

The secretarial work became yet another difficult employment for the artist, as implied by Rozanova's letter to Shemshurin dated July 9, 1917: "The journal may come out in August, and then FREEDOM!!!"⁷⁶ Freedom from all the long drawn-out matters connected with the printer, preparing photographs and plates, interacting with artists, and so on; as is well known, a great number of essential, exhausting, and anxious tasks rests on the secretary of any journal.

When she first joined Supremus, Rozanova's mood was joyous; on April 4 she informed Shemshurin with enthusiasm: "But in general the idea of this journal and the newborn Supremus society is a sheer delight for me!"⁷⁷ The expressions "newborn society" and "sheer delight" make us think that the artist was a neophyte in *Supremus's* organizational and other affairs.

By April 1917 the journal project was already half a year old, and the Supremus society had begun to consolidate with meetings in late 1916 and early 1917 in Udaltsova's apartment, meetings that Rozanova, to judge from the above, obviously did not attend.

Supremus

The Supremus Archive and Its Fate

The principal offspring of the Supremus society was its eponymous journal, which was virtually ready to go to press in mid-1917.

For nearly the entire twentieth century, the journal remained a little-known phenomenon, and opinions about it were contradictory. For a while Kovtun thought that *Supremus* had come out and that at least one issue would surface somewhere. Other scholars, on the contrary, believed that the society's members had only conceived of working on the journal.

As it turned out, the lion's share of the *Supremus* materials were in the Khardzhiev archive, as became known after the literary scholar's death and the Khardzhiev-Chaga Art Foundation's cultural center found a home at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. After the appearance on the research front of new data between 1999 and 2004, a number of publications appeared that were connected with *Supremus* activities.

Some of the journal's materials were first published in the fifth issue of *Experiment/Eksperiment* (1999), a periodical of the Institute of Contemporary Russian Culture at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles directed by John Bowlt. The issue's compilers aimed merely to publish previously unknown articles and manifestos.⁷⁸