

## ● THE BIRTH OF *BLACK SQUARE*

### CHAPTER 1

#### Fevralism, Forerunner of Suprematism

##### *Malevich's First Personal "Ism"*

For many long decades it was believed that Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square* first appeared in 1913. The artist himself dated it to that year, and scholars trusted him implicitly.

We know that superstitious people consider the number thirteen unlucky, and as fate would have it, the thirteenth year of the twentieth century was indeed an unusual year for Russia. On the eve of its demise, the huge empire had achieved a prosperity unprecedented in its history. After the establishment of Soviet power and over the many decades of its ascendancy, the Soviet Union's successes would be compared with the level of development achieved by tsarist Russia in 1913.

The cultural life in the two capitals, St. Petersburg and Moscow, conceded nothing in intensity to the economic surge. It was in this context that the Russian avant-garde came stormily into being.