

as a process but as a condition that ensues after the escape to the “desert,” the cleansing to zero.

Malevich’s “economy” concealed the metaphysical message of minimalism.

Kruchenykh used the word *minimum* in his declaration of “eko-ez” from *Nosoboika*: “Eko-khud and supremus give for the first time the measure (*minimum*) of colors and lines” but have gone past it.

The minimalism of the second half of the twentieth century, whose spiritual father and precursor was Malevich, had nothing in common with instrumental “economy” from any perspective whatsoever.

Summing up the results of Kruchenykh’s participation in *Supremus*’s activities, let us note his last mention of the uncompleted project: “How is printing going on *Supremus*? Will it come out?” It was not the poet’s friend Olga Rozanova but Shemshurin, who was, again, as in January, removed from journal affairs, who read this question in a letter received from Tiflis on December 23, 1917.

The Supremus Society’s Finale

Public Activism in 1917

The world war exacerbated all the weaknesses and flaws of the state and public order of the no longer feudal but not yet capitalist Russian empire. The country was rushing headlong toward disaster. In light of the tsarist government’s feeble conduct of the war and the corruption so prevalent in the top echelons, the social shifts that had been making themselves felt since the late nineteenth century led over the course of 1917 to irrevocable results. After the bourgeois democratic February Revolution, the October coup, subsequently ennobled as the Great October Socialist Revolution, broke out.

Supremus, a strictly party-line fellowship, brought together not only the most radical but also the most active left-wing artists on the public level. The activities, positions, and public posts of its members in 1917 were as follows.

Kazimir Malevich: member, Jack of Diamonds, chairman as of October; chairman, Supremus, and editor of eponymous journal; member, Union of Youth; member, Left-wing (youth) Federation of the Professional Union of Artists-Painters of Moscow (later the Left-wing Federation); member, Left-wing Federation Council; secretary from the Left-wing Federation on the Council of the Professional Union of Artists-Painters of Moscow; soldier, 56th