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Russian Design Firm Denies Plagiarism Accusations Over 'New Moscow' Logo

By The Moscow Times

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A Russian design firm has denied accusations of plagiarism after a logo it charged the city of Moscow 15 million rubles ($240,000) to develop has been exposed as a near exact match with an image available for free download on a pattern-sharing website.

The Apostol firm, co-owned by Russian television presenter Tina Kandelaki, said the logo it has developed to symbolize "New Moscow" — the capital's outlying districts incorporated into the city a few years ago — was the result of applying complex software to graph the so-called Voronoi diagram, the Gazeta.ru news portal reported Monday.

The diagram — representing a mathematically precise partitioning of a plane into regions — is also available for download from the craftsmanspace.com website.

"The key visual metaphor in designing the brand of New Moscow was a pattern based on the Voronoi diagram," a spokesperson for Apostol was quoted as saying. "In nature, this pattern is formed organically, but creating it artificially requires algorithms that mathematically

recreate this way of partitioning a space."

"To generate the Voronoi pattern our designers used special programming equipment. Such practices are common in graphic design," the spokesperson was quoted as saying.

Following Apostol's denials of plagiarism, State Duma deputy Alexander Ageyev said he was recalling his complaint to the Prosecutor General's Office, adding that the design firm convinced him it had earned its fee through significant work, RBC business news agency reported.

"It turns out, a huge amount of labor has been put into this, I could not even expect that," Ageyev was quoted as saying.

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