this sense, what I am saying resonates with the idea that art emerges from a social mode [of production] (Cf. Jane Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*). Thus, everywhere it develops, art is bound by such a standpoint. This is because art, too, is determined by concrete logic. However, the deeper that contradictory-self-identical form becomes, the more diverse becomes the course of development of a culture that takes the reality of active-intuition as its focus.

We said that the process by which the absolute-contradictory self-identical world forms itself as the passage from a made to a making thing employs both that which is ideal and that which is intuitive. And, yet, it is not there that I situate the self-identity of the world. In other words, the [world we described there] is not the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity. Within the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, self-identity must be something that everywhere exceeds this world. [And, yet], self identity is not a path that leads us to God. The relationship between a multiplicity of singularities and a totality is one that never resolves into unity. To the extent that we situate self-identity in the ideal such that it is constitutive of the world, the world is not truly the actual world that moves of itself. Thus, the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity must be a world that negates not only the ideal, but which negates even culture. The ideal world must be an imaginary world. The ideal, that which is born and dies, and that which changes, must be process-oriented. Because the world is absolute-contradictory self-identity, its process of self-formation is neither mechanical nor teleological, [rather], it must be the case that it is ideal-form[al]. Because [the world] is absolutely dialectical, it must involve ideal-active-intuitive chance. Thus, we can say that, everywhere culture and religion are in conflict, [so, too] are they mutually implicating. We can say this on

the basis of the claim I made in an earlier essay that, where the world casts the shadow of absolute-contradictory self-identity, there is the ideal. As I often say with respect to expressive activity, to say that the Self reflects the Self into itself is to say that this [self-reflection] is the continuity of discontinuity of the Absolute. This is to say that the transcendental [CHANGE INSTANCES OF “transcendent” to “transcendental”] everywhere constitutes the self through self-contradiction, which is to say that it is absolute-contradictory self-identity. Religion does not make art its end, rather, art concerns itself with religion. And yet, true culture must be that which is born of religion.

The world of absolute-contradictory self-identity does not itself contain self-identity. As contradictory-self-identity, [self-identity] is always transcendent with respect to this world. Thus, being the determinate that nothing determines, the self-form [of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity] is ideal. To say that say that this world thus possesses self-identity through the transcendental must be to say that multiplicities of singularities are everywhere opposed to transcendental unity; it must be to say that singularities are singularities by virtue of the fact that they are everywhere opposed to the transcendental. We are persons by virtue of the fact that we stand in opposition to God. However, to say that, as individual selves, we everywhere stand in opposition to God must, on the other hand, be to say that we are everywhere bound to Him. Our relationship to God consists in the absolute-contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One. As singularities of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, we are self-contradictory at the root of self-formation. This self-contradiction is not the sort of contradiction that diminishes as the result of cultural development, rather, it is the sort of contradiction that becomes clearer [by virtue of it]. Within the world that has self-identity through the transcendental, the active-intuitive-process that is the passage of the made thing to the making thing must everywhere be an infinite movement. We are not bound to the Absolute—to God—by virtue of the vector of that movement. We unite with God at the root of our self-form (we are [His] creations).

As formal elements of the contradictory-self-identical present that is the self-contradictory and simultaneous existence in the present of past and future, we are bound to this incontrovertible condition for the duration of our days. We are always bound to the Absolute, and, yet, we are not aware of this. By gazing into the foundational depths of self-contradiction, we set the Self aflutter and unite with the Absolute, which is to say we embrace God. This is called rehabilitation. Because we negate the Self there, the True Self appears. Martin Luther argued in his *Treatise on Christian Liberty* that, being the sovereign lords of all Creation, we are foot-soldiers who serve Creation [in return]. Thus, we do not enter into religion on the basis of those actions according to which we situate self-identity in this world, rather, we enter into religion by reflecting both upon those very actions and upon the self-contradiction of the Self itself. It follows, then, that, even when we say that we arrive at self-contradiction by so traversing the foundation of the Self itself, it is not by virtue of the Self itself that we arrive, rather, it must be that we are led by the Call of the Absolute. The Self itself cannot negate the Self (I’m thinking, here, of something along the lines of what the Faithful call “grace.”). Thus, religion can be considered otherworldly. However, as I stated earlier, religion is the standpoint of absolute-contradictory self-identity, so it must be the case that true culture emerges on its basis. It is because we everywhere face the Transcendent One that we become true persons. Thus, to say that the Self is the Self by virtue of the fact that it faces the Transcendent One is, at once, [to say that] I face my neighbor in brotherly love. The moral principle which says that the Self becomes a person by virtue of seeing the other as a person must be one that is grounded in this idea. Under this sort of moral constraint, [and], as a world

that forms itself through contradictory-self-identity and as a passage from a made thing to a making thing, the World must be ideal-formal.

Religion is not a field that neglects the standpoint of morality. Rather, the standpoint of true morality is founded on the basis of religion. However, to say that the truly moral standpoint is founded on the basis of religion is not to say that one enters into religion on the basis of individual virtuous acts of morality. **[WORK: [自力作善の道徳的行為]. 親鸞が『歎異抄』においての善人なおもて往生をとぐ、いわんや悪人をやという語、深く味わうべきである。]** The reason why, today, we debate over the question of whether or not the end of religion is individual salvation [which is the same reason why we question the extent to which it is compatible with our national sense of morality, is that we do not know the essence of religion. Religion does not concern itself with individual comfort. Those who are today lost in this sort of contradiction are the very people to whom I tried to save from it in the past. Those who have embraced the Absolute must be those who truly have a sense of morality. As ethical substance, the State and and Religion do not contradict each other.

The Eastern doctrine of “nothingness”² teaches that all living things *are* the Heart of Buddha. This is neither simply a theory of mind, nor is it mysticism. Logically speaking, it must be the contradictory self-identity of the Many and the One. To say that the Many³ is the One is not to say that the Many is indiscriminately the One. It must be the case that, *qua* absolute-contradictory self-identity, [the Many] is the One by virtue of [the fact that it *is* absolute-contradictory self-identity]. The principle of the historical formation of the world lies there as the absolute present. As singularities of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity, we are always bound to the Absolute, whom we are powerless to oppose. It is said that “this lone brightness before my eyes now, this person plainly listening to me [...] is unimpeded at any point but penetrates the ten directions [...]”⁴ That we die in the depths of self-contradiction and thereby discern the principle of All *qua* One is the essence of the teaching of Buddha-nature. So that, again, “you who are here now listening [...] are not the four great elements in you, but something that can make use of the four great elements in you. If you can just see it in this way, then you will be free to go or stay.”⁵ And yet, this is not to say that you are a conscious self who would serve as companion to a mere phantom; rather, it is to say that an absolute-negative conversion must occur. Thus, against such doctrines as idealism and mysticism, absolute-negative conversion must be the objective principle of the Absolute. True knowledge and ethics emerge on this basis. Mind is not a subjective sense but the very nondiscernment of interiority, and what we call nothingness is not that which opposes Being.

A world which forms itself as Idea by passing from the made to the making as the absolute-contradictory self-identity of the All and the One is a world which possesses self-identity in transcendence. Thus, in such a world, the more singular the singularity, the more [thoroughly] it is to face the transcendent subject [here, 超越的一者に対する]. From this it follows that to face the transcendent subject [here, again, 超越的一者に対する] is for the singularity intrinsically to face singularity in brotherly love. As the passage from the made to the making, and being that which is historically born of this world, we are always that which directly faces that which transcends this world [: いつも我々は直接にこの世界を越えたものに対す

³ Here, 「一切」, or, “the All”. However, Kosaka Kunio argues in his annotation to the text (大東出版社、2009, p. 186), that Nishida has in mind here “the All” as “the Many”, which Kosaka states is analogous to the notion of 「多即一」.

⁴ Here and following, I quote Burton Watson’s translations in *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi: A Translation of the Lin-chi Lu*. Boston: Shambala Publications, Inc., 1993, pp. 33 and 38, respectively.

⁵ Op. Cit.

るものであり], which is to say that we are that which transcends this world. There, in transcendence, singularity and world stand opposed. When earlier we said that that which was given in the standpoint of active intuition was that which threatens the individual self and absorbs the spirit, we said so for this very reason. And not only does it negate physical life, but it must also be that which negates the spirit. As singularities of a world that possesses self-identity in transcendence, we are always thoroughly in opposition to that world. For, so long as we risk absorption of the self by given things that mortally threaten us, we are not true singularities who possess the self in the transcendent subject [超越的一者において自己を有つ眞の自己ではない]. We cannot escape being thoroughly threatened by things. This fact is the basis of the categorical imperative. And yet, it is for this same reason that we must thoroughly exist as singularities of the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity. Otherwise, we would be nothing more than a species of hubristic moral tyrants. But, as singularities of the type previously described, the more imbued with personal character we are, the more ideally formative we must be as the passage from the made to the making. This must mean that, as creative elements of the creative world, we become the engine of the ethical subject. Thus, 'the ethical' becomes 'the religious.'

As absolute-contradictory self-identity, the world possesses self-identity in that which transcends it, and because we become singularities by virtue of the fact that we oppose the ethical subject, the more singular we are, the more reflective and thinking we are as we proceed from reality to reality and constantly transcend this actually existing world. When we say that the world possesses self-identity in that which transcends it, what we mean is that the world is expressive and that, as singularities of such a world, we are expressively active. Thus, when we say that past and future become one within the present as the form of the absolute-contradictory self-identity that is the world, what we mean is that we are reflective. By 'reflection' we must mean that past and future unite within the present. When past and future are thoroughly negated within the present in this way, thinking is the standpoint from which, as a single present, we grasp the world in its infinite movement.⁶ Within the standpoint of thinking, we expressively grasp the world as a single present. Within thinking, the world of contradictory self-identity can be grasped as that which contains self-identity within itself. To think is to grasp the self-contradictory world non-contradictorily.⁷ Thus, the standpoint of thinking is thoroughly self-contradictory. Moreover, thinking and practice are thoroughly opposed, and it is [within this opposition] that that which we call the standpoint of pure knowledge arises.⁸ We can say that the more ideal-formative the world becomes as contradictory self-identity, the more singularly thinking we become. Being a passage from the infinite past to the infinite future, a world which less thoroughly contains self-identity in itself

⁶ Note from 『西田哲学を読む3 : 「絶対矛盾的自己同一」』、小坂国継著。株式会社大東出版社、二〇〇九年十二月十六日発行。第四章 : 「歴史的生命の自覚」、注釈1 : 「思惟の立場」、ページ九一。[Kosaka Kunitsugu. *Reading Nishida Philosophy, Vol. 3: "Absolute-contradictory Self-identity."* Tokyo: Daitō Publishing, December 16, 2009, Ch. 4: "Consciousness of Historical Life," Section 13, Note 1: "The standpoint of thought," p. 191.]: 「具体的にどのような立場を指しているのかは明確ではないが、「絶対矛盾的自己同一」の立場すなわち場所的に自覚的な立場を指しているのであろう。」: "While it is unclear exactly what sort of standpoint [Nishida] is referring to here, we might assume that he has in mind the standpoint of 'absolute-contradictory self-identity,' which is to say, the conscious standpoint of place." Translator's note: Kosaka uses chapter and section divisions not shown in the Aozora Bunko transcript of Nishida's text, which is the source used for this translation.

⁷ Ibid. Note 2: [ENTER]

⁸ Ibid. Note 3: [ENTER]

can be thought as a concrete universal⁹ which contains self-identity in itself. The concrete universal that within which what we call scientific knowledge arises.

A world which forms itself as absolute-contradictory self-identity in the manner described above can always be thought logically as a concrete universal within the present of that contradictory self-identity. We say that such a world thoroughly reserves within itself occasion for self-negation because it is a world of contradictory self-identity. Were this not so, then it would not be a world of contradictory self-identity. But to proceed by thoroughly grasping the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity from such a standpoint, that is to say, to proceed by seeing it immanently as self-identity, must be to render it as abstraction. While concrete logic must include such abstract logic as this negating occasion, we cannot think in terms of concrete logic from the standpoint of abstract logic. It is thoroughly impossible for the world of absolute-contradictory self-identity to possess self-identity within itself.¹⁰ As the passage from the made to the making that is the occasion for the Idea-form of history, [self-identity] must be that which can be contained [by absolute-contradictory self-identity].¹¹ That which we call concrete logic lies where, as a product of history, the self advances by taking hold of reality. We can say that, here, the world in which we are contained as contradictory self-identity manifests itself clearly. In this sense, our consciousness self-contradictorily becomes the consciousness of the world, and we can thus say, for example, that we project reality through practice and that things bear witness for themselves. Even if we were to say that knowledge begins with abstract analysis, the movement from one standpoint to the next¹² would require it to arise from the consciousness that the self possesses within a particular standpoint as the passage from the made to the making. Knowledge must be an historical process. As stated above, we call something like the consciousness of historical life dialectical logic. Thus, even science is dialectical. But because [science] too is the product of a passage from the made to the making, we must say that it is concerned with environments. To view the world of historical life strictly from the standpoint [of science] is to remain bound by abstraction.

¹³As historical life, what we call our living bodies are already technical. As Aristotle said, somatic development is the *poiēsis* of Nature. But our bodies become truly technical within social life. We can think our bodies as being historical-somatic. From this sort of standpoint, we can probably say that historical life is thoroughly technical. And yet, conversely, to say that historical life is technical must be to say that it is self-contradictorily and thoroughly Ideal-

⁹ Ibid. Note 4: [ENTER]

¹⁰ Section 14, Note 2:

¹¹ ["Possess" v. "Contain"]. Ibid., Note 3:

¹² I.e., from the abstract to the concrete

¹³In the Kosaka-annotated edition of Nishida's essay, the following passage opens this paragraph, and I've included it here in order to provide additional context that is absent from the Aozora Bunko transcript. I've also provided below the source text for the English translation of Nishida's excerpt from the German. 「ヘーゲルは、「法理哲学」の始めにおいて „Die Philosophie hat est mit Ideen und darum nicht mit dem, was man blosser Begriffe zu heissen pflegt, zu tun, sie zeigt vielmehr deren Einseitigkeit und Unwahrheit auf, sowie, dass der Begriff (nicht das, was man oft so nennen hört, aber nur eine abstrakte Verstandesbestimmung ist) allein es ist, was Wirklichkeit hat und zwar so, dass er sich diese selbst giebt“ といっている。」: ["In the opening of *The Philosophy of Right*, Hegel states, 'Philosophy has to do with Ideas and therefore not with what are commonly described as mere concepts. On the contrary, it shows that the latter are one-sided and lacking in truth, and that it is the concept alone (not what is so often called by that name, but which is merely an abstract determination of the understanding) which has actuality, and in such a way that it gives actuality to itself.'"]]: Hegel. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Ed. Allen W. Wood; Trans. H.B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Section 1, p. 25.

formal. Thus, historical life develops from species-form into Idea-form, and it is only in this sense that we can say that the particular is the universal.

¹ Here, 「生物的個体」、as opposed to 「・ ・ 個物」