
Miliukov's monumental Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury (St. Petersburg, 1897–1901; final rev. ed., Paris, 1930–37) is a tightly organized and unified study. Over the course of the three volumes, the text proceeds from evidence to interpretation, from fact to idea. The first volume is a straightforward account of population, economic development, state institutions, and social structure; the second mixes data with interpretation, and major portions dealing with religion, literature, and the arts were translated under Karpovich's direction in 1942. The final volume is the most interpretative and abstract. Here Miliukov argues most forcefully his famous thesis, that Russian history can be conceptualized as a constant struggle between a native national spirit and an imported critical spirit. This argument is sustained by literally scores of cross references to evidence and themes developed in the earlier volumes.

In choosing to translate only the third volume (the present installment is the second of three, covering the period 1680–1760), Wieczynski has assumed a nearly impossible task. Of necessity he must omit all of Miliukov's cross references, the very feature which gave unity to the complex original work. The inevitable result is an uneven and discontinuous text which will confuse the expert and mislead the student.

Lacking Miliukov's cross references, Wieczynski must both translate and edit, but the additional material which he provides is of dubious value. In the single category of foreign names and works, one can find many errors: “Likhudy” is the plural form; it is Gil Blas, not “Giles-Blas,” and Just Juel, not “Juste Yule,” “Abbot Belgard” is the Abbé J. B. Morvan de Bellegarde; and the “Perfect Training of Children” was his L’Education parfaite. Miliukov erred, and Wieczynski compounds the problem: Castelione's [sic; read Castiglione] Cortegiano was not translated as A Man of the Court; L’Homme de Cour was Amelot’s French translation of Gracián’s Oraculo. It makes no sense to say that “few copies of Korb’s diary remain today,” since it has been reprinted. Wieczynski simply has not done his homework.

Translations are erratic: dvorianstvo is sometimes gentry, and sometimes middle service class; it is confusing to render osvisashchenyi sobor as “holy synod” in the context of 1682; kadetskii korpus is gentry academy and gentry institute. The term does not appear in the index in any form, Russian or English. Indeed, the whole index is a jumble: both “Feofan Prokopovich” and “Prokopyvich, Feofan” appear with different page citations; there is a categorical entry, “wine,” and specific references to “Hermitage,” “Hungarian wine,” and “campaign [sic],” although they all appear on the same page; but clothing, fashions, and costume, which Miliukov mentioned several times, are not in the index. Other entries, even proper names, are missing or incomplete.

In short, this edition serves neither the student nor the teacher, who will need Miliukov's original Russian. It is difficult to predict a market for it.

Max J. Okenfuss
Washington University