

XΩΡΑ-PLACE AS THE AVANT-GARDE ART TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

Irina Yu. Sagan

**St. Petersburg State Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture and
Architecture named after I. E. Repin at the Russian Academy of
Arts, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation**

Abstract: *The relevance of the problem under study is determined by the need to identify the role of the evolution of the art language through the influence of an artistic image. Image as the evolution of the art language is always relevant. The development and movement of the image actualizes the imagination. Imagination, the space of Imagination, the amazing ability of human consciousness. Imagination is focused on the manifestation of human activity, on the process of formation of its' socialization specifics. To imagine is to be present in the image. Therefore, the ability of imagination can be considered as a powerful tool for influencing the world and oneself. The objective of the article is to develop the artistically dominant model of the formation of the artist's imagination method, as a model of transformation and the formation of artistic space in the conditions of modern media culture. The leading method for studying this problem is experimental, which allows to consider this problem as a process of transformation and a certain mastery of the artistic practices of new spiritual dimensions. This study problem field is the question of the formation of the individual in the process of symbolizing the world around him in consciousness, which precedes external reflection in the artistic forms of culture, ideas about himself and the world. The study is aimed at adapting a person to the new conditions of modern culture for the awareness and definition of his world and his place in the world of reality. A new optics of worldview and a new aesthetics of artistic means of its expression appear. In this connection, the problematics of the imaginary as the semantic manifestation of the act of consciousness is not just a form of creative activity, but also a form of introducing to the new world symbolic system the thought of an artistic image.*

Keywords: avant-garde art, postmodern, khora, eidic image, artistic space, imagination.

A person inhabits and transforms himself and the outside world not only from the economic and political point of view, but also from the position of striving for aesthetization of himself and the surrounding space. The method of the artist's work is comparable with the transition to an imaginary place. "The miracle of Jesus's crossing the sea is, after all, one of the most impressive. This transition is unusual: "the boat landed on the shore" suddenly, and only one imagination can follow Jesus walking on the water... One can imagine that this transition is immaterial"¹. The non-materialized transition of the miracle in avant-garde painting begins

¹ Yu. S. Kristeva, "Soul and image", 2018. Available at: <http://www.kph.npu.edu.ua/le-book/clasik/data/misc/intent/08kristeva.html>.

with an inverted painting by V. Kandinsky. In this imaginary temporality of the unconscious, in the abstract syntax, V. Kandinsky creatively demonstrated the transition of painting to another – the spiritual dimension. Having reached the idea of the simplest, the atoms of reality itself², the artist as an operator of thought here and now realizes the creative process by means of imagination³. There is a hit in the state of presence of the one-time – the place is forming the space of meanings – the khora. Thus, in the problem of the space and image correlation, the khora landscape acquires the features of concepts convergence and definitions of meanings.

In 1987 J. Derrida wrote the famous work "Khora", devoted to the analysis of this term in Plato. Proceeding from Plato, Derrida interprets khoras in its own way, giving rise to intertextual polyphony, extracting from the depths of the ancient text many meanings and many uncertainties⁴. The multiplication of meanings ultimately leads the researcher to the edge of the abyss: "We no longer know – and this can make your head spin – on which edge, on which cliff surface? Chaos, a fissure, khora"⁵. This imaginary place of J. Derrida, after Plato, was designated by the word khora, as the idea of the imperishable circulation of being in itself, beyond going beyond its limits. The ancient philosopher interprets this concept in the dialogue "Timaeus"⁶ as "eternally moving, arising in a certain place and re-emerging from it... not being on earth or in heaven, as if it does not exist... but when it awakened, it turns out not to be able to make a distinction and speak the truth... because the image does not carry the reason for its own birth in itself, but is the ghost of something else..., as if clinging to the essence"⁷. As a result, the khora can be characterized as the maternal place of outcome of the phenomenon, but hidden in it and inseparable from the external image of existence of the entity.

² E.V. Yurkevich, N.I. Romancheva, V.D. Sekerin, A.A. Shcherbakov, L.N. Kryukova, "Augmented reality as a form of organising educational process of seventh technological stage", in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 233-243.

³ E.L. Hasanov, V.D. Panachev, V.P. Starostin, A.G. Pudov, "Innovative approach to the research of some characteristics of choir scenes as culturology issue", in *Astra Salvensis*, 2018, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 749-759.

⁴ G. Derrida, *Chorus. Name Essay*, Institute of Experimental Sociology, Moscow, 1998.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ Plato, *Book two. Plato (translation from ancient Greek N.V.Samsonova, A.N. Egunova, N.N.Averintseva)*, Eksmo, Moscow, 2008.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

Developing the idea of Plato, J. Derrida states: "The khora, neither sensual nor intelligible, belongs to the third kind, existing between the logic of exclusion and the logic of participation... is based on transient visibility"⁸. The khora, in such a discrepancy between the signified and the signifier, creates at the same time a moving and static-regulated position of the imagination between things existent and beingness. The mental space exists in this particular temporality through the presence of the subject experience, whose sensory perception acts here as the presentation of the imagination objects. In this state, the khora accepts all definitions to give them a place, but it has no one of its own... It "is" nothing but the result or process of what is currently imprinted "on" it, on its plot, but it does not have a plot or a constant support for all these interpretations, although, nevertheless, it does not boil down to them"⁹.

The abstract image in the pictures of V. Kandinsky lives and makes room for interpretations, which connects him to the Platos khora, which contains all possible interpretations in advance. Khora is not limited to inscriptions or interpretations relating to its plot or its constituent plot. It "surpasses" them, anticipates the thought, as well as the avant-garde image, being an imprint, an imprint of a changeable form carries in itself the germ of all possible transformations of the phenomena of essence. As a result, the avant-garde eidic image, as a characteristic of the prehistoric space of the subject, is the result of the self-movement of the universal semiotic character of being thought. Through the ancient concept of the khora, the aesthetics of the avant-garde acquires a specific legitimization, in relation to the practice of intellectual mobility of the postmodern J. Derrida.

Materials and methods

Research methods

The research analysis object in this article is the avant-garde art in the context of modern culture, and the subject is the khora, mental space – a place, a transformational model located in an unstable, changeable field of semantic vision and a homo viator knocking about, overcoming, erasing all sorts of boundaries, and his creative work on the semantic conversion of artistic forms. Experimental studying "homo viator" methods can be identified as the next ones:

⁸ G. Derrida, *Chorus. Name Essay*, Institute of Experimental Sociology, Moscow, 1998.

⁹ G. Derrida, *Chorus. Name Essay*, Institute of Experimental Sociology, Moscow, 1998.

- cultural and historical, which is associated with the definition of the genesis of the “human wandering” in the European culture history;
- an analytical method that gives a critical justification to the existing phenomena of the subject’s creative activity in being;
- method of observation and generalization of the specificity of the development of modernity through the prism of avant-garde art cultural and artistic processes.

The combination of the presented methods allows to justify the concept of “homo peregrinate”, to determine its specific characteristics and features. The cultural-historical method makes it possible to identify the genesis of the human creativity development in the aestheticization of space.

Experimental research base

The experimental base of the research was the St. Petersburg State Academy of Institutes of Higher Education, St. Petersburg State Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture named after I. Repin at the Russian Academy of Arts.

Stages of research

The study of the problem was carried out in two stages:

At the first stage, a theoretical analysis of the existing methodological approaches in the philosophical, art history and scientific literature on the subject of imagination and imaginary as a characteristic of the artistic image was carried out. The dissertation work on the artistic space analysis, as a kind of imaginary space of avant-garde art, as well as the theory and methodology of research on this subject. The problem, purpose, and research methods are highlighted, the plan of experimental research is made.

At the second stage, experimental work was carried out, the conclusions obtained in the course of experimental work from the perspective of the aesthetics of the avant-garde artistic space were analyzed, verified and refined, the results obtained were generalized and systematized.

Fine art is a place of reserved, previously unknown, hidden space. The paintings are transit details of the time in which the history of imaginative artistic writing reveals new horizons of creativity¹⁰.

¹⁰ A. Sailaukyzy, K. Sak, T. Lebedeva, “Alash publicism and journalistic activity of Alikhan Bukeikhan”, in *Opçion*, 2018, vol. 34, no. 87-2, p. 149-163.

“Breakthrough to new, previously not former horizons requires a high voltage of creative consciousness and not every artist is able to become a pioneer of a new world, a new *terra incognita*. This requires riot, rebellion, explosion of old eidetic forms. And this breakthrough makes the avant-garde, one of the directions of modern art, generated by the tasks of the new XX century. It arises during an extraordinary spiritual ascent in Russia, bold creative experiments in understanding the artistic heritage of world culture and the Russian traditional picture of the world. A new optics of thinking arises, a new understanding of the space in which a person lives”¹¹.

For avant-gardists, freedom of space invocation becomes not only a bold way to express oneself, but also the demand of an era. Artistic space as an act of imaginary creativity, reveals the properties of subjective artistic consciousness. The artistic consciousness of the avant-garde Creator changes the inner frame of the work through a spatial idea, acquiring the character of universality, generalization, universalization, spatial expressiveness. The transformational model of artistic space is akin to the stages of the subject formation, obtained its’ symbolization at resonance with the audience, is acquired in the relationship between theory and practice.

Results and discussion

Imagination as a historical experience of the subject and reality relationship opens its spiritual effort and embodiment in the Russian avant-garde art, through the representation of new artistic forms and new graphic means of expression in the works of V. Kandinsky, K. Malevich, M. Shagal, P. Filonov. A bundle of these artists helps to reveal the cyclical nature of the cultural-historical landscape, the birth of creative ideas at the intersection of the old and the new in line with the dynamics of historical events. The building of the space-time structure of the work through symbolic logic brings the avant-garde art in the mid-1910s to new frontiers: the analytical, semantic landscape of P. Filonov, ens by M. Shagal, V. Kandinsky's abstractionism, K. Malevich's suprematism allowed the artists to express their understanding of the cultural situation of their time through the artistic space.

The Russian avant-garde, inscribed in a special coordinate system, acutely feeling the transitivity, the crisis of the epoch followed the path of

¹¹ I. V. Gorina, I. Yu. Sagan, *The space in the painting of the Russian avant-garde*, Asterion, St. Petersburg, 2014.

“sacrificial denial of art, through art and within K. Malevich’s art itself¹², searching for existential, value, universal principles of M. Shagal, searching analytical foundations of the universe P. Filonov. Such a sacrifice of culture "in the name of being a superculture, and its great manifestation"¹³ implied a spiritual complex of the avant-garde qualities of the era, aimed not only at the destruction of culture, but still at the main pathos of exceptional, total creativity carried out through shift, shifting permutation of the whole picture of the world. Such a pragmatic setting was actualized in the avant-garde text at all levels: philosophical, literary, artistic, ontological, social, political. The attribute of artistic integrity of the ideas of that time is expressed through the artists represented here.

The symbol, formula, image-sign is the basis of the avant-garde ideographic painting artistic space, a product of the constitutive genesis of consciousness and the world. The intentional rationale for a fundamentally new position of the artistic space has a cosmological ontology, where cosmology is a universal system of meanings expressed through an act of open awareness. The image of the sign "unopened"¹⁴ form of things, represents an endless interpretation and is transmitted from eye to eye. Art space is an integral part of a work of art. In the aesthetics of the Russian avant-garde art space is a co-creator of the artist. Avant-garde painting represents a creative laboratory of the search for new expressive means and artistic techniques in working with color, line, texture, figurativeness, composition.

Artistic space as a manifested aesthetic reality is an open conceptual multidimensional system, built on the relation of philosophical and artistic-aesthetic knowledge and capable of self-development and modification. The artistic space is not static, but dialectical, this evolutionary development is stadial: *demiurgic splash (explosion)* of V. Kandinsky, *demiurgic assembly* of K. Malevich, in the demiurgic ascent of the “*growth of being*” P. Filonov, “*eventfulness*” of M. Shagal creates in the horror landscape the specifics of transformational means of defining new meanings. Artists act on the basis of a demiurgic experiment, demiurgic victors, the creators of a new universe. The creative thinking of these avant-garde artists of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries erases the boundaries and creates the aesthetic reality of a new cultural paradigm.

¹² Yu. N. Jilin, *Picture of the world of the avant-garde era. Avant-garde as system integrity*, IMLI RAN, Moscow, 2013.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ M. Merlot-Ponty, *Eye and spirit*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1992.

Aesthetic reality is relatively independent and has significant criteria for excellence and authenticity. It overcomes the line between reality and the ideal, the probable and the improbable, the proper and the real, the possible and the impossible in a work of art. As an artist's creative experience, aesthetic reality is a product of his consciousness: "The Creator... pervades it all, and it embraces it"¹⁵. The aesthetic reality or the substantial reality of such a creative ontologization can be characterized as the reality of individual perception, which presupposes the freedom of the artist's inner world.

XIX century avant-gardism is the source of the postmodernism identity, the search for new modernity, when human history is thought not linear, but consisting of several times¹⁶. Works of modern artists reflect the intertwining of text and images, time and space¹⁷. The artist travels around the modern and historical periods, isolates signs from them, and thus comprehends "here and now". He becomes a kind of nomad: in space, in time and among signs¹⁸. Appeal to avant-garde art in our time involves the idea of overcoming postmodernism through new reading scenarios. Avant-gardism is the alternating form of modernity, recharging ideas and cultural phenomena.

French philosopher and organizer of exhibitions of contemporary art N. Bourrio is trying to characterize the situation of today "altermodern". Altermodern, in the interpretation of N. Bourrio, is the territory of the borderland, and the alternating artist, from his point of view, is "homo viator", wandering, overcoming, erasing all and all boundaries¹⁹. "The artist is traveling, or he does not exist"²⁰, – the artistic world today. The process of the so-called "globalization" of space is expanding more and more, quickly causing structural changes in the culture of not only Western countries, but also the world as a whole. The process of globalization is characterized by a change in perception

¹⁵ S. L. Frank, "Reality and man. Metaphysics of human existence", 2015. Available at: <http://www.magister.msk.ru/library/philos/frank/frank006.htm>.

¹⁶ N. Burrio, *Altermodernism. Tate triennale*, Tate Publishing, London, 2009.

¹⁷ A. M. Lamminpiya, O.V. Zashirinskaia, Y.E. Shelepin, "Psychophysiological analysis of the reading and text understanding", in *Fiziologija cheloveka*, 2015, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 23-28; A. M. Lamminpiya, O.V. Zashirinskaia, Y.E. Shelepin, "Psychophysiological analysis of text reading and understanding", in *Human Physiology*, 2015, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 130-134.

¹⁸ Dzh. M. Rabat, *Crimes of the future: theory and its global reproduction*, Bloomsbury Publishing USA, New York, 2014.

¹⁹ O. P. Bespalaya, "After the postmodern altermodern, transmodern, postpostmoder", 2018. Available at: <http://www.online-science.ru/userfiles/file/zyrxdfoqfh3vbfvixtip3ihj91zpzca.pdf>.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

experience. At the same time, N. Burrio is fully aware of the fact that, thanks to the worldwide network, as the realm of unlimited possibilities, there was not a single place on the planet where something unknown and secret was preserved. “And the only sphere in which mystery can still be, is henceforth not a spatial, but a temporal continuum. N. Burrio believes that the distinctive feature of actual, altermodern art is its heterochrony – that is, perception of reality as a combination of a multitude of temporalities²¹.

“Homo viator” is a new philosophical and anthropological type – a man of the frontier, whose inner experience dominates the outer. From the standpoint of philosophy of art and aesthetics, the phenomenon of the avant-garde artist denotes the complex task of defining an artistic image as an object of thought. The metaphysical unconscious side of the image here acts as a process of becoming, a transforming force affecting the external world, seeking to aestheticize itself and the space around it. Working with the help of eidic ideas, the artist finds the dialectical relationship between internal perception and the external mode of its expression. Eidetic monologue, passing its way of aestheticization of the regime of artistic thought becomes not just an imaginary object, it is a *horaristic* landscape of polysemanticism. Here the object of imagination passes the boundary of reality, between being and the subject of empiricism of mind. The eidetic or eidic image, the force that exceeds the limit, being in an unstable, changeable field of semantic vision, acquires a sliding meaning, indicating the possibility of a sacred transition. The avant-garde picture lives in overcoming the temporality of time and the inner space of pure movement. It transforms the artistic space, giving the image a new semantic recoding. In the transgressive transitions of the states of closure to self-identification, a process takes place, raising being to erase the boundaries. In the perception of mental, eidetic images filled with the inner world, inner knowledge, there lives a new man, “homo viator” – “a man is wandering” and present simultaneously, his creative activity is in the mode of overcoming the canons of identification.

Consciousness of the artist, existing on the border, eliminates the power of the past and the future, translates consciousness into a plan of becoming "here and now". And as a result of such a special experience of consciousness refracting the objective world into a symbolic, allegorical imagination creates its own mental space, which exists in the special possibility of the generated communion. “Independent imagination is able

²¹ *Ibidem*.

to create worlds that really exist, to make being in a free degree”²². And the artist himself thinks the universe by analogy of a work of art, finding confirmation of the idea of the human imagination omnipotence. Artists – avant-gardists philosophers and thinkers in the act of the possible achievement of forms and images implement the universal ideas of the universe.

The eidic image can change the landmarks of the imagination to the landmarks of presence. In the paradigm of spiritual practice, an anthropological strategy of the mystery of the emergence of the image is formed. “*Imagining*, imaginary in Descartes means *not only* to understand intelligere, but also to see what is supposed to be present”²³.

Present, looking into the creature of the world in an instant, and putting its’ spiritual letters of time on the canvas, in which the rhythm, the excessive sounding of color, the splashing out of emotions, the excess of forms and their refractions leads to fabulous spatial metamorphoses. “Time arose together with heaven, that at the same time born, they would break up at the same time, if disintegration occurs for them, the eternal nature served as the prototype for time, so that it would become like it, so possible. For a primitive is, that which is, for all eternity, between, as (the mapping) has arisen, is and will be in continuation of the whole time”²⁴.

“The artist stands slightly apart from the picture. He looks at the model; perhaps he needs to add the last stroke, but it is possible that the first line has not yet been drawn. The hand in which he holds the brush is turned to the left, to the palette. For an instant, he stood motionless between the canvas and the paints. The master's hand holds the gaze, which in turn rests on an interrupted movement. Events will unfold between the thin tip of the brush and the point of view”²⁵. A contemporary artist, according to N. Burrio, the author of the manifesto of altermodernism, is a peculiar homo viator (human wanderer), whose mobility allows him to overcome space and time of different cultures with psychological ease. Combining for a while with the work to implement any artistic project, the artist embodies his anthropological experiment in

²² K. V. Sultanov, N. N. Suvorov, “*Overcoming reality in imagination*”, 2018. Available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/v/preodolenie-realnosti-v-voobrazhenii>.

²³ F. Fedier, “*Imaginary. Power*”, 2002. Available at: <http://bibikhin.ru/voobrazhaemoe.30.08.18>

²⁴ Plato, *Book two. Plato (translation from ancient Greek N.V.Samsonova, A.N. Egunova, N.N. Averintseva)*, Eksmo, Moscow, 2008.

²⁵ M. Foucault, “*Words and things*”, 1994. Available at: <https://e-libra.ru/read/173561-slova-i-veschi-arheologiya-gumanitarnyh-nauk.html>.

physical space. The fate of avant-garde artists in our time are perceived as the initial sequence of such projects.

The features inherent in postmodern have not completely exhausted themselves. They are continued in the new situation, which can be called the avant-garde postmodern, with the properties of the transformation "khoras". "She appears to be in envision, which can, on the one hand, deprive him of clarity of consciousness, but on the other – give him divine power"²⁶.

The Platos khora bears various definitions, it is both the "foster-mother" and the receptacle, a psychological drawing of the artist's personality²⁷. The avant-garde sign-symbol born in the khora marks the space of what is happening and conveys the complexity and depth of what is happening. The psychological concept of a khora, as the first stage of the formation of a subject, of his consciousness, which is present in the world, contains within itself diverse objects of being, which he must distinguish, recognize and is in relationship and structural relationships with them. The visibility and representation of the phenomena of the world substantiates its presence as a sphere awakening our thinking. That is, the external world, in this context, is not a construct of facts and concrete phenomena, but a reservoir of phenomena, pre-given to our thinking. Therefore, a person can make sensually imagined acts of choice for self-identification in being.

What is it? Indeed, *something of the khora*, fundamentally new and different from everything that was before, is a variation on the theme of transforming oneself and time.

In the dialectical course of thought within the theoretical and experimental definition, the aesthetics of artistic space as a transformational concept is reality itself, which is expressed in the forms of avant-garde works of art. A new optics of thinking associated with the aesthetics of the subjective understanding of the world leads a creative person to new acts of consciousness. The aesthetics of artistic space is such a reality that is in the process of reflection, development, change, which exists as the formation of the world of artistic practice. This means that only in the formation category there is a connection between theory and practice, distraction and empiricism. The empirical reality of space is chaotic, fragmented, multiple, in order to bring it to unity, we need the work of thought, distraction, abstraction. "To fill an abstract definition of

²⁶ G. Derrida, *Chorus. Name Essay*, Institute of Experimental Sociology, Moscow, 1998.

²⁷ N. Tarabukin, "The problem of space in painting", in *Questions of Art*, 1993, no. 1, p. 170-209.

space with concrete content, it is necessary to give an abstract meaning to the actual content, i.e. define space as meaning”.

The tendency to symbolize the artistic space of avant-garde artists is given on the basis of a subjective understanding of reality, and their very fact of objective existence cannot be denied. The consciousness of the artist becomes the subject of thinking, not as a finite limited experience, but as a productive imaginary contemplation. Perception of space, along with time, is one of the subjective conditions for the emergence of aesthetic contemplation and observation. The dynamics of the avant-garde genre is characterized not so much by the object of the depiction of abstract forms, as by the depiction of the artist’s khoras-place, which is directed inside the cultural-historical process. The exit from the mimetic perception of three-dimensional space, to the khoraristic dimensionality measurement problems, and postulates the idea of multidimensionality of the world.

This article materials may be useful for teachers of art universities, for specialists in the field of modern art, for professional activities in the system of retraining and advanced training.