

Dana and David Dornsife  
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

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Отзыв члена диссертационного совета, Джона Э. Боулта, на диссертацию Булучевской, Елизаветы Андреевны:

«Эмиграция деятелей культуры в Италию (1918-1939 гг.)», представленную на соискание ученой степени кандидата исторических наук

Recommendation from John E. Bowlt regarding **Elizaveta Buluchevskaia**: **"Emigratsiia deiatelei kul'tury v Italiu (1918-1939)"**.

It is with pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation in support of Ms. Elizaveta Buluchevskaia's *kandidatskaia* dissertation "Emigratsiia deiatelei kul'tury v Italiu (1918-1939)" which I have read with pleasure and profit. I know Ms. Buluchevskaia's work through my acquaintance with her work and from our regular correspondence and I am happy to be able to report upon this particular academic contribution. Ms. Buluchevskaia is a dedicated scholar with a strong intellectual acumen and her investigations are marked by a fine comprehension of Russian and European cultures of the modern era. As she has proven in her academic activities, especially the dissertation, she evaluates sophisticated issues of aesthetic accomplishment both through close reading and through contextual elaboration, i.e., through crisp intrinsic analysis and through the appreciation of political, social and material contexts.

The dissertation is written in a clear, sober and objective fashion and presents the material in a sequential and rational manner, creating, in the end, a veritable encyclopedia of the Russian emigration in Italy. The primary strength of the text, then, lies in its factual, documentary assessment of the many writers, artists, actors, musicians, historians, political observers and scientists who took refuge in Rome, Milan and other Italian cities after the October Revolution. Although there have been other, serious publications on Russians in Italy, "Emigratsiia deiatelei kul'tury v Italiu (1918-1939)" is the first exhaustive study of the subject and is remarkable for its synthetic coverage. From a larger perspective, the dissertation helps us to understand not only the manifest and multiple destinies of the Russian diaspora in Italy, but also its creative contribution to Italian society and the humanities as a whole – as well as to the zig-zag political and cultural relationship between the Soviet Union and Fascist Italy during the 1920s and 1930s.

Although her focus is on the interwar period, Buluchevskaia reinforces her argument by referring back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and to the Italian sojourns of, for example, Dostoevsky, Gogol', A. Ivanov and Kiprensky, i.e. to what was an important "anthropological" and social precedent to the October emigration. Of course, as Ms. Buluchevskaia implies, there are various kinds of emigration -- political, social, psychological and intellectual, and not all are occasioned by the pressures of a hostile domestic government. Emigration may even be "internal", a condition that is especially relevant to the Stalin era, when some artists and writers tried to escape from the impositions of everyday life into their own private worlds, while still living in Leningrad and Moscow. Those who did travel to the West converged in the most diverse places: eventually, for example, Chagall and Bunin settled in Paris, Leonid Pasternak in

University of Southern California  
3501 Trousdale Pkwy, THH 255, Los Angeles, California 90089-4353 • Tel: 213 740 2735 • Fax: 213 740 8550



N 09/2-240 of 23.11.2018



England, Anisfel'd, Aronson, Gabo, Manevich and Sorin in the United States, Nicola Benois and Viacheslav Ivanov in Italy and so on.

The Russian emigration in Italy is an extremely complex and variegated topic. As Buluchevskaia implies, there are many reasons why artists, writers, musicians, and dancers fled Russia after the Bolshevik coup. The October Revolution brought social and economic confusion, destroying the traditional components of artistic practice -- the private art market, museum and gallery space, publicity and promotion. In other words, the very way of life and livelihood of artists and writers, in particular, left and right, were endangered, and material rather than ideological reasons often compelled them to seek security in the West, including Italy; and for moderate artists and critics such as Beloborodoff, Nicola Benois and Muratov, there was also the more perverse pressure of artistic and personal rivalry from the left. Consequently, straitened material circumstances, fear of Bolshevik reprisal and experience of the licentious behaviour of Bolshevik plenipotentiaries in 1917-18 resolved many to leave their homeland. This was particularly true of those who had been a part of the Moscow and St. Petersburg artistic and intellectual elite such as Annenkov, N. Benois and V. Ivanov, whose emigration was also motivated by the sudden disappearance of that very class -- the bourgeoisie -- which had guaranteed patronage and solvency. As a result, groups of Russian artists, writers, performers and scientists converged in numerous places as they travelled away from Russia, including Italy, specifically, in Rome, Florence, Venice and Milan. Such is the terrain which Ms. Buluchevskaia surveys and assesses under three major chronological and thematic rubrics.

In her first section Ms. Buluchevskaia provides a rich historiographical background to the topic, indicating the major and minor sources, published and archival, Western and Russian, upon which she has based her evaluations, detailed tables of names and professions plus an extensive bibliography supplementing the main text. The copious descriptions and references indicate that Ms. Buluchevskaia is well aware of parallel researches by scholars such as Gardzonio, Lo Gatto, Paklin, Rizzi, Severiukhin, Shishkin, Strada and Talalai, and of the more general appreciations of the emigration by specialists such as Raev. The dissertation demonstrates that Ms. Buluchevskaia has consulted a wide range of sources, including the holdings of the Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Archivio di Stato di Milano, the State Archive of the Russian Federation and similar depositories in Italy and Russia, and that she has conducted rigorous research on relevant periodicals such as *Europa Orientalis* and *Rassegna Sovietica*.

In devoting Section 2 to the typology and social status of Russian émigrés in Italy, Ms. Buluchevskaia gives particular attention to the material aspect (often ignored in parallel studies which tend to be drawn more to ideological or cultural arguments). In this context she brings to light not only the more celebrated names in emigration such as artists Leonid and Rimma Brailovsky, Falileev, Isupov, Lokhov, Shcherbatov and Paolo Trubetskoi and cultural commentators Ivanov and Muratov, but also less familiar names such as Grigorovich, Signorelli and Veidemiuller. Among the artists listed are Bezrodnyi, Mal'tsev and Sheremevsky, among writers -- Veitsman and Shor, among musicians and performers, Bariansky, Borisenko and Kutukova. The list also extends to theater director Krol', archaeologist Varsher and mathematician Bernshtein.

Ms. Buluchevskaia is quick to point out, however, that in spite of the marked presence of Russians in Italy, there was little cultural or political solidarity and that in many cases they fell victim to impoverishment and marginalization. Unlike France which, in the 1920s and 1930s, did much to help destitute Russians, Italy, in this regard, had no panoramic state policy and, on a local level, manifested few attempts to render practical assistance to displaced persons. True, as the dissertation demonstrates, there were a number of professional Russian organizations such as the Russian Assembly in Italy, the Gogol Library, the Russian Literary and Artistic Circle and the Herzen Society, but it would be misleading to assume that there was a cohesion and unity of interests -- one reason, surely, why the



Russian exodus to Italy has, hitherto, not received extensive scholarly. Buluchevskaia does much to fill this lacuna.

Section 3 strikes by the wealth of material concerning the impact which Russians made on Italian cultural life. Although (with its numerous names and dates) the text reads sometimes more like a telephone guide, the data presented are fresh and essential to the thesis. We learn of Signorelli and her salon in Rome, of Ivanov and his religious explorations between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, of Vedemiuller and his sociological views, of Pervukhin and his journalism, Ginzburg and her establishment of Einaudi and Sanin and his theatrical involvement, to mention just a few of the Russian activities during Mussolini's Italy. Scientists such as Bakunina, historians such as Zabugin and philosophers such as Yakovenko also receive due mention.

There can be no doubt that "Emigratsiia deiatelei kul'tury v Italiu (1918-1939)" deserves distinct praise and should be passed, for it is a lucid, pioneering and informative source which explores a vital component of the Russian diaspora, returning many names and institutions in the pantheon of Russian émigré culture. The dissertation is in good order for potential publication as an enquiry into the development and destiny of Russian visual culture outside of Soviet Russia during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century - an exciting, complex, and yet still underestimated sphere of research. Ms. Buluchevskaia is at the forefront in the rediscovery of this lost legacy and deserves every encouragement to maintain her fresh trajectory. However, if she were to develop the dissertation into a book, she might take account of the following points as she reworks the manuscript:

1. What motivated Russian artists, writers, musicians, emigrating from Soviet Russia, to choose Italy, rather than France, Germany or the USA, as their destination and haven?
2. How did the Russian émigrés in Italy relate to Mussolini's Fascism? Were they politically active on this (or another) front?
3. What were their attitudes to the Catholic church – and vice versa?
4. How did Russian artists and writers in Italy develop or "modernize" their styles, or, on the contrary, retain allegiance to "Old Russia"? Did they resist the vagaries of esthetic and commercial taste in order to carry forward the banner of traditional Russian values, pictorial, ethnic, religious or otherwise -- or did they try to become part of "International Modernism"?
5. The author should try to be more conceptual, speculative and judgemental in her appreciation of Russians in Italy, i.e. provide some idea of the qualitative (rather than statistical) attainments of the émigré intelligentsia.

Essentially, points 1-5 are relevant much more to the potential publication of the dissertation as a scholarly monograph than to the dissertation in its present state and should not be interpreted as criticisms of the actual text which she is defending.

All this is to say that I recommend Ms. Buluchevskaia very highly and ask you to give her your every consideration. The dissertation merits a full pass.

Sincerely,



John E. Bowlt

Professor Emeritus, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089, USA

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