Reminiscences of suprematism heritage in modern design and architecture: relevant professional discourse, environment identity source and/or commercial idea

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Abstract. The article conducts the analysis of using the heritage as one of the most problematic professional discourses of today and the particularly relevant practices of forming an objective-spatial environment as the means for making up unique living spaces in the situation of modern life commercialization. Today suprematism, selected as the object for discussion, is quite a popular cultural pattern and identity resource demanded in the works of designers and architects. The relevance of the research is also explained by the need of searching for a compromise solution between a correct interpretation of the heritage and commercial profit. The work includes the study of the avant-garde painting as the modern era style, suprematism reminiscences in the objects of modern design and architecture, analysis of relations between the heritage and commercial idea. An important outcome is the identification of successful examples of the heritage application in modern works. The paper outlines a positive experience of using the brand potential of the suprematism heritage, the interpretations of “new painting” as a concept, a cultural example, an identity resource and a special design language which shows the opportunity of the cultural norm priority over the commercial idea. It also provides obtaining the balance between contemporary challenges and cultural archetypes at the creation of the demanded and relevant product.

1. Introduction
The role and significance of legacy in modern culture and the formation of an objective-spatial environment, the forms and methods of its use and relevant interpretation become an important research and design object in the era of commercialization. Popularizing research and studies in this field is determined by the need to identify and individualize the modern design pieces and create unique autochthonous environments, since immersion in the legacy, its reminiscences have been among the means of such an interpretation. Appeal to legacy as a source of ideas and concepts, a way to search for images in the course of art and design work initiates the creation of an exclusive modern environment.

In the conditions of the essential continuous involving legacy in the commercial realities of life, the modern environment design is a space of compromise between the content of cultural patterns and the desire to use them as a commercial product and/or a strong brand.

2. Research Relevance and Objectives
The relevance and significance of the study are predetermined by a number of aspects:

- Requirements for the quality and comfort of the objective-spatial environment, which consider its uniqueness and adaptation to modern life and the ‘place’ originality as preconditions for livability
- The relevance of studying the legacy interpretation aspects as a source of identity, as well as the need to research the forms and methods of using cultural patterns
- The commercialization of life and the desire to benefit from everything, including culture, which is largely associated with a pragmatic attitude towards the legacy and transforming the sacred culture component
- The need to find a compromise between the correct legacy interpretation and a commercial benefit, the use of the brand legacy potential.

Chosen as the study object, the Russian avant-garde or more precisely, ‘new painting’ is now one of the extremely trending cultural patterns highly requested in the formation of the environment. Being a large-scale experiment with concepts, color, and shape, the avant-garde art builds in the style-forming ideas of the emerging era. According to S.O. Khan-Magomedov [1], one of these concepts is Suprematism with its idea of ‘color breakthrough’ and formalized style creating. The works by N. Adaskina, I. Aziyan, E. Bobrinskaya, D. Boul, O. Genisaretsky, A. Ikonnikov, E. Kovtun, V. Krinsky, K. Malevich, A. Nakov, D. Sarabanyanov, G. Revzin, V. Sidorenko, N.M. Tarabukin, S.O. Khan-Magomedov, A. Yakimovich, etc. create the theoretical foundation for studying the painting avant-garde peculiarities and the role of legacy in modern culture and the formation of the objective-spatial environment design.

3. Theory

3.1. Heritage of Russian avant-garde: “new painting” as a relevant professional discourse and the style of the modern era

The impact of non-objective art of the early 20th century on the formation of various fields of art and culture is described in the contemporary author’s texts and theoretical studies and revealed in project and art designs. Appeal to painting turns into a fashion, an important trend of the time; a new type of painting established by Malevich - Suprematism is becoming a style-forming concept of a new era.

Declaring the independence of the ‘new painting’ from the old aesthetics, Malevich proclaims the ‘painted plane’ [2] in the infinity of space as a ‘basic style module’ of various shape-forming processes. Having felt “extremely simple style-forming elements that have become the basis of the 20th-century style” [1], the avant-garde art virtually creates a new system of space, shape, and color interaction, which is manifested in designs, scientific research, and various educational courses. While giving priority to color, K. Malevich represents everything we see as “arising from the color mass transformed into plane and volume” [3].

According to S.O. Khan-Magomedov, the combination of simple geometric planes with space (or white background as its symbol) was decisive for the formation of the Suprematism style module. The combination of these particular elements of the style-forming core of Suprematism turned out to be the most universal style hallmark” [1]. Backgrounds of local colors broken by colored planes representing space in Suprematist compositions serve in general as a prototype of the avant-garde and then modernistic architecture. The interaction of color planes-shapes with a space-background plane sets a new shape-space style in art, design, architecture, and urban planning [4]. Thus, the ‘new painting’/Suprematism turns into a “project of specific stylistics for the world” [1].

Practicing architects and “producing artists” of the early 20th century find themselves under a spell of the ‘new painting’ as a specific style-forming factor. Thus, L. Lissitzky shows the contribution of the ‘new painting’ to the modern movement; he calls for bringing the power and energy of ‘left painting’ to architecture and finds the organics of transformation and its connection with architecture in his PROUNs [5]. I. Leonidov also actively uses the Suprematism ‘style modules’ in his works. Krinsky V.F. [6] notes the global impact of the ‘left painting’ on his own work and emphasizes the
effect of new color trends on surrounding colleagues. ‘Suprematist colors’ and non-objective pattern become a fashionable trend in clothes. Fashion has responded to the avant-garde painting with designs by L. Popova, A. Rodchenko, V. Stepanova, and V. Tatlin [7]. Education involuntarily absorbs the ‘new painting’ achievements and conflicts.

In general, the concept of Suprematism art as a specific color-plastic construction plays an important role in the development of all arts and the formation of their stylistic characteristics. The idea of ‘color construction’ in the colored background space [8] seems to be a fundamental feature of the style- and shape-forming integrating all artistic and project-oriented fields, including architecture and design (producing art) [9].

3.2. Interpretations of suprematism heritage in the formation of a modern objective-spatial environment. Heritage VS commercial brand

The new discovery of the avant-garde in the second half of the last century causes interest in understanding the stylistic features of non-objective painting and practical using legacy in architecture and design. Today, appeal to the avant-garde painting is very popular in both domestic and foreign practice, scientific research, and educational programs [10–14], however, sometimes it turns into real speculation in legacy.

Zaha Hadid is considered one of the most prominent modern adherents of Suprematism (although common concepts and avant-garde ideas are also important for other iconic figures - R. Koolhaas, T. Ando, S. Hall, R. Meyer). For Zaha Hadid, her own paintings are an indispensable form of comprehending the Suprematism ideology and style, a specific ‘tonometer’ in designing. Therefore, the avant-garde painting allusions may be seen in not only the author’s architectural pieces but also special exhibition projects and interior designs dedicated to the Russian avant-garde, in which Z. Hadid is invited to participate as a recognized Suprematism ideologist and interpreter (e.g., works for the Guggenheim Museum in New York, Galerie Gmurzynska in Zurich, etc.) [4].

The architectural reminiscences of the ‘left painting’ in the residential towers by Eric van Egeraat in Moscow may be related to the modern ‘new painting’ replicas in architecture. For Egeraat, just the color expression of the ‘new painting’ has become a starting point to immerse in the cultural context, build architectural interpretations of paintings by V. Kandinsky, K. Malevich, A. Exter, L. Popova, and A. Rodchenko, and create spatial paraphrases of pictorial motifs and images [15].

The avant-garde painting experiments have been brought into play in creating the image of Russia as the basis of Russian identity. One such pattern is the Russian brand proposed by the Artonika agency, where the authors appealing to non-objective painting build a unique ‘color-graphic history’. The avant-garde painting images are also used in decor of the Sochi Olympics. 52 Factory has created a whole series of diverse products in the Russian avant-garde style, including organizers and children's toys with prints inspired by the creations of K. Malevich, V. Stepanova, L. Popova, A. Rodchenko, I. Chashnik, etc.

The transformation of avant-garde painting into a specific fashion and/or commercial idea leads to exploiting Suprematism images with greater or lesser correctness in the development of interior designs, corporate styles, advertising and souvenir products, etc. E.g., a shocking Suprematist red cross with K. Malevich’s quote created as part of the Stenograffia graffiti festival on a square in Yekaterinburg is a very free interpretation of the avant-garde painting ideology and represents the populist exploitation of the avant-garde brand. The Dr. Zhivago restaurant interior images quite formally refer to avant-garde themes by using the color palettes, equipment items, and environmental decorations.

The emergence of multiple information resources devoted to avant-garde plays a significant role, since along with scientific and popular or educational courses, they also publish materials not correctly describing the main features of the ‘new painting’ and its style-forming factors.

Herewith, avant-garde is often transformed into a kind of ‘exclusive pop culture’, a commercial product [16], the key features of which are determined in a very straightforward manner. Among them, ‘innovation and experiment’, ‘contrasting form and color’, ‘pure colors: white, black, saturated
yellow, red, deep blue, green, and light green’, ‘combining almost all materials’, etc. Thus simplified the essence of Suprematism’s ‘projective philosophy’ [17] often leads to the profanation of the concepts and style used and commercial exploitation of the avant-garde painting brand legacy potential.

4. Results

Peculiarities of the modern territories/cities’ development, the formation of life-friendly and comfortable areas, and the role of legacy in these processes allow using the objective-spatial environment design as a kind of space for compromises required when involving the legacy in the commercial life of today's society.

The experience of studying legacy and, in particular, avant-garde painting, its use in the formation of the objective-spatial environment as a way to drop into the origins of culture and find compromises with the modern life space is an important part of the professional development and requires, firstly, a theoretical study of the material, secondly, mastering the legacy at the preparation stage (inclusion in the educational process), and thirdly, analyzing the modern practical activity.

1 - Studying the cultural codes of Suprematism and transformations of avant-garde mythologemas [18] and their influence on the professional development and the establishment of identity and Russian mentality contribute to the preservation and interpretation of avant-garde painting as a professional and cultural value, the reproduction of legacy as not just a promoted brand, commercial idea, and/or fashionable trend.

2 - Immersion in the ‘new painting’ legacy as a way to form a professional culture, a part of professional development, and educational practice seems to be an important category of art and design activity, the relatability of which is associated with the formation of project thinking.

The experience of the IRNRTU’s (the Irkutsk National Research Technical University) guidance papers includes familiarizing with symbolism and significance of color and Suprematist shape-forming and their use in architecture and design, as well as mastering the non-objective art language in the course of developing interpretation skills in the ‘new painting’ style, and studying the fundamentals of design.

3 - Modern design practice and summarizing the existing experience allow highlighting the most successful patterns of working with heritage, finding a balance between modern challenges and cultural archetypes. The positive experience of using the brand legacy potential, interpreting the ‘new painting’ legacy as a cultural pattern, and representing Non-objectivity as a specific plastic design language [17] show that cultural practices may prevail over the commercial idea when creating a popular modern product. Today, this can be found in various design fields:

- a country/city brand (a tourist brand of Russia, a brand of the city of Perm with a developed urban design system, etc.)
- the urban environment images, the city festival/celebration images (cultural code of the city of Vitebsk, Suprematist painting on the facades and transport in Voronezh, Krasnoyarsk, etc.)
- spatial Suprematism in architecture (a series of works by Z. Hadid, the building of the University of Art in Puebla, a house in the Los Angeles suburbs, etc.)
- interiors and equipment (SUPREMATIC lamps of the Wishnya studio, Avantgarde chair, interiors and kitchenware by Z. Hadid, metro stations in Moscow, etc.)
- clothing and accessories (Calvin Klein collections (spring-summer 2018), Marni (spring-summer 2016); Diagram 17 watches, etc.)
- souvenirs (Suprematist constructor, a series of Red Dolls toys, badges based on K. Malevich’s works, etc.)
- graphic design and advertising products (the Watson & Watson agency work, graphic design of the 2011 Kinotavr film festival, etc.)

Author's solutions (including as part of creative teams) based on the ‘Suprematism code’ and stylistic features of avant-garde painting are dedicated to the public space designs for the city of Irkutsk, the color solutions of Studgorodok, interior environment designs (art schools in
Irkutsk/region, IRNRTU coworking), corporate styles (the TerritoriyaOtdykha and Musical Theater companies), and a series of theatrical posters and call boards.

5. Conclusions
The appeal of modern professional perception and the society to the heritage as an actual discourse and suprematism as a specific symbol of the new world-view, shows the significance of the heritage in total and the avante-garde ideals in particular for culture and profession. It is proved by the existing practice in the area of architecture, design, monumental and applied arts. Considering that it is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid the pragmatic, commercial use of legacy, a way to solve existing problems is finding a compromise between the correct use of legacy and its exploitation as a strong brand. The modern environment design as a space for such a compromise allows interpreting the Suprematism legacy as a style- and shape-forming concept, a source of figurative searches, an ideologema, and the ability to be a ‘world style project’ and herewith using the non-objective painting brand legacy potential.

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