

● **ON THE THRESHOLD OF "0.10"**

CHAPTER 2

Suprematism in Fall 1915

September–October 1915

Abstract painting demanded to be fitted out verbally. We encounter the terminological definition “Suprematism”—with a capital letter—for the first time in a letter to Matiushin dated September 24, 1915: “I’m thinking that ‘Suprematism’ is most suitable.”¹

The word had its roots in Malevich’s native language, Polish, to which it had come, in turn, from the Latin of the Catholic liturgy. *Supremacia* meant “superiority,” “dominance”; for the artist in the initial stage, “Suprematism” established the supremacy of color energy in painting.

In time, Suprematism fully revealed its morphogenic power and the potential of its all-encompassing style, unlike the expressive biomorphic nonobjectivity of Vasily Kandinsky or Larionov’s Rayonnism, which were domestic approaches to and variations on abstract art. In the not too distant future—an entirely different era—Suprematism would find itself an