Problems of Idealism
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ESSAYS IN RUSSIAN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

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Foreword
CARYL EMERSON

In March 1993, with the world still bewildered at the collapse of Communism, an international conference was held in Moscow to discuss the recuperable past and future prospects of Russian philosophy. Four of the papers (two by Americans, two by Russians) were later published as a forum in the professional journal Voprosy filosofii (Questions of Philosophy).

The Russian entries addressed the “Eternal Values of Russian Culture” and “Russian Philosophy and Religious Consciousness”; the two Western academics, while acknowledging the depth and aesthetic productivity of those quests, were more sober and pointedly secular. James Scanlan had provocatively entitled his talk “Does Russia Need Russian Philosophy?”—and concluded that an exceptionalist or uniquely Russian philosophy for the post-communist era was most definitely not needed. The organicist-collectivist bias in Russian philosophy (which in any event was not uniquely Russian, but part of the general nineteenth-century Romantic critique of modernization), made more intense by the native Russian tendency toward legal nihilism, now required a serious overhaul. The world of Russian philosophy was larger than “Lenin’s Marxism” versus “Berdiaev’s Russian Idea” (64).

As a first step toward filling in that world, Scanlan recommends that attention be paid to those complex, nuanced thinkers who had been suppressed or distorted beyond recognition during the era of “competing maximalisms,” a
group including Russian students of the French philosophers, natural-law theorists, Russian neo-Leibnizens, and "those Russian liberal legal philosophers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (65). Andrzej Walicki concurred. He even ventured to remark that much of what he heard at the Moscow conference would not be considered philosophy at all in university departments devoted to that discipline in the United States, where more mundanely theoretical, not grandly "historiosophical," questions are considered suitable for research. Outside of Russia, Walicki observed, Russian philosophy is read largely by historians, political scientists, literary critics, and Slavists (69). To be sure, there is much of great interest and richness in this tradition, but its tendency to focus on Russian historical and spiritual experience must be resisted if professional philosophers are to listen.

The Russians, naturally, disagreed. Russian thinkers had long prided themselves on bringing abstract analysis down to earth and speaking beyond a professional audience. In giving such advice, Scanlan and Walicki were themselves acting like politologi, "political scientists," their eyes pragmatically focused on what was useful, necessary, and perhaps most of all safer for Russia's future development. Yet all parties in this impressively frank exchange surely sensed the larger import of the issues raised. Since 1990, Russian bookstores had been featuring reprint editions of the famous 1909 anthology Vekhi (Landmarks), directed against the follies and philosophical deficiencies of the Russian radical intelligentsia, as well as its 1918 successor volume Iz glubiny (De profundis, or Out of the Depths), a mournful postmortem by some of Russia's greatest philosophers on that country's then-current Revolution. Both those anthologies are angry, eloquent, topical, and accessible to a concerned lay public. The first caused one of the mightiest scandals in the history of Russian thought; the second would have caused another, had it not been suppressed by the Bolsheviks. Much less in evidence during the reprint festivals of the early 1990s was the more academic volume that preceded them both, compiled by the same core group of thinkers but at a different phase in their intellectual evolution (and in Russia's political evolution): Problemy idealizma (1902). When Randall Poole, Walicki's student, decided to prepare a scholarly English-language edition of this extraordinary volume, it was with two goals in mind. First, he wished to restore this difficult, brilliant, unjustly neglected collection of essays to its rightful place in the history of Russian philosophy. And second, as if in response to Scanlan's and Walicki's summons at the Moscow conference, he wished to reinvigorate one part of the rich Russian tradition that "competing maximalisms" had squeezed out, namely: the power of idealism (as understood by these thinkers, trained in European
philosophy but working within Russian culture) to advance and celebrate liberal values.

Poole's detailed introduction provides the necessary historical, institutional, and intellectual background to their argument. This foreword aims only to orient readers in the most general way to what was at stake, pointing out some representative concerns of the anthology and its overall strategy. In passing, I will suggest how some of its more provocative positions resemble critiques mounted by Russian thinkers whose ideas are more familiar in the West: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Bakhtin. Several of the contributors to Problems of Idealism were, or were soon to become, accomplished literary critics. All were deeply engaged in the Russian reform movement. None, however, confused the tasks of philosophy with literary-cultural criticism or political activism. It was precisely because they were so alert to the political crises of their time, and also to the temptations of the creative imagination, that they had become such fastidious close readers of the dominant ideological systems of the day, insisting that the autonomy of each moral part was essential to the integrity of the whole. They knew that when individual thinkers are turned into "schools of thought," the potential for a minor carelessness or inconsistency to be fixed into a slogan escalates alarmingly. Their opening question, therefore, is a procedural one. How much disciplined philosophical rigor would be required to profess with integrity the sorts of doctrine that Russian radical activists professed? And they conclude: a very great deal. In their opinion, this work had often been slighted. Thus the usual tactic of the philosophers in this volume—a method that Poole elsewhere calls "immanent critique"—is to take a currently influential theorist or body of thought, grant it (as an opening courtesy) maximum legitimacy, analyze it carefully, and then show how the system in question refutes itself from within.

Patience here was not only a matter of intellectual courtesy, however. The most famous of these thinkers (Struve, Bulgakov, Berdiaev, Frank) had gone through a positivist-Marxist phase of their own. In working their way through "legal Marxism" to idealism, they did not reject wholesale what earlier doctrines had allowed them to see, especially as regards the polemics surrounding Russian populism and "subjective sociology." Rather than move from one fervent ideal to another fervent ideal (the common route of utopian thinkers, for whom the end of a belief system so often comes as a shock and a collapse, a God that Failed), these philosophers are more likely to express their gratitude for any coherence they can find, and make ever more modest claims about what can be fully known. Among their most pressing tasks is the recovery of the ideal from its utopian and supra-personal transpositions. If this agenda
seems counterintuitive for a group of thinkers investigating questions of idealism, it is because this group had its own rigorous and (for our time as well as their own) original ideas about the proper functioning of an ideal.

**Russia 1902 and the Neo-Idealist Critique**

Problems of Idealism appeared at a pivotal time. The debacle of 1905 had not yet happened, but Russian social thought had matured significantly since the naïve, radical generation of the 1860s, disappointed as it was with the Great Reforms. Terrorism was again on the rise, and the zemstvo movement was less and less satisfied with “small deeds” alone. Fin-de-siècle Russia was an autocratic empire, in certain ways more entrenched than ever; just past the most rapacious phase of its capitalist revolution, it had barely recovered from a disastrous famine that was widely blamed on government policies. In 1895, the new Tsar Nicholas II had made known his categorical refusal to consider even the most tentative steps toward consultative representation. Pobedonostsev and other high-ranking court apologists relied on the innate religiosity, forbearance, and communal instincts of the Russian folk (a misty myth, but one much beloved) to preserve the status quo. In the realm of art, the Symbolist movement had begun to offer a powerful alternative to both the massive Realist novels of the 1860s–1880s and the modest, more contemplative twilight-era writings of Anton Chekhov. Philosophically, however, the most vocal political opposition remained positivist and materialist.

In this polarization, certain prejudices—or perhaps merely reflexes of the mind—had formed around certain terms. Positivism was associated with progress, with empirical science, with Realism in psychology and literature, and thus with the courage to see the world concretely, “as it really exists.” Idealism, on the other hand, was felt to be pie-in-the-sky, dreamy, abstract, passive, a mystical realm, and thereby reactionary. It was the burden of Problems of Idealism to challenge this dichotomy, and at the same time to enlist the Kantian concept of “ought” (Sollen) in a truer account of the experience of living by ideas—or, in the special sense these philosophers will impart to the phrase, living by the ideal. They were fully aware that positivists were in fact more prone than others to build dreamy utopias, and that materialists often smuggled in nonmaterial values to make their systems more compelling. But they did not wish to descend to hurling potshots in a journalistic war. Nor, for that matter, did they intend to duplicate the brilliant bellicose exposé of positivism, both psychological and historical, that had been mounted by Fëdor Dostoevsky forty years earlier in his Notes from Underground. As professional philosophers, they were after first principles, and as such they were
obliged to build up an affirmative position, not merely laugh down a defective one. What is more, in the spirit of Lev Tolstoy’s moral tracts of the 1890s, they wished to rehabilitate the concept of the ideal wholly “on this side,” from within a concrete world of mortal behaviors and attitudes, a world that even empiricists might accept. Prior to doing so, they had to define what an ideal could and could not do, and cleanse it of confusing attributes falsely adhering to it. So: What were these confusions?

First: an ideal — just because it is spatially or temporally distant — is not for that reason abstracting, homogenizing, or depersonalizing. As we shall see, these philosophers are all committed personalists, who regard the individual consciousness (or “personhood,” 

 *


*) as the central value of philosophy, its most precious capital. They took their inspiration from Kant’s “subjective idealism,” with its insistence on the human being as an end in itself and not a means, rather than from those more monistic, objective idealisms (such as Hegel’s) which aimed to restore lost unity in a future Absolute. It is their eagerness to argue on behalf of the dignity of the person in the palpable here-and-now, and moreover in a Russia divided between authoritarian mystics and radical materialists, that wins for them the role of defender of liberal values. In their variant of philosophical pluralism, there are potentially as many ideals as there are persons. And thus the originary responsible relationship to be worked out is not among ideals — ideals do not need to arrange themselves in some attractive or coherently integrated design in the sky — but between an individual person and the ideal posited by that person as a guide.

Second: an ideal need not be a fixed or permanent value. The content of an ideal can change. All that is fixed is the status of the ideal within a given person’s purview. While the mandate of my ideal might be utterly, inescapably vivid for me, “the absolutism of the moral law,” as Novgorodtsev remarks in his defense of natural law, “relates to its form and basis, not to its content” (see Chapter 8). Berdiaev, too, argues that “no hardened empirical content can pretend to the title of absolute morality” because personhood is most real when it is restless; “the absolute moral norm is always only a call forward, a beacon” (see Chapter 4). Kistiakovskii, in his analysis of Russian subjective sociology, concurs: “We call an ideal that which does not exist in a ready and complete form, but appears only as a task in which we believe and toward which we consider it our duty to strive” (see Chapter 9).

Third: living by ideals is not, in the denigrating sense of the word, “idealistic.” Quite the contrary. Absolute ideals — unlike the worldly utopia of the positivists — are not positive because one expects to arrive at them and live comfortably in them (several contributors to this volume, Novgorodtsev and Kistiakovskii especially, will have harsh things to say about such expectations).
I posit an ideal because I want to be oriented by it and move toward it, in a world that otherwise offers me little by way of security, reasonableness, or reward. Idealism is completely alien to those sorts of naïveté that counsel us to await a change in environment that will then bring about (for the most part automatically) a change in the self. Such mechanical solutions are castles in the air. In contrast, living by ideals is supremely realistic, since coherence or justice is at no point expected from the outside world or imposed upon it. External events, “what happens to us,” can never be counted on to cohere for our benefit—that is not the way the world is made—but each individual can choose to be answerable for a coherent set of responses to events, which is what the ideal facilitates. In other words, positing ideals makes wholeness possible in my life.

Again and again, these philosophers demonstrate their superb grasp of the balance in the human subject between material necessity and spiritual freedom. In his spectacular lead essay, Sergei Bulgakov insists that human beings “must have an integral idea of the world.” To seek such an idea is a fundamental need, like seeking air and nourishment, and is thus almost a human right. In like spirit does Semën Frank defend, as a moral and realistic pursuit, Nietzsche’s “Liebe zum Fernsten” (love of the distant), for this type of love responds to drives toward integration and harmony natural to our organism (see Chapter 5). Frank adds that love for humanity as a whole is probably not such an instinct (drawing on that “exquisite psychologist Lev Tolstoy,” who presented just such an idea to the Moscow Psychological Society in March 1887). Altruistic systems that presume the existence of such love in us are singularly unrealistic. But to turn the idea of generalized love into a distant ideal and resolve to work consciously toward it: this task might indeed satisfy, in certain persons, deeply rooted appetites and needs.

In this economy, it is simply not enough to be governed by “interests.” At the end of his luminously gracious essay on the role Marx and Engels allot to ideas in history, Evgeniĭ Trubetskoi submits that social and material interests are undeniably real, but that “interest alone neither creates consciousness of truth nor frees human thought from error” (see Chapter 2). What, after all, are our interests? They are illusory, often arbitrary, and once satisfied are taken for granted and then fade away. One could say that interests share with two other human aspirations, pleasure and happiness, the peculiarity of not being directly addressable or targetable; they are better realized as by-products, that is, as benefits reaped during our pursuit of something else. (In his essay for this volume, Berdiaev will argue along these lines against hedonism in ethics.) When seeking a good and just life, therefore, it is utopian to rely exclusively upon a sense of one’s interests. Only the ideal, which in principle can never be
satisfied, is reliable. We cannot achieve it, but we are optimally liable to feel ourselves whole while striving toward it.

Idealism, then, need not be abstract, impersonal, homogenizing, impractical, or unrealistic as a guide to individual moral behavior. But *Problems of Idealism* had a more "professional" message to deliver, which in the view of its authors could clarify much that had plagued Russian sociopolitical thought. Here Randall Poole's early work on Mikhail Bakhtin and the Russian response to European rationalism provides a useful framework. Poole directs our attention to a well-known passage at the beginning of chapter 3 of *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, where Bakhtin provides an expose of the "ideological monologism" that had conquered modern European thought with its promise of a "unity of existence and of consciousness." In such a world, persons cannot be fully valid (or even fully visible and audible) participants; everything of value strives to unite under a singular concept, and radical difference is registered simply as error. Poole observes that in positing dialogism as a corrective to this state of affairs, Bakhtin drew on one of the West's most seminal thinkers, Kant. From its earliest contacts with modern Europe, Russian thought had been highly susceptible to monologic rationalism (the positivism that the Russian idealists were analyzing in 1902 being only the most recent instance). This susceptibility can be variously explained, Poole notes, but the crucial factor was the weakness of the Russian church relative to the state and the resulting militant, intemperate nature of secularization in imperial Russia. Bakhtin's response to the enticement of monologism was much like that of the authors of *Problems of Idealism*: while not denying it, devise a remedy for it out of Russia's own resources. Such a remedy might well begin, for example, by emphasizing those insights of Russian Orthodox personalism (the irreducibility of the self) that are compatible with Kantian ethics, with the notion of moral duty ("ought") as an autonomous and non-derived value, and with epistemological modesty (or, in Poole's later expansion of this point, with "apophatic" modes of thought). Out of such philosophical debates, Bakhtin fashioned his own theologically inflected aesthetics, as earlier, *Problems of Idealism* had advanced its positive agenda, liberalism—to which we now return.

Delimitation, Autonomy, Coexistence, Tolerance

The authors here vary widely in their expertise and technical display of it. But in their corrective to the social thought of their time they are united around one point: that moral philosophy must be, first of all, a defense of individual consciousness. These philosophers perceived nineteenth-century
positivism, materialism, and historicism—especially in their Russian redaction—as major threats to this prime site of human value. But they develop their case in a remarkably formal way, “structurally,” as it were, preferring on the whole not to consider lapses in a given thinker’s logic a blot on personal integrity but rather the result of miscalculations at a more impersonal level, a failure of that thinker’s professional discipline to guide and restrict the speculation (and the law-building) that goes on within its borders. What strikes one in this book (in Pëtr Struve’s essay particularly (Chapter 3), but by no means only there) is its overall sweet-temperedness, its generosity to individual thinkers and lack of ad hominem attack. These pages abound with appreciations, even to movements that have proved to be far more culprit than friend. Consider, for example, what Evgenii Trubetskoi writes of Marxist economics: “In this whole theory there is a large share of truth”—and this after a critical but compassionate exposition of that doctrine, as if to assure the reader that whatever deficiencies might be found, social thinkers of earnestness and breadth always serve knowledge. In part, of course, this open-mindedness can be traced to the fact that several of these Russian idealists themselves once professed the very ideologies they now find wanting. But more important is their conviction—not routinely associated with idealism—that it is not evil intent, not a will to power or the desire to mystify our opponents, that does us in as much as it is bad methodology, misclassification, trying to do what cannot be done from where we stand, denying quests and needs (in this case the metaphysical need) that cannot for long be denied. Struve’s fury, such as it is, is directed against falsely defined fields, not against human beings. Since we inherit categories of thought, and since we are mentally wired to seek integral knowledge and wholeness, the temptation is great to simplify a domain and do all our thinking within it. But real needs that have been expunged or defined out of a field can only give rise to flawed and dangerous theories.

In addition to such principled courtesy to their opponents, these authors have another strategy: it is, they say, already over. Positive science no longer reigns supreme. The second half of the past century was indeed a heady time, Bulgakov admits in his lead essay; empiricism became “the religion of humanity.” “But of course, such a situation could not last forever.” For all its passionate energy, it could not sustain itself coherently from within. “Marxism was strong not in its scientific, but in its utopian elements,” he concludes, “not in its science, but in its faith.” The resurrection of metaphysics will nevertheless be arduous. It cannot hide away in the safe realms of culture; it will have to take real social problems seriously. Sergei Askol’dov devotes his entire contribution to the question of “Philosophy and Life”, and a shadow theme engaged by all these authors is the parallel between the harmony—esthetic and spiri-
tual—that we have a right to seek in our personal lives and the social harmony we can reasonably expect from the outside world (see Chapter 6). On the most general level, then, what must happen in social philosophy so that balance, vigor, and clear-sightedness can be restored?

First, the world must be confirmed as a place where autonomous spheres have a right to coexist. Each sphere resolves problems within its own area of competence. There is no reason to believe that these competencies will ever be wholly compatible with one another, or that a particular competence will increase or decrease with time. The positivism of Comte and the historical materialism of Marx, in which stages displace one another in linear sequence, allow us to organize past (and future) events in a satisfying way and speculate on many things, but at considerable cost; as Novgorodtsev puts the matter, “philosophy must restore its own rights and show history its limits.” Or to recall Bakhtin’s echo of this demand in Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics, the world that successfully resists monologic rationalism is a world where delimited, autonomous entities gain their legitimacy not through accidents of genesis but through coexistence and interaction (28). Delimitation is not an insult to a field, not a restriction, but an enablement. As Kistiakovsky notes, an exclusive empiricism might be appropriate in the natural sciences, but when “this type of thinking was made the basis of the whole philosophical system of positivism, then soon thereafter not only all its poverty, but also its enormous harm to the further development of science, had to be revealed.”

In short, the contributors to Problems of Idealism did not perceive themselves as anti-science. They believed they were working on its behalf, because the authority and scientific validity of a position increase when the tasks for which it answers are made more precise. What is more, in their opinion the human sciences are not designed to come together; they are valuable precisely in their heterogeneity. In his essay on “What the History of Philosophy Teaches,” Sergei Trubetskoi insists that “the differences and contradictions of separate philosophies testify to the truthfulness of the philosophy itself in them, to its authenticity and veracity” (see Chapter 7). Eliminating borders between separate disciplines is not harmony, but fraud. As Novgorodtsev remarks of historicism, a theory invites its own demise when it “takes on tasks beyond its strengths.”

The necessity of autonomous, interacting spheres in human culture is matched by an analogous call for interaction between body and spirit. The main authors of Problems of Idealism are deeply indebted to Vladimir Solov’ev, although they secularize his teachings in varying degree; for each, spirit and matter are irreducible to each other, interpenetrate each other, and both deserve our reverence. Finally, in the sphere of ethics, each of these philosophers begins
on a Kantian foundation and insists that what "ought to be" in our lives cannot be derived from what is. Or to cast this truth in a form that brings it into direct confrontation with positivist-Marxian thought: what ought to be is not "reflected" from what is, but all the same is absolutely real.

Evgenii Trubetskoi addresses directly this notion of "ideas as reflections or 'reflexes' of economic relations"—a doctrine that is, he observes, "very widespread among Marx's followers." He has two big problems with it. First, it makes no sense, even as a metaphor. One half of the picture is missing. "In general," he observes, "any reflection is invariably the result of the joint action of at least two causes—the reflected object, and the medium which reflects it."

In the Marxist model, the human psyche as active receiving medium receives no scientific grounding. How can "productive relations" be considered the singular origin of any human activity, when production itself depends on ideas? Second, the reflection theory makes no allowance for evaluation, which (especially in legal structures) sits at the normative center of any relevant "relation." Struve carries this critique further, in his inquiry into the very nature of creativity. The world, he admits, is largely present to us as a "given."

We can never explain the world "from the point of view of causation; the larger part always was and remains pure 'givens,' that is, genuine and supreme mysteries." But against these unrecuperable everyday mysteries, locked in matter and present to us in their immutable outer aspect, are the equally everyday miracles of creative being, which emanate from the psyche. They are not reducible to any perceivable cause, but unlike the mysteries of the outer world, they are penetrable, malleable, and free. Struve intimates that such surprising new realities can be urged out of the present if an ideal, a "what ought to be," exists on the horizon for the creator; but in no way can these realities be predetermined by, or reduced to mere reflections of, "what is." At the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the wake of so much excellent insight into the creative process (in the Russian field, one thinks especially of Gary Saul Morson's work on Dostoevsky and Bakhtin) and amid the ruins of so much Marxist practice, these ideas may no longer have the cutting edge of discovery. But one hundred years ago, in 1902, they must have been an inspiration. It was not necessary or possible for science to solve everything. It was, however, both necessary and possible for each individual to accomplish some concrete thing. Or as Sergei Bulgakov puts the matter at the end of his essay: "A person, within the limits of the understanding of reality that he has succeeded in achieving (an understanding in which science plays not the last role), selects from the boundless sea of evil precisely what can and ought to be eradicated just then by his own particular efforts; he selects that upon which he should concentrate his struggle at that given moment" (see Chapter 1).

It is part of the pathos of this centennial edition that Petr Struve, the most
politically astute mind of the group, appeared to believe that the history of social philosophy would self-correct. Badly or inconsistently constructed fields would simply fall apart, because surely the makers of history could not be satisfied with mere slogans or illogical heaps of words. As his essay indicates, he was gladdened that critical work had appeared from within Marxist thought, and that the "subjective sociology" of Russian populists like Nikolai Mikhailovskii now appeared ripe for auto-critique. Struve put a great deal of hope in "the new people of the metaphysical need." But the overall critical assessment that these philosophers leveled against the positivists' theory of progress could only come back to haunt their own hopes. For in fact, they understood well that no guarantees obtained in this matter of creative miracles overcoming, one evil at a time, the mysterious givens of the world.

At the end of November 1901, Sergei Bulgakov delivered a lecture in Kiev on Ivan Karamazov as a philosophical type. He noted that the sort of "sickness of conscience" driving the second Karamazov brother insane was a "native Russian sickness." Why was this so? "In its very essence," Bulgakov explained, "the ideal is a concept that does not correspond to reality, it repudiates reality. But the degree of this non-correspondence can differ widely. In Russia, this non-correspondence is measured by a difference of several centuries; and thus, while our intelligentsia is in step with the most advanced European thought, in other respects our reality lags behind Europe by several hundred years. Which is why nowhere else in Europe does life so insult one at every step, so torment and cripple one, as in Russia." 8

What followed was the twentieth century. These essays — so ably translated and edited for this centennial edition — remain radiant testimony to ideals that even the most savage reality could not put permanently to rest.

Notes

1. "Vzglad na russkuiu filosofiiu," in Voprosy filosofii 1 (1914): 34-72. The Russian representatives in this forum are M. N. Gromov and N. K. Gavriushin; the Americans are James P. Scanlan and Andrzej Walicki (a Pole, of course, but then based in the United States). Page references henceforth included parenthetically in the text.

2. Berdyaev wrote an acclaimed study of Dostoevsky in 1934; Frank, a series of studies on Pushkin, and, between 1908 and 1933, five essays on Tolstoy. Askol'dov and Bulgakov also wrote incidental essays on Dostoevsky.


4. Randall A. Poole, "Epistemology, Ethics, and Self in Bakhin's Problems of Dosto-


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Note on the Text and Translation

The original Russian edition of Problems of Idealism runs to 521 pages. This translation abridges the text by a little less than twenty percent. I have deleted the most from Kistiakovskii's essay; by the author's own admission it appeared in a "somewhat unfinished form" and was done in haste. His thesis is an important one, but does not require the nearly one hundred pages he devoted to it. Most of what I have left out consists of his long restatements, with abundant use of quotations, of certain fairly straightforward ideas by N. K. Mikhailovskii and V. P. Vorontsov. Similarly, Lappo-Danilevskii's article is a long, painstaking, and important critique of Comte; I have abbreviated it somewhat, with minimal loss of content. To a lesser extent I have also abridged Frank's essay, mainly by cutting some of his extended quotations from Nietzsche. The essays by Ol'denburg and Zhukovskii are the "least classic" in the volume and have also been shortened, but with no real loss of content. The other contributions are included in their entirety or with very slight abridgments. The essays are translated from their original version in Problems of Idealism, not from subsequent reprints (with changes) by their respective authors.

Spaced ellipses indicate my deletions: in brackets [. . .] for one or more full paragraphs, including in some cases several pages, without brackets . . . for less
than a paragraph, even if that amounts to a long passage. Unspaced ellipses ... are from the original. In places, I have “silently” (without ellipses) eliminated wordiness, repetition, and metadiscourse that have no bearing on meaning. More generally, this translation strives to be literal with regard to meaning, but not always with regard to expression, and I have not refrained from attempting to make the English text more direct and economical than the Russian original.

For quotations in the text, source references have been supplied where needed. Also, I have avoided “back-translating” quotations from the Russian. Instead, I have either used existing English translations or retranslated from the original (French or German), generally indicating this as “editor's translation.” The one somewhat problematic essay in this respect is Lappo-Danilevskii's, whose translations into Russian are often unusually loose and interpretive. Where possible, I have retranslated from the original sources, but in some cases Lappo-Danilevskii's quotations appear to be paraphrases or combinations of elements from separate passages.

Full citations have been provided for bibliographical references that are incomplete in the Russian text, but I have used brackets only for more significant additions, in order to avoid further cluttering the text. Non-Russian names have, of course, been restored from Russian transliteration to their original form, and where appropriate have been given in full rather than by initials. Names are identified in the notes or, for those that occur in more than one essay, in the Glossary of Names, except for merely bibliographical references and a few well-known figures. Notes supplied by me are designated “Ed.” Russian terms in brackets are given in the nominative, not in declension (except for whole phrases). Finally, contributor biographies appear at the back of the book.

The Russian term lichnost' can mean personality, person, individual, individuality, or self. In this period the term was acquiring greater philosophical specificity and increasingly could refer to the concept of “person,” as this book attests. In general, I have used “person” or “personhood” where the emphasis was on the absolute worth and dignity that make human beings (although not necessarily only human beings) persons or, in Kant's terminology, “ends-in-themselves.” (Of course, “person” can also mean “human being” (chelovek) in a more generic sense, without any particular philosophical implications. Where necessary I have provided the relevant Russian term in brackets.) For the contributors to this book, “personhood” entailed some type of idealist commitment in philosophy, since categories such as absolute worth and dignity were not empirical ones and yet were intrinsic to moral consciousness.
This reflected a philosophical development of the idea of lichnost' compared to its earlier use among, for example, Aleksandr Herzen and, after him, the Russian “subjective sociologists” (P. L. Lavrov, N. K. Mikhailovskii, N. I. Kareev), for all of whom its meaning was closer to “individual,” “individuality,” or “personality.” These Russian populist thinkers stressed that the individual was an active moral agent capable of introducing his or her own values and ideals into history (Lavrov), or of striving to harmoniously and integrally develop all sides of his or her personality (Mikhailovskii). It was through the fuller theoretical elaboration of these ideas, as well as through other philosophical and theological sources (such as classical German idealism and Orthodox religious thought), that the contributors to Problems of Idealism invested lichnost' with the meaning "personhood.”

Another central concept in these pages is the distinction between “is” and “ought,” or between “what is” and “what ought to be” (in German, between das Sein and das Sollen). As a logical principle, its meaning is that propositions about “what ought to be” cannot be derived deductively (analytically) from major premises limited to “what is.” This separation is often summed up as the rule, no “ought” from “is.” The classic formulation of the logical fallacy of deriving “ought” from “is” belongs to David Hume in A Treatise of Human Nature (Book III, part 1, section 1). More generally, the distinction has often been used to capture the irreducibility of our ideals and values to the empirical world, an irreducibility that, for some philosophers, holds implications that go well beyond analytic logic. In the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason, Kant defines “ought” as the form of the categorical imperative (regardless of content), in contrast to “is” as the form of a theoretical proposition. He thought moral consciousness of “ought” implied metaphysical conclusions (“postulates”) about freedom, immortality, and God.

In Russian, the distinction is between bytie or sushchee (“is” or “what is”) and dolzhenstvovanie or dolzhnoe (“ought” or “what ought to be”). I have generally enclosed the English terms in quotation marks, regardless of whether the Russian terms have them in the 1902 text. In each part of the distinction, either Russian term can be used synonymously for “is” or “what is” and “ought” or “what ought to be,” respectively. Dolzhenstvovanie is, however, somewhat more abstract, suggesting “ought” or “oughtness,” compared to the more concrete “what ought to be” for dolzhnoe. As for bytie and sushchee in common usage, bytie means “being” or “existence,” but can be translated as “is” or “what is” to make the distinction from “ought” or “what ought to be.” Sushchee (which suggests more “what is”) is less common and tends to imply essentiaity. In certain philosophical contexts, such as in the works of Vladimir Solov'ëv and Sergei Trubetskoi, it has a more metaphysical or ontological
meaning, to convey, for example, the sense of wonder that anything is ("something rather than nothing") and to suggest, from that, the idea of necessary being or God. At these metaphysical heights, the distinction between "is"/ "what is" and "ought"/"what ought to be" loses the validity it has in the empirical world, and here some of the contributors to Problems of Idealism speculated about a higher metaphysical synthesis of "is" and "ought." In this they were continuing the perennial Russian search for "pravda" as a higher unity of the truth of "what is" (theoretical truth or verity, "istiina") and the truth of "what ought to be" (practical truth as "justice").

*Problemy idealizma: Sbornik statei, ed. P. I. Novgorodtsev (Moscow: Moskovskoe Psihologicheskoe Obshchestvo [Moscow Psychological Society], [1902]). A new Russian edition appeared as the present English edition went to press: Problemy idealizma: Sbornik statei, ed. M. A. Kolerov (Moscow: Tri Kvadra, 2004), with lengthy introductory essays by N. S. Plotnikov and M. A. Kolerov. The Kolerov edition usefully compares the essays by Bulgakov, Straue, Berdiaev, Frank, and Kistiakovski to their subsequent reprints and lists the changes; otherwise it is generally not annotated. Kolerov's introductory essay has also been published in somewhat different forms in his books, Ne mir, no mech: Russkaia religioznno-filosofskaa pechat' ot "Problem idealizma" do "Yekh", 1903–1909 (St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 1996) and Sbornik "Problemy idealizma" (1902); Istoriia i kontekst (Moscow: Tri Kvadra, 2002). In the editor's introduction to the present edition, I draw on Kolerov's seminal 1933 essay "Arkhivnaia istoriia sbornika 'Problemy idealizma' (1902)" (for full citation, see p. 61, note 45).
Editor's Introduction: Philosophy and Politics in the Russian Liberation Movement
The Moscow Psychological Society and Its Symposium, Problems of Idealism
Randall A. Poole

The appearance in late 1902 of Problems of Idealism was a philosophical watershed in the Russian Silver Age, as the remarkable cultural renaissance at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries has come to be known.1 The Russian critic Ivanov-Razumnik, in his classic History of Russian Social Thought, described the publication of the volume, a collection of twelve essays by some of Russia's most important philosophers and philosophical thinkers, as an "event" in the history of Russian thought.2 This assessment has endured.3 Problems of Idealism was published by the Moscow Psychological Society, a learned society founded at Moscow University in 1885. By the end of its activity in 1922, the Psychological Society had attracted most of the country's outstanding philosophers and had made the major contribution to the growth of Russian philosophy.4 In pursuit of its goal of the free, autonomous development of philosophy in Russia, the society advanced a powerful neo-idealistic critique of positivism, an outlook that had been remarkably pervasive in Russia since the middle of the nineteenth century and that sought to eliminate speculative philosophy as "unscientific." For leading philosophers in the society, neo-idealism offered compelling theoretical support not only for the autonomy of philosophy against reductive positivism, but also for rule-of-law liberalism and constitutional reform. Problems of Idealism, edited by Pavel I. Novgorodtsev, one of the society's most prominent social
philosophers, helped publicize the connection between neo-idealism (in theoretical philosophy and ethics) and liberalism (in social philosophy). This connection consisted, first of all, in the neo-idealist concept of the irreducibility of the self to naturalistic explanation, on the one hand, and in the special claims liberalism makes for the absolute value and dignity of the person, on the other.

Problems of Idealism was followed by two better known symposia exploring the differences between philosophical and ideological thought, Vekhi (Landmarks or Signposts, 1909) and Iz glubiny (Out of the Depths, 1918). Four writers (the most famous) contributed to all three collections: N. A. Berdyaev, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank, and P. B. Struve. S. A. Askol'dov and Novgorodtsev wrote for both the first and third volumes, while B. A. Kistiakovskii contributed to the first and second. Petr Struve had a major organizational role in all three projects. Vekhi is a scathing critique of the radical Russian intelligentsia and its positivist ideology, which the volume's contributors blame for the failure of Russian liberalism in the aftermath of the 1905 Revolution. It generated one of the most famous controversies in all of Russian intellectual history and has been the subject of extensive analysis and commentary, most recently in post-Soviet Russia where the volume has been widely reprinted. It has also been translated twice into English. Out of the Depths assesses the role of the radical intelligentsia in the revolutionary events of 1917, as Landmarks did for the 1905 period. It, too, has recently been reprinted in Russia and is available in English translation. Problems of Idealism, by contrast, has not been translated until the present edition and has not received the attention it merits, not only as the first in the set but more importantly as a crucial source that occupies its own place in the Religious-Philosophical Renaissance of the Russian Silver Age.

Problems of Idealism develops the theoretical foundations of liberalism more consistently than its two successor volumes, which concentrate on relentlessly critique of the radical intelligentsia. In some ways it is a more substantial and less tendentious text, and thus more relevant to the post-Soviet search for a national liberal tradition in pre-revolutionary Russian thought. The collection demonstrates one of the paradoxes of Russian liberalism—that its frail social foundations made its intellectual defense all the more imperative. This theoretical need was less urgent elsewhere in Europe, in countries where liberalism was more deeply rooted and better realized in practice. As a result, the philosophical premises of liberalism can be seen with greater clarity through the idealism of the “Russian prism” (to borrow Joseph Frank’s metaphor). These premises are of wide-ranging interest, involving problems of perennial importance to human identity: freedom, moral responsibility, and the nature of the self. The powerful formulation Problems of Idealism gives to these and
related problems makes it a classic of Russian thought. The symposium informs the work of its great predecessors, from Herzen and Dostoevsky to B. N. Chicherin and Vladimir S. Solov'ev, and anticipates its successors, from Bakhtin to Solzhenitsyn. It forms part of a liberal tradition that, if not characteristically Russian, is nonetheless authentically Russian in its defense of the absolute value and dignity of personhood.

The Moscow Psychological Society and Russian Liberalism

The Moscow Psychological Society, the sponsor of Problems of Idealism, distinguished itself as the philosophical center of the revolt against positivism in the Russian Silver Age. The Psychological Society was founded by sixteen Moscow University professors headed by M. M. Troitskii (1835–1899), an empiricist psychologist whose specialization accounts for the society's name. The founders, most of whom were, ironically, inclined toward positivism, took little role in the society after its initial establishment. Rather, its direction was taken over by a group of idealist philosophers led by Nikolai Ia. Grot (1852–1899), who became chairman in 1888. Among Grot's main colleagues were Solov'ev, Sergei N. Trubetskoi, and Lev M. Lopatin. A. A. Kizvetetter, in his classic memoirs, describes how in Moscow University circles at the time "all the talented young people occupied with philosophy stood in opposition to Troitskii and immersed themselves at once in metaphysical problems. At the head of these young people were Lopatin, Sergei Trubetskoi and — the most brilliant diamond of this philosophical generation — Vladimir Solov'ev." They embraced Grot, "in all respects well-suited to this tight and friendly philosophical company. It was this company that captured the Psychological Society, transforming it into a philosophical society in the broad sense of the word."

By the 1890s the society had about 200 members, a number that remained fairly constant throughout its existence. In 1889 it began publication of Russia's first regular, specialized journal in philosophy, Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii (Questions of Philosophy and Psychology). Published five times a year until 1918, the journal was invaluable in promoting the growth of philosophy in Russia. Grot characterized the journal's prevailing direction as idealist or, "in respect to method, metaphysical." In 1910, when the Psychological Society celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, one of its officers could evaluate it as a "profoundly significant fact in the life of Russian society, where in general philosophical questions could only relatively very recently become the object of free and, to the extent possible, objective discussion."

While the Silver Age as a whole can be seen as a broad revolt against
positivism, in which respect Russia was an integral part of the European fin-de-siècle,\textsuperscript{13} neo-idealistic philosophy in the Psychological Society was distinctive in the theoretical depth of its critique. In ethics, epistemology, ontology, and social philosophy, neo-idealism emerged as a response to the dominant positivist background, the main characteristics of which were reductionism, which dismisses as a meaningless proposition (i.e., neither analytic nor empirical) the possibility of being beyond the positively given data of sense experience; scientism, the claim, consistent with the positivist reduction of being to natural phenomena, that the natural sciences cover everything; and utopianism, or faith in human perfectibility through (in this case) application of natural scientific methods to man and society.\textsuperscript{14} In its popular naturalistic and scientific forms, positivism asserted that philosophy had no special methodology and thus no legitimate right to exist as its own type of scientific (naučný i wissenschaftlich) discipline. Empirical sciences were the only sciences; philosophy could serve, at best, as a field that systematized empirical research. The measure of reality was empirical experience: positively given, external sense data. Against these reductionist claims, the Psychological Society sought to defend the autonomy of philosophy by arguing that the positivist criterion of reality was far from exhaustive, and that what it did not exhaust constituted the special domain of philosophy. This domain was human consciousness itself, to the extent it could be shown to be irreducible to empirical experience (the positivist sphere). Neo-idealism thus took shape as a type of philosophy of consciousness.

The effort to base the autonomy of philosophy on the irreducibility of consciousness had direct implications for the core value of liberalism, the human person. Russian neo-idealism substantiated the foundational liberal principle of personhood (lichnost'), the idea that human beings bear an absolute value and dignity because they are persons or, in Kant's terminology, ends-in-themselves. From the Kantian idea of autonomy, Psychological Society idealists typically came to the ontological conclusion that the self was not free-floating, anchored in neither this world nor another, but metaphysically grounded. For them, Kant's transcendent idealism entailed a transcendent ontological reality.\textsuperscript{15} In its main representatives, Russian neo-idealism thus took the form of a modernized, theoretically explicit theism, in which the value of the person was rooted in transcendent being (personalism). Psychological Society philosophers drew here on the "concrete" or personalistic traditions of Orthodox theology (and of theism more generally), in which it is the "image and likeness" of God in man that constitutes personhood.\textsuperscript{16} This was a project to raise liberalism to an ontological level, in sharp contrast to empirical-positivist conceptions of liberalism (John Stuart Mill in England, Pavel Miliukov in
Russia). An important link in this development was Solov'ev’s concept of Godmanhood (bogochelovechestvo), which refers to humanity’s divine potential and vocation, the ideal of its transformation in and union with God. The self-realization of each individual human person is at the same time a step toward the divinization of the cosmos.\textsuperscript{17}

By the turn of the twentieth century, the Psychological Society was clearly the theory center behind Russian liberalism. Six of its most prominent philosophers were main theorists of Russian liberalism: Chicherin, Solov'ev, S. N. Trubetskoi, E. N. Trubetskoi, Novgorodtsev, and S. A. Kotliarevskii.\textsuperscript{18} Questions of Philosophy and Psychology regularly published essays and studies in liberal political philosophy, including some now classic works of Russian liberalism.\textsuperscript{19} While advancing the theoretical development of Russian liberalism, the Psychological Society also played an integral part in the intellectual, political, and social history of the Russian Liberation Movement. Under way from the very beginning of the century, the Liberation Movement was a broad-based public opinion campaign designed to bring the autocratic regime to recognize the need for constitutional reform. It culminated in the Revolution of 1905.\textsuperscript{20} Solov'ev died on the eve of the movement, and Chicherin was too old to take an active part in it,\textsuperscript{21} but their legacy inspired the four neo-idealist professors from the Psychological Society who did have leading roles in the campaign for constitutional reform: the two Trubetskoi, Novgorodtsev, and Kotliarevskii. V. I. Vernadskii, the well-known Russian geologist and another major figure in the Liberation Movement, was also a member of the society. His philosophic interests offered valuable support from within the natural sciences for the neo-idealist program. These scholars were very much aware of their influence, as professors, in shaping public opinion, and were thus natural participants in the constitutional reform movement. The Psychological Society was an important focus in their common intellectual and institutional background.

Four philosophical thinkers well known for their evolution from Marxism to idealism—Struve, Bulgakov, Berdiaev, and Frank—were also involved, to one extent or another, in the work of the Psychological Society, and all became members, sooner or later. Another prominent liberal theorist associated with the Society was B. A. Kistiakovskii. All five were active in the Liberation Movement. This is especially true of Struve, who, together with Novgorodtsev, organized the society's important programmatic symposium, Problems of Idealism. The volume, which publicized the connection between neo-idealism and liberalism that the society had advanced for fifteen years, was its main institutional contribution to the campaign for constitutional reform. The symposium was conceived as a theoretical statement of Russian
liberalism in the first stages of the Liberation Movement, when the liberationists (osvobozhdentsy) saw in the zemstvo institutions of local self-government (established in 1864) the most promising social support for liberalism. In this way it constitutes the theoretical counterpart to the first issues of Struve's famous émigré newspaper, Osvobozhenie (Liberation), which began publication earlier the same year (1902). Both were concurrent projects organized by zemstvo constitutionalists (typically landed gentry) and their allies outside the zemstvo, whose cooperation launched the Liberation Movement. The Moscow Psychological Society, one of the learned societies promoting the growth of civil society in late imperial Russia, is itself a paradigmatic example of the vital importance, in both the intellectual and social history of Russian liberalism during this period, of the interconnections and cooperation between zemstvo activists (zemtsy) and "new liberals" from the professions and intelligentsia.

Problems of Idealism: Conception and History

ZEMSTVO CONSTITUTIONALISTS AND NEW LIBERALS

Turn-of-the-century Russian liberalism was represented by two basic groups: constitutionalists from the zemstvo institutions and "new liberals" from the free professions and certain ideological currents within the intelligentsia, such as "legal Marxism," "economism," and "legal populism" (connected with the short-lived People's Rights party). Between traditional zemstvo and the new Russian liberalism, university professors like Novgorodtsev had a special role as intermediaries. The intransigence of the autocracy convinced leaders from both groups to join forces in a public opinion campaign that, they hoped, would persuade the regime to enter the path of constitutional reform. Initially this effort, although orchestrated by both zemstvo constitutionalists and their allies from the professions and intelligentsia circles, hoped to draw primarily on the zemstvos. The goal was to raise zemstvo political consciousness well beyond the relatively few already committed liberals, who numbered not more than 300 district- and provincial-level deputies at the turn of the century (by Pirumova's count). Later, the concept of public opinion expanded to include the "democratic intelligentsia," and for its allegiance the liberationists entered into competition with openly revolutionary parties. The most important instrument of this public opinion campaign, whether in its early identification with the zemstvo or subsequent leftward shift, was Struve's journal, Osvobozhenie. Problems of Idealism, as noted above, took shape as a philosophical defense of liberalism during the zemstvo phase of the Libera-
tion Movement. The planning and collective authorship of the volume also clearly reveal, as I will try to show, the social composition of the constitutional reform movement: zemstvo constitutionalists, liberals from the professions, and certain groups from the intelligentsia (in this case, the "legal Marxists").

Struve, the most prominent of the new liberals, had long recognized the oppositional potential of the zemstvo. The earliest demonstration of his interest in rallying the zemstvo to the cause of constitutional reform was an "Open Letter to Nicholas II" he wrote in response to the tsar's infamous speech of 17 January 1895 in which the new emperor dismissed as "senseless dreams" even quite modest zemstvo hopes for some form of consultative representation. "In this manner," according to Richard Pipes, "Struve established connections with the constitutional wing of the zemstvo movement, whose principal theoretician he was to become after being ejected from the ranks of Social Democracy." The effect of the "senseless dreams" speech was all the stronger because the great famine of 1891–1892, and the official incompetence it disclosed, were still fresh in everyone's mind. Olga N. Trubetskaia called the famine a turning point in the life of her brother, Sergei Trubetskoi, who worked on behalf of famine relief in Riazan. "First-hand acquaintance with the Russian countryside," Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak writes in her study of Trubetskoi, "completed his break with the quasi-Slavophilism of the Moscow tradition and led to the forceful development of liberal political convictions." Evgenii Trubetskoi, like his brother Sergei a contributor to Problems of Idealism, describes in his memoirs how the famine and Nicholas II's speech affected the "Lopatin Circle," which formed around Lev Lopatin's father, Mikhail Nikolaeovich (1823–1900), a prominent Moscow jurist. The dinners Mikhail Nikolaeovich hosted every Wednesday were attended by some of Moscow's leading intellectual figures, including the Psychological Society philosophers (Solov'ev, Grot, Lopatin, the Trubetskoi), and also N. A. Ivanov, similarly interested in metaphysics. Trubetskoi characterized the circle as "moderately liberal" in its political outlook. The circle became animated during the famine, "which provoked terrible discontent with the government and gave a strong push to constitutional dreams." Such political excitement returned during the first hopeful months of the new reign, until the tsar's speech, which immediately depressed the mood in the circle.

Nicholas II's rebuke to the zemstvo, amplified by Struve's "Open Letter," prompted the revival of zemstvo efforts to confer regularly on a national level. These efforts bore temporary fruit in the zemstvo conference held at Nizhnii Novgorod in August 1896, and more permanent results in the "Beseda circle" of zemstvo opposition. Founded in 1899, Beseda was the first organized group of the emerging Liberation Movement. Three of its members were from the
Psychological Society: S. N. Trubetskoi, E. N. Trubetskoi, and Kotliarevskii. Through them, Novgorodtsev was also closely connected to the circle. Beseda's initial goal was the development of public opinion in the zemstvo institutions, to help defend local self-government and rural interests against bureaucratic infringement and Minister of Finance Sergei Witte's industrialization drive. The threat to the zemstvo was made very real by Witte's confidential (but nonetheless widely discussed) memorandum, written in 1898 and first published (with a long introduction) by Struve in 1901, who gave it the title *Samoderzhavie i zemstvo (Autocracy and the Zemstvo).* Struve's efforts further "consolidated his authority in leading zemstvo circles," Shakhovskoi recounts.

Witte's memorandum argued that since the zemstvo was by its nature proconstitutional and therefore incompatible with autocracy, the tsar should abolish the former if he wished to preserve the latter. D. N. Shipov, a Beseda member and perhaps one of the circle's founders, wrote that upon reading the paper in November 1899, "I experienced a feeling of deep indignation." Trubetskaia records that its circulation in late 1899 "powerfully radicalized" the educated public. In 1900–1901, several Beseda members were involved in the preparation of petitions to the tsar to articulate zemstvo responses to the Witte memorandum. This activity, together with Beseda's consideration in early 1902—when its agenda had shifted from zemstvo to national political concerns—of a report by N. N. Lvov "on the causes of Russia's present unsettled state and on measures for improving it," clarified the differentiation of Beseda members into two political orientations: the neo-Slavophiles, headed by Shipov, who sought principally to curb bureaucratic arbitrariness and ensure respect for civil liberties; and the constitutionalists, among whom were the three Psychological Society philosophers.

The Beseda Circle and the Psychological Society shared a commitment to advancing Russian liberalism through publication of scholarly works. The Beseda book program began in 1902, the same year that *Osvoboždenie* started publication and that *Problems of Idealism* appeared. It produced seven collections of articles, several in two-volume sets and in more than one edition. Kotliarevskii contributed to a volume on the constitutional state. Most Beseda books were devoted, however, to concrete problems of rural economy and local self-government, not to the theoretical development of liberalism. For this, Russian constitutionalists had other outlets, including the Psychological Society's *Questions of Philosophy and Psychology and Problems of Idealism.* In addition to the purely intellectual side of the circle's book series, Emmons singles out another dimension: "Beseda's publishing enterprise provided an important institutional setting for contacts between zemstvo
political leaders and the ‘intelligentsia’ (the journalists and academics without
gentry or zemstvo ties),” contacts that were also furthered by the Psychological
Society.

In early March 1901 Struve, within a few months of preparing his edition of
the Witte memorandum, was arrested for involvement in a student demon-
stration on Kazan Square in St. Petersburg. He chose Tver, the traditional
stronghold of zemstvo constitutionalism, as his place of exile. There he oc-
cupied himself with two projects: Osvozhdение and Problemy idealizma.43
They were concurrent initiatives not only for Struve, but also for Novgorod-

Plans for Osvozhdение had been under way between Struve and his various
zemstvo contacts (especially I. I. Petrunkevich) since 1900, and were finalized
in Tver.46 After Struve went abroad in December 1901 to set up shop for the
émigré journal (it began publication in Stuttgart, 18 June/1 July 1902), a
special conference convened in Moscow (February or March 1902) to deliber-
ate its program, funding, and method of distribution. Among those present
were Vernadskii, Novgorodtsev, Zhukovskii, and possibly Kotliarevskii.47 In
May 1902 Kotliarevskii was part of a zemstvo delegation that visited Struve in
Stuttgart.48 Although Beseda did not adopt Osvozhdение as its official
organ, its programmatic articles were discussed at a meeting in May 1902.49
Throughout this period—at the same time Problems of Idealism was taking
shape—the osvozhdentsy followed a policy conceived “primarily in order
to pursue the task of mobilizing the zemstvo institutions in support of constitu-
tional reform and the application of pressure on the government from that
quarter.”50 What Emmons characterizes as Osvozhdение’s “zemstvo cam-
paign” lasted until late 1902; an exchange between Struve and Pavel Milukov
in the seventeenth issue (16 February/7 March 1902) marked its end, and the
beginning of the “intelligentsia campaign.”

Novgorodtsev worked most closely with Struve in planning Problems of
Idealism. At the end of September 1901 Struve sent him his first conception of
the philosophical symposium (see below). In October they consulted in person
in Tver, after which Novgorodtsev assumed most of the organizational and
editorial responsibility, especially after Struve left Russia in early December.
Struve solicited Zhukovskii’s involvement in the Problemy project simulta-
neously with Novgorodtsev’s; it was, in fact, through Zhukovskii that Nov-
gorodtsev first learned of the idea. Zhukovskii, a wealthy zemstvo, financed
both Problems of Idealism as well as the start-up of Osvozhdение.51 He also
contributed one of the essays to the volume, and later became a member of the
Psychological Society itself (in 1914).52

Two other zemstvo involved in planning Osvozhdение were also associated
with the *Problems* project: Kotliarevskii and Vernadskii, both close colleagues of Novgorodtsev. Kotliarevskii (1873–1939) and Novgorodtsev became members of the Psychological Society within a few weeks of each other, in February 1898.\(^\text{53}\) This is the first indication of the great deal they had in common. Both were social and legal philosophers at Moscow University, shared very similar conceptions of neo-idealism and its implications for social theory, and had parallel parts in the Liberation Movement. Kotliarevskii, a provincial zemstvo deputy from Saratov, had the distinction of defending four dissertations at Moscow University, the first two in the Historical-Philological Faculty,\(^\text{54}\) the second two in the Juridical Faculty.\(^\text{55}\) During these years he lectured in history as a *Privatdozent*. With his second doctorate in 1909, he became professor of public law at Moscow University. Kotliarevskii did not contribute to *Problems of Idealism*, but he did write an important review essay defending it against what he describes as the “false realism” of the positivists, who responded to *Problems of Idealism* with their own collective effort, *Ocherki realizlicheskogo mirovozbereniia* (Essays in the Realist Worldview).\(^\text{56}\)

His essay formulated with eloquence and precision certain main ideas of neo-idealism, particularly the “contraband” critique of positivism (see below).

Vernadskii (1863–1945) and Novgorodtsev first met in Paris in 1890. Their close association was a source of Vernadskii’s philosophical interests.\(^\text{57}\) Through the example of his life and work, Vernadskii showed that the true spirit of scientific inquiry had nothing in common with reductive positivism or scientism. He was a Tambov zemstvo deputy (district and provincial levels) and professor of mineralogy at Moscow University from 1898 to 1911, making him another *professor-zemets*. Vernadskii, “moved by his general sympathy for the *Shornik*,” as Novgorodtsev put it, wanted to contribute to *Problems of Idealism*,\(^\text{58}\) but instead chose to publish in the Psychological Society’s journal that year a major essay, “On the Scientific Worldview,” which argued, just like the symposium, for the relative autonomy of distinct spheres of human consciousness and experience — empirical or natural scientific on the one hand, moral or idealist on the other — and against their conflation in positivism.\(^\text{59}\) Vernadskii was also part of the Psychological Society’s examination of Kant’s legacy, delivering one of the three papers at its jubilee Kant meeting held in December 1904.\(^\text{60}\) He had a close colleague not only in Novgorodtsev but also in Sergei Trubetskoi,\(^\text{61}\) who nominated him for Psychological Society membership, to which he was elected in December 1907.\(^\text{62}\)

Two of the zemstvo constitutionaists involved in the *Problems of Idealism* project, Vernadskii and S. E. O’denburg, connect it to the “Bratstvo Priiutino,” a circle of socially conscious, civic-minded students united by their belief in the transforming power of modern knowledge, who gathered around Sergei
Ol'denburg and his brother Fëdor at St. Petersburg University in early 1880s.\textsuperscript{63} The Brotherhood, which remained intact long after its members finished at the university, constituted an important part of the generational and intellectual experience of the leadership of the future Constitutional-Democratic (Kadet) party.\textsuperscript{64} Several of the Priutiintsy were close to Lev Tolstoy and were inspired by some of his ideas. They adopted his techniques, for example, in organizing famine relief in Vernadskii's Tambov province in 1891–1892.\textsuperscript{65} "But in contrast to Tolstoy," G. V. Vernadskii stresses in his account of his father's circle, "the majority of the members of the Brotherhood considered science one of the highest manifestations of the human spirit, recognizing the value of modern culture in general, and also the necessity of courts and the state."\textsuperscript{66} Although the Priutiintsy did use populism to justify their devotion to nauka (science), their ideal of service to the narod (people) did not degenerate into a reductive utilitarianism. Science, in the broad sense of higher learning, preserved its autonomy.

In 1926 Vernadskii described the intellectual outlook of the Priutiino Brotherhood: "In the beginning of the 1880s, along with purely socialist moods, there existed other tendencies, close to the latter but not included within their boundaries. The purely socialist tendency was permeated by a feeling of social morality, close in its philosophical ideals to scientific positivism, linked with a negative attitude to religion, art, and especially to political life." The non-socialist tendencies, by contrast, "did not share the same attitude toward religion, art, philosophy, political life, or science which was part of the socialist mood of youth at that time. Many intellectuals considered it difficult to reconcile socialism with other sides of the human spirit that were dear to them—with a feeling for their nation or the state, and even more so with their belief in the freedom of the personality."\textsuperscript{67} The Priutiintsy were among the non-socialist intellectuals. The defense of the autonomy of religion, philosophy, and "other sides of the human spirit" against scientistic positivism would be one of the central themes in Problems of Idealism.\textsuperscript{68}

The zemstvo constitutionalists were one of the two major liberationist groups represented in Problems of Idealism; the other was the intelligentsia "new liberals," among whom the "legal Marxists" were the most theoretically articulate, even before their four most famous representatives became idealists.\textsuperscript{69} Marxism, in its conception of the historical necessity for Russia to pass through a prolonged stage of capitalism and "bourgeois" freedoms during which the country would be fully Europeanized, was already compatible on a practical level with liberalism. The potential for cooperation with more traditional representatives of Russian liberalism widened as the legal Marxists abandoned positivism for idealism and came to see liberal values as ends, not
merely means. Already in April 1900 Vernadskii noted the “curious progress of the Marxists” Struve, Bulgakov, and others, who “are now coming close to the democrats and liberals.”\textsuperscript{70} In pinning his first hopes for the Liberation Movement on the zemstvo milieu, Struve needed to convince zemstvo liberals that they had nothing to fear from legal Marxism because it had evolved into a consistent and powerful philosophical defense of liberal values. The contributions by the former Marxists to Problems of Idealism, once they became involved in the project, helped serve this end.

The Psychological Society helped provide the intellectual resources the Marxists needed as they made their way past positivism,\textsuperscript{71} for the simple reason that the society had long spearheaded the philosophical critique of positivism and included Russia’s leading idealist philosophers. In fact, the intellectual trajectory from positivism to idealism had been followed before the legal Marxists by several society philosophers themselves, including Solov’e\v{v}, Grot, and the Trubetskoi brothers. In a review of Grot’s posthumous collection of articles spanning his positivist and idealist periods, Filosofii i ee obshchie zadachi (Philosophy and Its General Tasks, 1904), E. V. Spektorskii drew the parallel between it and both Problemy idealizma and Bulgakov’s collection, Ot marksizma k idealizmu (From Marxism to Idealism, 1903).\textsuperscript{72} Far more important than Grot as a source of inspiration was Vladimir Solov’e\v{v}, the society’s most visible philosopher. Bulgakov included in his autobiographical set of essays an article devoted to Solov’e\v{v}, to mark his part in the intellectual evolution the volume traces.\textsuperscript{73} Bulgakov himself became a member of the Psychological Society in November 1897.\textsuperscript{74} A year before, Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii published part of a developmental polemic between Struve and Bulgakov, a harbinger.\textsuperscript{75} By 1902 Bulgakov had completed his transition to idealism.\textsuperscript{76} At a meeting of the society in February, he delivered a paper, “Osnovnye problemy teorii progressa” (“Basic Problems of the Theory of Progress”),\textsuperscript{77} which became his contribution to Problems of Idealism.

The Psychological Society also helped turn Berdiaev and Frank toward philosophical idealism, although they did not become members until later (1909 and 1914, respectively). As a student, Frank attended public sessions of the society, and later recalled that the society’s special commemoration in 1896 of the 300th anniversary of Descartes’s birth was “for me the first stimulus to the study of philosophy.”\textsuperscript{78} At this time he was also inspired by Novgorodtsev’s lectures in the Law Faculty at Moscow University.\textsuperscript{79} Berdiaev began to contribute regularly to Voprosy filosofii in 1902. His major programmatic article of 1904, “On the New Russian Idealism,” names several of the Psychological Society’s outstanding philosophers—Chicherin, Solov’e\v{v}, A. A. Kozlov, Lopatin, and S. N. Trubetskoi—as sources of the idealist Weltan-
schaunungen he and his former Marxist colleagues had come to embrace.80 They could look to the Psychological Society not only for theoretical philosophy, but also for the reconstruction of liberal social philosophy on idealist principles, a project that, as Andrzej Walicki has shown in detail, engaged Chicherin, Solov’ev, and Novgorodtsev in particular.81

As it turned out, the collective authorship of Problems of Idealism reflected the social history of the leadership of the Liberation Movement remarkably well. The zemstvo constitutionalists were represented by S. N. Trubetskoi, E. N. Trubetskoi, S. P. O’l’enburg, and Zhukovskii. The other two zemstvo associated with the Problemy project were Vernadskii and Kotliarevskii. The new liberals were represented by the four former Marxists (Struve, Berdiaev, Bulgakov, and Frank), all contributors. Close to them in background and outlook was Kistiakovskii, another contributor. Novgorodtsev, editor of the volume, was the professor-intermediary between the two groups. Most of these figures (including Vernadskii and Kotliarevskii) took part in the important liberationist conference held abroad at Schaffhausen, Switzerland, in July 1903.82 Organized by Zhukovskii, the conference planned both the Union of Liberation (formally established in St. Petersburg in January 1904) and the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists (formally established in Moscow in November 1903). Most members of the Problemy project continued to exercise significant political influence in the Liberation Movement after their meeting at Schaffhausen (for details, see the biographical notes on the contributors at the end of this book).83

P. B. STRUVE, P. I. NOVGORODTSEV, AND NEO-IDEALISM

Among the former Marxists, Struve’s new philosophical ideas were the closest to neo-idealism as developed by such Psychological Society philosophers as Lopatin, the Trubetskoi, Novgorodtsev, and Kotliarevskii—even though he would not become a member of the society until 1912.84 Struve was the first of the Marxists to make the transition from positivism to idealism, a process completed by autumn 1900, in the long introduction he wrote to Berdiaev’s book Subjectivism and Individualism in Social Philosophy: A Critical Study of N. K. Mikhailovskii. His formulations there already have much in common with neo-idealism in the Psychological Society, which was distinctive (1) in its broadly theistic or ontological direction (in contrast to the purely epistemological, phenomenalist, and axiological currents common in neo-Kantianism), and (2) in its conviction that the fullness or plenitude of being (the absolute) is transcendent and cannot be realized in space and time, that is, in the natural and historical world. The common point of departure for many idealist currents in Russia, including those represented in Problems of
Idealism, was ethical idealism: the claim that the irreducibility of ethical ideals to empirical reality gave the individual a certain autonomy relative to the natural and social environment. From autonomy, Psychological Society neo-idealists drew ontological conclusions about the self, to the effect that personhood was metaphysical in nature. Lopatin’s moral philosophy, for example, has been characterized as follows: “This conviction in the ontological significance of ethics flows like a red thread through all of Lopatin’s statements on ethical questions.” Lopatin and his colleagues stressed the ontological implications not only of morality, but also of the unity of consciousness as the transcendental condition of experience. For them, these ontological implications also entailed a belief in the transcendence of absolute being. This conviction helped make neo-idealism in the Psychological Society resistant to the utopianization (the “immanentization” of the absolute) that was not uncommon for other idealist currents in the Russian Silver Age, including those that Berdiaev and to some extent Bulgakov represented soon after the appearance of Problems of Idealism.

In his introduction (written in September—October 1900) to Berdiaev’s book, Struve was most concerned with the problem of objectivity in ethics. Positivists seek to derive morality, like everything else, from empirical criteria. The solutions they propose (such as eudaemonism) strike him as inadequate because they deny the presence of duty, on which moral autonomy rests. Positivism must reject the authenticity of duty, or consciousness of moral obligation, because to do otherwise would violate positivist rules for what is real. Positivist prohibitions notwithstanding, moral experience persists. Scientific ethics wishes away this central aspect of human identity. “To reject the moral problem means in essence to defy the immediate consciousness of every person,” as Struve puts it. But if morality cannot be justified empirically, in what does its objectivity consist? If our sense of moral obligation is not reducible to naturalistic explanation, how is it authentic or real? What does the reality of duty as such entail? In a famous passage, Struve writes: “The compulsive presence in every normal human consciousness of the moral problem is beyond doubt, as is the impossibility of an empirical solution to it. Acknowledging the impossibility of such a solution, we at once recognize the objectivity of ethics as a problem, and, accordingly, come to the metaphysical postulate of a moral world-order, independent of subjective consciousness.”

For Struve, the irreducibility of moral consciousness to empirical experience, the autonomy of “ought” relative to “is,” postulates a higher level of being than natural existence, a trans-phenomenal or supernatural ontological reality that grounds the objectivity of values. Conscience is, in short, the voice of God. Either duty is a naturalistically explicable psychological illusion, or it
is real, and thus capable of determining the will in violation of natural causation. "Freedom is the capacity to act, without being determined by anything external, foreign, or other; it is independence from the uninterrupted causal chain, and only substance possesses this capacity." In this way, from duty and free will, Struve infers the substantiality of the person, a main tenet of ontological neo-idealism in the Psychological Society. Lopatin had formulated it in nearly identical terms, in the second volume of his Positive Tasks of Philosophy. Lopatin was influenced, in turn, by Rudolf Hermann Lotze, whose defense of personal substantiality Struve now considers "metaphysically incontrovertible."

Novgorodtsev took notice of Struve's evolution toward neo-idealism. In the autumn of 1901, in the midst of his work with Struve on Problems of Idealism, Novgorodtsev published one of his own studies, Kant and Hegel in Their Theories of Law and the State. There he praised Struve's essay:

It is impossible not to welcome this return to the traditions of idealist philosophy. The author expresses one of the most profound needs of our time, abandoning the narrow limits of positivism all the more when he speaks about the necessity of "metaphysics as a theory of the transcendent, i.e., of that which is not given in experience and cannot be revealed by it." For us it is especially interesting to note that Mr. Struve comes to this requirement on the ground of a strict demarcation of the limits of science and a clear posing of the moral problem.

Clearly, if similarity in philosophical views was any indication, there were solid grounds for cooperation between Struve and the Psychological Society.

No doubt of this was left when, on the basis of the neo-idealist philosophy he had just advanced in his introduction to Berdiaev's book, "Struve constructed a theory of liberalism, outlined most fully in a marvelous essay called 'What Is True Nationalism?'" The essay Professor Pipes celebrates appeared (pseudonymously) in the Psychological Society's journal in the autumn of 1901, at the same time as Novgorodtsev's book on Kant and Hegel and at the height of preparations for Osvobozhdenie and Problems of Idealism. For Struve, liberalism is the defense of the absolute value of the person, or of personhood. For him, this value is absolute by virtue of the metaphysical nature of the self as substance. From this it follows that individual self-determination ought to be the moral foundation of every social and political order. This principle of the autonomy of the individual gained increasing acceptance in political theory, Struve observes, after Kant made it the cornerstone of ethics. The guarantee of individual rights is a necessary condition of the fullest realization of personhood. "The idea and practice of such rights,
in our view, reveal all the deep philosophical meaning and all the enormous practical significance of the remarkable doctrine of natural law, lying at the basis of all true liberalism." Natural law is absolute, "rooted in the ethical concept of the person and its self-realization, and serving as the measure of all positive law." True nationalism and true liberalism are, for Struve, identical concepts: "In historical development the absolute, formal principle of ethics has become clear to us—freedom, or the autonomy of the person... Liberalism in its pure form, i.e., as the recognition of the inalienable rights of the person... is also the only form of true nationalism." 

By 1901 the philosophical similarities between Struve and Novgorodtsev were quite striking. Parts of Novgorodtsev's book on Kant and Hegel were first published in Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii. One essay, "Kant's Theory of Law and the State," appeared in the issue immediately preceding Struve's "What Is True Nationalism?" Novgorodtsev's essay summarized the main thrust of his book, the philosophical substantiation of the revival of natural law in Russia. For Novgorodtsev, a specifically Kantian neo-idealism offered the best defense of the autonomy of natural law against positivist and historicist reductionism. This autonomy resided in moral consciousness, in Kantian practical reason: respect for natural law was a moral obligation or categorical imperative. The source of positive law was the state; the source of natural law was moral consciousness, given a priori. The force behind positive law was the police; the force behind natural law was duty. Natural law provided a normative framework for the evaluation of existing positive law; it served as an ideal toward which the real ought to constantly strive. In this, natural law was inherently progressive, a conclusion Novgorodtsev stressed. The idea of natural law with changing content, made popular by Rudolf Stammel, was a direct consequence of Kant's ethical formalism: "As an expression of infinite moral aspirations, this idea is not satisfied by any given content or claim to perfection, but constantly strives toward the higher and better." The essence of natural law was its critical spirit. "It is a challenge to improvement and reform in the name of moral ends." In this way, for both Novgorodtsev and Struve, natural law was the nexus between ethical idealism and Russian liberalism.

In Kant and Hegel in Their Theories of Law and the State, Novgorodtsev does not explicitly draw the ontological conclusion that the person as a bearer of natural rights is substantial, as Struve does in his writings at this time. In his introduction to Berdiaev's book, for example, Struve states that the principle of the equality of persons as ends-in-themselves rests ultimately on the substantiality of the human spirit. Novgorodtsev's relative silence on metaphysical questions prompted a call for clarification from one of his Psychological Society colleagues, Evgenii Trubetskoii. In a review of Novgorodtsev's
book, Trubetskoi suggested that “in his relation to metaphysics a wavering is sensed between fear and attraction. Apparently the issue here is a point of view still not fully formed and in the process of development.” Novgorodtsev took up the challenge. In responding to another review of his book, by Leon Petrużycki, Novgorodtsev wrote that “affirmation of the contingency [uslovnost'] of empirical knowledge means for me also the admission of free, creative, uncaused being.”

Novgorodtsev was the most consistent and profound Kantian philosopher in the Psychological Society, and unlike Lopatin, the Trubetskois, and Kotliarevskii, he did not hesitate to acknowledge his debt to Kant. Moreover, he found no incompatibility in principle between the German philosopher and the ontological direction characteristic of Russian philosophical and religious thought. This enables the Russian historian of philosophy A. V. Sobolev to write, “for Novgorodtsev the person is the ontological center, the spindle of light rays with the help of which it is alone possible to illuminate problems of being and knowledge.” True, Novgorodtsev’s debt to Kantian theory of knowledge and ethics is most evident in his earlier work, while the influence of Russian Orthodox thought becomes explicit later, in the midst of revolution, civil war, and emigration. Yet, according to his student I. A. Il’in (1883–1954), “Pavel Ivanovich did not ‘become’ in his last years a religious man, he always was one. The wise depths of Russian Orthodoxy, revealed to him in years of strife and suffering, imparted not the first, but a new and, I believe, final form of his religiosity.” The inevitable consequence of his synthesis of Kant and Russian ontologism was a conviction in the transcendence of the fullness of being. He concisely formulated this liberal principle, which had always guided his thought, in one of his last essays, “The Essence of Russian Orthodox Consciousness,” where he wrote, “The Kingdom of God cannot be constructed within the order of earthly activity, but nonetheless all earthly life must be infused with the thought of this anticipated Kingdom.” The Russian theologian G. V. Florovskii, who greatly admired Novgorodtsev, suggests that he proceeds here not only from Orthodox consciousness, but also from Kantian philosophy of history. This synthesis of Kantianism and Russian religious philosophy was also highly characteristic of Struve’s thought after 1900.

Another indication of Struve’s intellectual proximity to neo-idealism was his new understanding of Solov’ev, the most visible member of the Psychological Society. Struve dedicated his essay on “true nationalism” to Solov’ev, reversing his earlier positivist contempt for Russia’s greatest religious philosopher. Struve’s hostility is obvious in a shrill article he published on Solov’ev in 1897, “A Philosophy of the Ideal Good or an Apologia of Real Evil?” When
Struve reprinted this review in his collection *Na raznye temy* (*On Various Themes*) in 1902, he removed the passages that now seemed “unjust,” and was forced to explain, “at that time I still stood on the ground of critical positivism, but now I profess metaphysical idealism and, therefore, have become much closer to Solov’ev than before.” In 1900 he published a generally laudatory obituary of Solov’ev, in which he claimed that the philosopher’s greatness rests not so much on his speculative and theoretical works as on his series of publicistic articles devoted to the critique of Slavophile nationalistic isolation of Russia from European culture. First published between 1883 and 1891, these articles were later collected in two volumes under the title, *The National Question in Russia*. By dedicating his 1901 *Voprosy filosofii* essay to Solov’ev, Struve hoped to associate his own conception of “true nationalism” with the ideas Solov’ev developed in *The National Question*.

At the beginning of 1901, Novgorodtsev published an essay that directly addressed Solov’ev’s contributions to the intellectual defense of Russian liberalism. The issue of *Voprosy filosofii* in which it appeared was dedicated to Solov’ev, who had died on 31 July 1900. Novgorodtsev’s article “The Idea of Law in Vl. S. Solov’ev’s Philosophy” argued that the idea of law was precious to Solov’ev and lay at the basis of his moral and social philosophy. “The role of law in human life appeared to him first of all in the light of its higher ideal meaning. To serve the ends of moral progress, to help the moral principle take hold among people—here was the higher task of law that Solov’ev emphasized.” Solov’ev’s defense of law, against Slavophile and Tolstian efforts to denigrate it, could help overcome the contemporary crisis in legal consciousness that Novgorodtsev diagnosed and inspire the neo-idealistic development of Russian liberalism. *Opravdanie dobra* (*Justification of the Good, 1897*), Solov’ev’s famous treatise on ethics, had done jurisprudence a great service in vindicating respect for and trust in the idea of law. Like Struve, Novgorodtsev extolled Solov’ev’s censure, in *The National Question in Russia*, of national egoism and its Slavophile roots, as well as his refutation of the “most fantastic of Slavophile fantasies,” that for the Russian people political rights are neither important nor needed. In contrast to the Slavophiles, Solov’ev’s positive ideal, for the foreseeable future, was the *Rechtsstaat*, or law-governed state (*pravovoe gosudarstvo*), his hopes for the ultimate triumph of theocracy notwithstanding. Solov’ev, Novgorodtsev stressed, was a progressive, liberal westernizer.

**FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE**

Solov’ev was, no doubt, one of the main influences under which Struve arrived at his initial conception of *Problems of Idealism*: a symposium defending freedom of conscience. In Tver Struve took note of a speech delivered in
September 1901 by Mikhail A. Stakhovich (1861–1923), marshall of the nobility of Orel province, a Beseda member, and close acquaintance of Lev Tolstoy. Stakhovich, addressing a conference in Orel on missionary work, spoke of the need for the church to defend freedom of conscience against intrusion by the state—in sharp contrast to Tolstoy’s excommunication by the Holy Synod the preceding February. Struve wrote Stakhovich thanking him for his “splendid and courageous speech,” which he learned of through the newspapers. Struve’s letter was intended for circulation among the zemstvs, to further prepare the ground for cooperation in working toward a liberal Russia: “You have again demonstrated by this that you belong to people who understand that high social status obliges one not to flatter [the authorities], but to speak the truth. With joy I welcome in you a talented spokesman of the best intentions of the Russian nobility.” Struve then sent to Novgorodtsev in Moscow a plan for a collection of thirteen articles devoted to freedom of conscience and its importance in idealist philosophy, liberalism, and philosophy of law. The authors he suggested included himself, Novgorodtsev, S. N. Trubetskoi, E. N. Trubetskoi, K. K. Arsen’ev, M. A. Reisner, V. M. Hessen, R. Iu. Vipper, S. F. Ol’denburg, and even Adolph von Harnack, the famous German historian of Christian dogma. The former Marxists (except Struve himself) were conspicuous by their absence at this stage of the project.

Struve’s enthusiastic response to Stakhovich makes clear that Problems of Idealism was designed, among other things, to raise the level of political consciousness in the zemstvo milieu. Stakhovich was a prominent representative of the “neo-Slavophile” current in the zemstvo movement. In his Orel speech he appealed not only to the heritage of the Slavophiles (A. S. Khomiakov, Iu. F. Samarin, I. V. Kireevskii), but also to the memory of Solov’ev. This might seem an untenable combination in view of Solov’ev’s criticism of Slavophilism in The National Question in Russia. Solov’ev’s attack, however, was directed primarily (although by no means exclusively) at the nationalistic and Panslavist interpretation of Slavophilism among its epigones, while the classic Slavophiles (followed in this respect by Ivan Aksakov) championed freedom of conscience and expression, as did Solov’ev. The label “neo-Slavophile” or “Slavophile” did not imply that the zemstv to whom it was applied were nationalists or Panslavists, only that they were distinguished by their respect for religion from the constitutionalists in the zemstvo movement, most of whom were rather positivistic in their general outlook. The Stakhovich speech convinced Struve that in freedom of conscience he had an excellent platform by which he could hope to bring to the side of constitutional reform conservative zemstvo elements (such as those represented in the letter “from zemstvo deputees” that he printed in the second number of Osvoobzhdenie).

Struve apparently thought that the religious outlook of the “Slavophile”
zemtsev, once tapped and made theoretically explicit, might become a major source of Russian liberalism. His approach was not merely tactical: he recognized that freedom of conscience had been very important in the development of liberalism in Europe and America and thought it was crucial to Russian liberalism. He dwelled on this conclusion in his article “What Is True Nationalism?” There he traces the idea of the inalienable rights of man to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the proliferation of sects following the Reformation and the consequent growth of religious toleration, freedom of conscience, and separation of church and state. Struve points in particular to the English Independents and Roger Williams, who for the first time established a government—in Providence, Rhode Island (1636)—on the general principle of toleration and freedom of conscience. Struve informs us of his source: Novgorodtsev, who in his course “The History of the Philosophy of Law” gives an “extraordinarily clear and elegant exposition of this important moment in the development of man’s legal consciousness.”

Struve went on to explain in “What Is True Nationalism?” that his historical survey revealed the inaccuracy of the doctrine, “very popular in Russian society,” that liberalism arose in defense of the political and material interests of the bourgeoisie (of course, Struve had contributed more than anyone to the popularity of this doctrine, Marxism). Instead, liberalism grew from the demands of religious consciousness. “The first word of liberalism was freedom of conscience. And this ought to be well known and firmly remembered in any country where liberalism has not yet said one word.” In its ideal origins and aspirations, liberalism transcends class. With this, Struve may well have hoped to convince the zemtsev that he had overcome the “progressive class” point of view of his Marxist past. Even his association with the Psychological Society, home to a number of zemstvo liberals, benefited him in this respect.

In defending freedom of conscience as a basic premise of liberalism Struve proceeded from intellectual conviction, but in enlisting the late Slavophile Aksakov in support of his views—as he did at some length in “What Is True Nationalism?”—he seems to have acted mostly out of political expediency in order to woo “Slavophile” zemtsev, among whom Aksakov enjoyed popularity. Aksakov was no liberal, but he could be selectively appropriated for liberalism. This was done not only by Struve but also by S. N. Trubetskoi and Novgorodtsev. Sergei Trubetskoi lauded Aksakov’s defense of freedom of conscience and the need for church autonomy, speaking in the same breath of Aksakov and Solov’ev as the best among Russian publicists, “who exposed with such force the sores on our state church with its anti-canonical administration and absence of independent spiritual power and ecclesiastical freedom.” Novgorodtsev, in a long two-part article, “The State and Law,” pub-
lished in *Voprosy filosofii* in 1904, enlisted Aksakov for the critique of legal positivism. Novgorodtsev quotes Aksakov’s words that, according to formal jurisprudence, “there is nothing in the world except the dead mechanism of the state; that everything is and should be accomplished in the name of and through the means of state power, no matter what form it takes, if only it bears the stamp of external legality; and that, finally, life itself, and consequently the life of the spirit, is one of the branches or functions of the state organism.” Walicki, who also quotes these lines, writes that Novgorodtsev “obviously hoped in this way to influence the right wing of the zemstvo liberals.”

Novgorodtsev was pursuing the same end Struve had three years earlier in his “true nationalism” article, which quoted these exact words (with much else) from Aksakov. Novgorodtsev chose not to mention, as did Struve, that Aksakov’s remarks were written against Chicherin’s 1861 inaugural lecture at Moscow University, where Chicherin had been appointed to the chair in public law. Aksakov saw in Chicherin an extreme *gosudarstvennik*, not an uncommon perception after the inaugural lecture. Interestingly enough, Struve contrasts Chicherin’s étatist, Hegelian approach to law in the 1860s to his later autonomization of law on the basis of a natural-rights liberalism, best explicated in his *Filosofia prava* (*Philosophy of Law*, 1900). “A significant change,” Struve exclaims, “the result of the triumph of idealistic metaphysics over sociological and juridical positivism!”

It is very likely that Struve came to (or was at least reinforced in) his appreciation of the importance of freedom of conscience under the influence of Solov’ëv and the Psychological Society. Chicherin, Sergei and Evgenii Trubetskoi, Novgorodtsev, Kotliarevskii, and the Moscow University historian Vladimir I. Ger’e (Guerrier), also a prominent member of the Psychological Society, had long advanced separation of church and state and freedom of conscience as axioms of liberalism. In his programmatic statement of the principles of Russian liberalism, written in 1855, Chicherin identified freedom of conscience as “the first and most sacred right of a citizen.” His later works remained resolute in their defense of this right. Notable in this respect is his book *Nauka i religia* (*Science and Religion*, 1879), which extends the principle of freedom of conscience to the broader concept of the necessary autonomy of the various distinct spheres of human need, experience, and aspiration: not only church and state, or religion and politics, but also economy, science, philosophy, and art, for example. This understanding of autonomy was further developed by Novgorodtsev in particular and became one of the main themes in *Problems of Idealism*.

Sergei Trubetskoi was another ardent champion of freedom of conscience. In his remarkable analysis of Russian state and society, “On the Threshold,”
written in February 1904, he observes despairingly how, in the course of Russian history, "the Orthodox Church becomes the church of bureaucratic caesaropapism." Russian liberalism rested on reversing this historical trend. As Trubetskoï proclaimed, "an independent church and freedom of conscience — here are the demands which any law-governed state and, first of all, any state calling itself Christian, must meet." Kotliarevskii, an astute student of religion and society, was also convinced that liberalism grew from the demands of religious consciousness and that a liberal civic culture had its foundations in free spiritual life. Like Struve and Novgorodsev, he pointed to the example of American religious history, with its principle of expanding toleration and "recognized diverse forms and symbols under which is felt a unity of content." 

The defense of freedom of conscience by the Psychological Society professors was a response not only to the illiberal effects of the state-dominated church in Russia, but also to the utopianism of their colleague, Solov’ëv. In the middle period of his creativity (i.e., from the early 1880s to the early 1890s), Solov’ëv was preoccupied with a grant project for the unification of Eastern and Western Christianity in a world theocracy under the spiritual authority of the pope and the imperial authority of the Russian tsar, all in preparation for the advent of the Kingdom of God on earth. In this utopia of "free theocracy," Solov’ëv's Psychological Society colleagues could see the mirror image of the subordination of church to state characteristic of modern Russian history. They came to a clear appreciation that theocracy and the "state church" in Russia (as the Trubetskois referred to it) were illiberal in the same way: both infringed the necessary autonomy of church and state. As Evgenii Trubetskoï later put it, Solov’ëv's theocratic project would have violated the "most precious of all freedoms — freedom of conscience." In expression of the parallel the Psychological Society contributed to a considerable literature on church history and church-state relations.

From the early 1880s, Solov’ëv himself sharply criticized the subordination of church to state in Russian history and religious intolerance within the Russian Empire. Facing the weakness of the Russian church, he placed his theocratic hopes on Roman Catholicism. His plan for a world theocracy evoked very little sympathy among contemporaries. Therefore, Solov’ëv admirers welcomed this abandonment, beginning in the early 1890s, of "free theocracy" as anything other than a remote ideal, "stripped of its millenarian features and reduced to something like a Kantian 'regulative idea' in ethics," as Walicki characterizes the transformation. Solov’ëv began to dismantle his utopian project under the impact of the great famine, which left no doubt of the gap between Russian reality and the theocratic ideal. In conversations
with friends at the time, “he openly spoke of his disappointment in the contemporary state order and of the necessity for representative, constitutional institutions,” Evgenii Trubetskoii recalls. “In these circumstances Solov’ev very soon faced the necessity of choosing between theocracy and constitution.”

He expressed his disillusionment in a major public lecture, “On the Reasons for the Collapse of the Medieval Worldview,” delivered before the Psychological Society on 19 October 1891. The speech became a cause célèbre because the ultra-conservative newspaper Moskovskie vedomosti made a scandal of it. The lecture could be seen as an important step forward: if ten years earlier Solov’ev had highlighted the baneful effects of state domination of the church, now he seemed to come closer to recognizing that theocracy was the flip side of the coin. What mattered was the principle of separation of church and state, the defense of the autonomous rights of the sacred and secular realms that medieval theocracy and the “state church” in Russia alike denied (true, the lecture was less a clear defense of this principle itself than a valuation of secular work from the perspective of Christian progress). The example of Solov’ev’s dramatic intellectual evolution reinforced his Psychological Society colleagues in their conviction that freedom of conscience was a fundamental premise of liberalism.

Although Solov’ev appears never to have abandoned the theocratic ideal altogether, further talk of its possible realization took a distant second place to the immediate task at hand — real progress. This was the message behind “On the Reasons for the Collapse of the Medieval Worldview”: the medieval worldview was not progressive, the modern one is. Modernity is progressive in its recognition of the autonomy and value of secular activity. In this it is truer to the spirit of Christianity than medievalism, with its “monstrous doctrine” that the only path to salvation is faith in church dogma. Godmanhood, the realization of humanity’s divine vocation, cannot be achieved without the active participation of man. “For it is clear,” Solov’ev writes, “that the spiritual rebirth of humanity cannot take place apart from humanity itself. It cannot be only an external fact; it is a deed with which we are charged, a task which we must solve.” Unbelievers who work contribute to Christian progress no less than believers, sometimes much more so, as modern times show. If Christians in name only (“nominal Christians”) betray the spirit of Christ, then why should it be denied that people who work, although not necessarily in Christ’s name, nonetheless serve his purposes? Solov’ev’s new emphasis on modernity, progress, and secular work was a necessary first step toward reversing the long-held association of idealism with obscurantism in social philosophy, an association only reinforced, after all, by the enthusiasm Russia’s most visible idealist philosopher had shown for theocracy. The de-utopianization of
Solov'ëv's thought cleared the way for the Psychological Society to take up a forthright idealist defense of liberalism.

Solov'ëv's lecture heralded a new conception of liberal progress. The paper itself, while widely known, was not published until ten years later, in the same issue of Voprosy filosofii as Novgorodtsev's article (discussed above) on Solov'ëv's significance for Russian liberalism. Novgorodtsev interpreted the central idea of the lecture as an original and bold combination of the Christian ideal with westernizing progress. Liberal Westernizers had always stressed the value of energetic cultural work and external social forms as conditions for the free development of persons. Now Solov'ëv added the new philosophic foundation of a theistically inspired idealism. This revision of the traditional (and often vague) view that positivism was the natural ally of liberalism, in favor of an idealist substantiation, set the agenda of the Psychological Society in social philosophy and was clearly reflected in Problems of Idealism.

The culmination of the secularization (valuing the autonomy of the secular sphere) and de-utopianization (relegating theocracy to a remote or even transcendent ideal) of Solov'ëv's thought came with the appearance in 1897 of Justification of the Good. The treatise produced a great impression on Russian society, requiring a second edition in 1899, raising interest in idealist philosophy and creating a favorable climate for the reception of Problems of Idealism.

Nowhere in Justification of the Good does Solov'ëv invoke "free theocracy." Walicki formulates very well the significance of the volume in this respect:

Solov'ëv now proclaimed the need for a formal separation of church and state, expressing his hostility to state-promoted religious intolerance in Russia. The cause of religious and moral progress, consisting in the Christianization of political and social life, was thereby radically divorced from the ideal of binding together the spiritual power of the church with the coercive power of the state. On the contrary: the realization of the idea of Godmanhood in history was made dependent on man's maturity, on his full moral autonomy, incompatible with any form of tutelage in the spiritual sphere.

Solov'ëv had made the autonomy of the sacred and secular a central part of his liberal philosophy of progress. Clearly, Problems of Idealism was, from its first conception as a defense of freedom of conscience, integrally related to the top priorities of the Psychological Society.

We have seen that Struve knew Novgorodtsev's published lectures on the history of the philosophy of law. In his introduction to them, Novgorodtsev contrasts the modern concept of the Rechtsstaat to medieval theocracy. The secular ideal of the Rechtsstaat is the principle of equality before the law, shown by Kant's philosophical justification to be absolute. "As in the middle
ages the ultimate dream of church philosophy was the unification of all peoples under the moral authority of the church, so now in the philosophy of Kant the highest goal of history is the unification of all humanity under the rule of one law equal for all.154 In this, Novgorodtsev expresses a certain sense of misgiving. Neither the sacred nor the secular can, if taken in isolation from the other, satisfy the full range of the demands of human nature. In an interesting twist to Solov'ev's lecture on the collapse of the medieval worldview, Novgorodtsev writes that the modern secular state cannot successfully resist the Christian spirit that infuses modern moral consciousness. He quotes Solov'ev's words that, "the unbelieving engines of modern progress have acted in the interests of true Christianity," and that, "social progress in recent centuries has been accomplished in the spirit of the love of man and justice, that is, in the spirit of Christ."155 There must be a correlation of the two ideals, sacred and secular, although Novgorodtsev is quite tentative about how this might be achieved. However, his ideas unmistakably point to the insight, which he would develop in much of his later work, that without delimitation of, and equilibrium between, the spheres of church and state, the principles each represent are either compromised and diluted by cross intrusion and usurpation, or are hypostatized as one sphere looks on itself as absolute in trying to exclude the other.156 Progress miscarries in utopianism. Freedom of conscience concisely formulated the principle of respect for the autonomy of the parts that enables the balanced and integrated development of the whole (in reference to both self and society), and that prevents utopian derailment. This principle was not limited to the archetypes of church and state, but extended to the various distinct spheres of human experience and consciousness (such as religion, politics, science, and philosophy). These spheres are legitimate in their own domain; one cannot be substituted for any of the others; they are relatively autonomous parts of a whole in which each has its own place. This was a guiding principle of neo-idealistic social philosophy, forcefully advanced in the final version of Problems of Idealism.

PROGRESSIVE IDEALISM

The connection that Solov'ev had come to stress, and that Novgorodtsev amplified further, between autonomy and liberal progress was the key link between Problems of Idealism's initial focus, as Struve conceived it, on freedom of conscience and the broader approach the symposium took in its published version. There, freedom of conscience was subsumed under the more general thesis that idealism offered a far better defense of liberal progress than positivism could. Although the expansion of the project's scope had its accidental moments as the list of contributors came to include Struve's former
Marxist colleagues,\textsuperscript{157} there was clear logic in it as well. Positivism was in its own way a denial of freedom of conscience in its claim that what is positively given in sense data is the only measure of reality and in its tendency to discount other aspects of human experience and consciousness. Struve's expression for official ideology—"state positivism"—captured the similarity.\textsuperscript{158} The initial tight focus on freedom of conscience sought to tap the amorphous religious outlook of the "Slavophile" zemstvy. The final version still fit Struve's original premise that the religiosity of the conservative zemstvy was potentially constitutional, but in addition the broader approach could hope to convince zemstvo liberals more generally, most of whom probably subscribed to a "soft" positivism, that neo-idealism was a better articulation of their liberal convictions. The original policy of the osvobozhdentsy to pin their hopes on the zemstvo milieu was based on a judgment that that environment offered the most reliable basis for Russian liberalism by virtue of social background and civic experience. \textit{Problems of Idealism}, by theoretically substantiating the liberal values that (it was assumed) the zemstvy held by life experience, might inspire them to more resolute action in working for a liberal Russia. Struve and Novgorodtsev wanted the best of both worlds for Russian liberalism: zemstvo civic background and neo-idealism theoretical backing.

One of the Moscow Psychological Society's contributions to Russian social thought—a contribution \textit{Problems of Idealism} publicized—was to help reverse the traditional association of positivism with liberalism and of idealist and religious philosophy with reaction. The neo-idealists program in the first stages of the Liberation Movement, in seeking to put the social strengths of zemstvo liberalism on new theoretical foundations, adds another element to the distinction between the old and new Russian liberalism. New liberalism can thus refer not only to the emergence of social support beyond the zemstvo, for example, within the urban intelligentsia (in the broad sense), but also to the replacement of positivism by neo-idealism as the theoretical justification of liberalism. Often the social and theoretical dimensions did not coincide: Miliukov and E. D. Kuskova, for example, were new liberals by social background but old liberals theoretically, in their positivism. From the opposite end of the political spectrum, Chicherin, the grand old man of zemstvo liberalism, was rather a new liberal in the theoretical sense.\textsuperscript{159} The Psychological Society was home to other traditional zemstvo liberals who were new philosophical idealists, including the brothers Trubetskoi, Kotliarevskii, and (in some respects) Vernadskii.\textsuperscript{160} In the case of the four former Marxists, the new social and theoretical sources of liberalism did coincide, as they did for Novgorodtsev.

\textit{Problems of Idealism} took up no mean task in challenging the received
opinion that idealism was intellectually and politically retrograde. Idealism was perceived as dangerous to science, enlightenment, and social progress, while positivism was thought to be their natural champion, or at least that is how most intelligenty, who set the standards for progressive opinion, represented things. Against the charge that idealism was adverse to the spirit of scientific inquiry and a mask for political and intellectual obscurantism, the philosophers could (and did) invoke the authority of Vernadskii, who wrote in his 1902 companion article to Problems of Idealism: “Today, in an epoch of the extraordinary flowering of scientific thought, the close and deep connection of science with other currents in the spiritual life of humanity is not infrequently forgotten. . . . Sometimes it is heard that . . . the creative and vital role of philosophy for humanity has ended and in the future must be replaced by science. But such an opinion . . . can hardly withstand the test of science itself.”161 Problems of Idealism stressed throughout that idealism was intrinsically progressive. In Aikhenval’d, in a fine contemporary review, thought this was the volume’s main message. He wrote that the majority of the Russian reading public is accustomed to think

that those freedom-loving aspirations, the attractive and bright imprint of which lies on nearly every page of our collection, have their only and necessary basis in a completely different worldview—the positivistic-mechanical. The acknowledged heralds and champions of free citizenship [grachdansvennost’] turn out to be advocates of ethical-religious views that are ordinarily professed by representatives of a rather different social camp. And in this respect Problems of Idealism can provide a great educational service in dispelling the dominant prejudice among us that the spiritualist worldview is incompatible with the cherished precepts of social liberalism.162

The public reception of neo-idealism was a paramount concern for its representatives active in the Liberation Movement, the very purpose of which was to bring public opinion to bear against the autocracy. They feared that positivist intelligenty might caricature idealism as a reactionary doctrine. This concern may well have been heightened by the Liberation Movement’s initial reliance on the zemstvo milieu, since the democratic intelligentsia saw zemstvo liberalism as a defense of gentry interests, inimical to genuine progress for the narod. What is certain is that neo-idealists went to even greater lengths to stress their progressive social views because the former Marxists in the group were seen by the left as traitors. “The idealism of our days would hardly have brought against itself such polemics,” Novgorodtsev wrote in 1904, “if among its proponents were not persons who had left Marxism.”163 This helps account for the publicity surrounding the appearance of Problems of Idealism.
Aikhenval'd saw it the same way. The volume attracted the attention it did not so much because of its philosophical ideas, which had long been advanced by the Psychological Society, as because of the previous reputations of some of its contributors, "who until now were known for their work in other fields of theory and practice and who were most often attached to active Marxism—these very names concentrate around themselves a new and broad contingent of readers.”

At a meeting of the Psychological Society on 11 May 1902, Novgorodtsev proposed that Problems of Idealism be published in its series, "Editions of the Psychological Society." The proposal was accepted. As a condition of publication, Lopatin provided a one-paragraph opening statement to the volume, indicating that it expressed the views of only one group of society members, but deserved the support of the society as a whole in view of its outstanding interest. Novgorodtsev, promoting the symposium two days before its actual appearance, delivered a public lecture, "On the Question of the Revival of Natural Law," before a well-attended meeting of the society. The lecture summarized his own Problemy essay and directed attention to what he thought was the main service of the collection, the neo-idealist defense of liberalism. The volume saw light of day on 16 November 1902 in a solid printing of 3,000 copies, and was sold out in a year. "Problems of Idealism was a challenging, self-confident manifesto of the neo-idealist revival in Russian thought," Waliciki writes, a revival Psychological Society philosophers had advanced for more than a decade and that they would continue to champion as offering a powerful theory of the main principles of liberalism: personhood, autonomy, law, and progress.

Problems of Idealism: Key Ideas

ETHICAL IDEALISM AND THE IRREDUCIBILITY OF THE SELF

Ethical idealism, the claim that ethical ideals do not derive from the empirical world, that "what ought to be" is not reducible to "what is," was the common point of departure for the contributors to Problems of Idealism. From this initial premise, Russian idealism pursued different directions and took on diverse forms. This process of differentiation is already evident in Problems of Idealism, but for the moment it was held in check by the common idealist defense of liberalism and critique of positivism. Later, some currents represented in the 1902 symposium diverged from the neo-idealist defense of liberalism (Berdiaev and to some extent Bulgakov), while others did not pursue that defense to its ontological depths, as did the Psychological Society professors.
Problems of Idealism strove to convey the importance, not only for the critique of positivism but for human self-understanding, of the distinctiveness of moral experience. The contributors pointed to the glaring contradiction between the positivist criterion of reality—empirical experience—and the persistent human predilection for moral evaluation of it. They were struck by the very presence of a category such as "what ought to be" when the empirical world speaks to us only of "what is," of positive data and facts, not of ideals and standards. The positivist conception of reality discounts these ideals, central to human identity. Russian idealists differed over their origin, but agreed it was not empirical. The recognition of moral obligation (duty) was already something startling; the freedom to act on it was nothing short of miraculous. The capacity of the categorical imperative to determine the will, the capacity to act as one ought, in opposition to impulse, upheld the autonomy of the self against reduction to naturalistic explanation. In all this, the contributors to the symposium drew heavily on Kant's moral philosophy, even where they did not accept his system as a whole. An important intermediary between Kant and Problems of Idealism was Solov'ev's major treatise on ethics, Justification of the Good.\textsuperscript{169}

Ethical idealism, in short, took the distinctiveness of moral experience as refutation of the positivist conception of reality and as testimony to the irreducibility of the self to the empirical world. This gave the person a special dignity, the defense of which was liberalism. As Novgorodtsev affirmed in 1904,

Contemporary idealist philosophy can well indicate that in its practical ideals it continuously emphasizes and advances the principle of the person, its absolute dignity, its natural and inalienable rights. For all the various shades dividing even idealists themselves, it is that point in relation to which they are in full agreement. But in the end do not all living and progressive movements of Russian thought meet on this point?\textsuperscript{179}

Russian idealists of all shades did concur on the dignity of the self, but not all thought that meant substantiality.\textsuperscript{171} Among the Problemy authors known for their contributions to Russian philosophy,\textsuperscript{172} Frank did not at this point, and Kistiakovskii never would, draw ontological conclusions from the irreducibility of the self to empirical experience.\textsuperscript{173} The rest did.

Ethical idealism marked the culmination of an important stage in the intellectual evolution of the four former Marxists. Henceforth Struve's general philosophical outlook changed little, while Berdiaev, Bulgakov, and Frank continued to work toward their later philosophical and theological conceptions. But the Kantian-inspired recovery of ethical ideals that the Marxists
undertook already in their revisionist period received its highest expression on the pages of Problems of Idealism. “Scientific socialism” was no doubt the most reductive form of positivism in Russia, as expounded by G. V. Plekhanov. The “necessitarian” Marxism of the Second International that Plekhanov embraced was based in large part on the interpretation of Hegel that Engels advanced in his Anti-Dühring. To this, Plekhanov added his own great admiration of Hegel’s fatalistic side. A certain similarity does suggest itself between Hegelian identity, the idea that in Sittlichkeit, “there is no gap between what ought to be and what is, between Sollen and Sein,” as Charles Taylor puts it, and the deterministic contention of orthodox Marxism that historical necessity, operating on its own without inspired human agency, will bring about the Golden Age. The association of Hegel with “scientific socialism” helps explain why, in both Germany and Russia, revisionist attempts to invigorate Marxism with ethical ideals sought to recover the Kantian distinction between das Sein and das Sollen. In this way the legal Marxists contributed to the critique of positivism, to the autonomization of ideals and values, even before their revisionism precipitated their full conversion “from Marxism to idealism,” as Bulgakov immortalized the whole development.

For the Marxists, ethical idealism thus began with a recovery of the ideals that “scientific socialism” castigated as “utopian” in the socialist tendencies it opposed (in Russia, populism). In Struve, this critical rehabilitation of utopianism, as he put it, remained critical (as it did for Frank), but in Berdiaev and Bulgakov the process derailed soon after the appearance of Problems of Idealism. They quickly embraced post-Kantian, absolute forms of idealism that conflated the absolute and the relative, the ideal and the real. Both tended to revert to, or had not overcome in the first place, the utopian vision of the total revolutionary transformation of society (the “leap to the kingdom of freedom”) that characterized orthodox Marxism (“scientific socialism,” its own protestations notwithstanding, was, of course, far more utopian than socialists who took matters into their own hands and worked toward the gradual realization of socialism through reform). Their new utopianism was explicitly millenarian and chiliastic, while Marxist utopianism can be seen as a secular transposition of eschatological impulses under the guise of science. Bulgakov and Berdiaev themselves labeled such positivist conflations of science with religious and metaphysical hopes as “contraband,” apparently not realizing that the logic of their criticism required that the ideal of salvation be strictly that, a transcendental ideal. By contrast, the “core” Psychological Society neo-idealists were critical of utopianism as such, stressing its incompatibility with transcendence.

Struve’s contribution to Problems of Idealism, “Toward Characterization of
Our Philosophical Development,” is an overview and self-evaluation of his evolution from Marxism to idealism. He presents the results of that evolution in a succinct statement of what he calls the basic error of positivism. Man conceives all that is conceivable in two basic forms, “what is” and “what ought to be.” Causation and necessity completely govern the realm of “what is.” In it there is no room for freedom or creativity. “The present is entirely determined by the past, and the future by the present (and thus by the past). In this way, everything is determined or predetermined” (78/147). Scientific understanding reduces one thing to another, as its cause, and examines the mode of this causal dependence. “What is” and “what ought to be” are completely incomparable categories, not reducible to each other. “Meanwhile the basic idea and also the basic error of positivism consists in subordinating ‘what ought to be’ (‘ought’) to ‘what is’ (‘is’) and in deriving the first from the second.” This is the monstrous idea of scientific ethics. It is rooted in idolatry before the principle of causation. “It forgets that in experience or science we discover the causation and mode of being, but that being itself [samoe bytie], as such, always remains for us unknown and unexplained” (79/148). It is “being itself” that makes possible duty and the freedom to act on it, or ethical idealism.

Struve’s argument can be clarified by Kant’s distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal. The category “what is” is the phenomenal world; “being itself, as such” is the noumenal. Therefore, the basic error of positivism is the reduction of “what ought to be” to the phenomenal world. This reduction is uncritical because positivists identify the phenomenal and noumenal, that is, they make unconscious metaphysical claims through unjustified extrapolation from empirical knowledge. Struve insists that philosophy be critical, that it not make dogmatic metaphysical claims by confusing the phenomenal and the noumenal. Noumenal being is inaccessible to scientific method (it cannot be known as phenomena are), although its presence is felt in the depths of moral consciousness. “Philosophical reflection, by its own critical approach to belief in causation, cannot but support immediate consciousness of the special nature of moral ‘ought,’ presupposing free or creative activity,” Struve writes. From this we acquire the right to metaphysics. “Yes, metaphysics,” but, Struve adds, critical, Kantian metaphysics (81–82/150). Conforming the will to duty is an autonomous act; it breaks the chain of phenomenal necessity and thus constitutes a leap of being to the noumenal level. This, Struve says in so many words, gives us the right to metaphysics, although a critical metaphysics that, while grasping the presence of noumenal reality, recognizes its unknowability.

The critical caution with which Struve approached the metaphysical conclusions he drew from the nature of moral experience is one of the ways he compared to the Psychological Society neo-idealists. Berdiaev is not so
critically cautious, as is clear, for example, in the boldness of his declaration of allegiance to metaphysical idealism and spiritualism, “to which I have now finally arrived.” Despite the differences, which would soon become pronounced, his Problem essay is an eloquent statement of ethics as the common point of departure in the idealist revival. In this, Berdiaev relies on Kant’s establishment of “what ought to be” as an autonomous category, given to consciousness a priori, independent of empirical knowledge. Ethics is an autonomous discipline: it has no need of empirical science, since its principles are available before experience. Otherwise we would merely perceive the world, instead of also evaluating it. “Moral evaluation of ‘what is’ from the point of view of ‘what ought to be’ is inherent to every consciousness” (94/163).

In opposition to the Kantian dualism of “what is” and “what ought to be,” positivists deny that consciousness has two separate, parallel sides. In place of violently distorting positivist reductionism, Berdiaev calls for the rehabilitation of both sides of human consciousness into an integral whole. Positivist interpretations of human behavior and motivation, such as hedonism and utilitarianism, reduce everything to an empirical criterion such as pleasure or happiness; they fail to treat morality as an autonomous force in human conduct. Ethics is its own thing, not something else, like pleasure or happiness.

“Happiness itself is subject to moral judgment, which determines the quality of happiness, recognizing it as worthy or unworthy of our moral nature” (100/167). One ought to strive not for happiness but for moral perfection (or to deserve happiness, in Kant’s words). Nothing in the empirical world approximates our a priori notion of perfection, which thus cannot be phenomenal in origin but must arise from a connection to noumenal grounds. The moral law is a link to transcendence. “It is a beacon, shining to us from infinity. . . . It is the voice of God inside man, it is given for ‘this world’ but it is ‘not of this world’” (104/170).

Self-perfection is, for Berdiaev, the basic idea of ethics. Drawing on Wilhelm Windelband, he develops a distinction between the empirical and ideal or normal self: “Morality is first of all the internal relation of a human being to himself, the search for and realization of his spiritual ‘I,’ the triumph of ‘normative’ consciousness in ‘empirical’ consciousness” (106/171). Recognizing one’s spiritual self makes possible, in turn, normative relations toward other people, based on recognition of them as persons. The higher self is affirmed in the exercise of freedom, that is, in the fulfillment of moral duty. In fact, “to be a ‘person,’ to be a free human being, means to be conscious of one’s moral-rational nature and to distinguish one’s ‘normal,’ ideal ‘I’ from the chaos of a contingent empirical cluster of facts; in itself this empirical chaos is not yet a ‘person,’ and the category of freedom is inapplicable to it” (133/188). Since
morality consists in the internal relationship of a person to himself, Berdiaev rejects the ethical primacy of "thou" or "other." Egoism versus altruism is a false opposition; the ideal self stands above these hypostatized poles. "The relation of one human being to another is ethically derivative from the relation of a human being to himself... Higher moral consciousness demands that every human being relate to every other human being not as to 'thou'... but as to 'I'" (111/174). This is Berdiaev's interpretation of the Kantian notion of man as an end, never merely a means, and of the equality of persons as ends-in-themselves.

For Berdiaev, the moral problem takes on a tragic character. The absolute ideal of moral perfection can never be realized in experience. The empirical self cannot fully coincide with its ideal side in historical reality. The result is an eternal challenge to infinite improvement as well as an invitation to speculation about a metaphysical resolution of the impasse. The inevitability of metaphysics has led Berdiaev to now embrace the substantiality of the spirit (spiritualism), as Struve had in the introduction he wrote to his book on Mikhailovskii. Berdiaev differentiates his own approach from Kant's, whose method is to postulate immortality and the existence of God from morality. Berdiaev thinks this is too timid, declaring, "I reject Kantian skepticism and more than the Kantians believe in the possibility of constructing metaphysics by various paths" (107n./194, n. 34). The various paths he suggests are tentative. He refers to the triumphant march of the world spirit in Hegelian metaphysics and philosophy of history, which he contends have never been refuted, although at this point he also informs us that "in certain respects I am, incidentally, closer to Fichte than to Hegel" (113–114n./194, n. 37). He often compares his views to Struve's on one question or another, assuring us that they are in basic agreement on everything, except that "my metaphysics has a somewhat different shade than the metaphysics of Leibniz and Lotze, with which Struve, apparently, especially sympathizes" (132n./197, n. 65). That examples such as these are contrivances was pointed out (with annoyance) by Aikhenvald in his review (to which I return below).

Some of the contributors to Problems of Idealism, Berdiaev and Frank in particular, found that they could appropriate Nietzsche to promote their conceptions of ethical idealism.185 Frank's essay is devoted entirely to the German thinker. It attempts to defend the autonomy of certain moral principles by developing Nietzsche's contrast between "love of one's neighbor" and "love of the distant." The first is based on the elementary feeling or instinct of compassion and the utilitarian desire for people's happiness, while the second is based on respect for "abstract moral goods" that possess internal value. Nietzsche also referred to "love of the distant" as "love of things and phantoms," where
"phantoms" stand for such principles as truth, justice, beauty, honor and other "objective ideals possessing absolute and autonomous [autonomy] moral value."186 These ideals are autonomous because their value cannot be accounted for by extrinsic criteria such as the happiness of oneself or one's neighbor, or because, in other words, their value is self-inherent and independent of their consequences. Frank uses the term "ethical idealism" for this Nietzschean critique of positivist utilitarianism and defense of autonomy, so conceived, but this is the only sense in which Frank's position is "idealist." For him, the autonomy of "distant" moral ideals does not entail any conclusions about the irreducibility of the self. In fact, at the end of his essay, Frank writes, "this idealism remains in Nietzsche realistic: no matter how far the 'distant' lies from regular life and its interests, it does not fall beyond the limits of earthly, empirical life" (178/233).187 Berdiaev agrees, but gives a different evaluation: "Nietzsche is a dreamer whose idealistic soul is poisoned by naturalism. He splendidly understands the failure of all positivist theories of morality, but he himself nonetheless remains on the ground of naturalistic positivism" (124/182).

In trying to face the problem of the origins of autonomous moral ideals, Frank falls back on positivism and utilitarianism. "There is no doubt," he writes, "that genetically the whole aggregate of moral feelings and principles — including 'love of phantoms' — grew from the needs of social welfare" (167/217). "Love of one's neighbor" and "love of the distant" are only different types of moral "feeling"; somehow the second type becomes autonomous after arising naturally. Most Russian neo-idealists found this type of "idealism" untenable. Frank's essay is interesting insofar as it points in the direction of the more sophisticated formulations of neo-Kantian value theory and a strictly axiological idealism (to which Kistiakovskii, for example, aspired). It is also revealing of what the ontological neo-idealists thought were the weaknesses of the purely axiological approach, such as the tendency to revert to naturalism. This tendency is quite evident in Frank's essay, as in his usage of the terms "feeling," "instinct," and "impulse," as well as in the bizarre language of "phantoms."188 It can be argued that Frank was striving for the most earnest possible defense of autonomy, one that would avoid any ontological backing of moral ideals. Two years later, in his important essay "On Critical Idealism," he freed himself of naturalistic vestiges, maintaining that consciousness was absolute and its own explanation.189 But this type of radical autonomy was in the end no less untenable for the ontologists, who argued that the autonomy of moral ideals was ultimately grounded in a transcendent level of being. Frank himself would later become one of the most distinguished representatives of the ontological direction in Russian idealism.
In a way that reflects its beginnings as a defense of freedom of conscience, *Problems of Idealism* insists throughout on the strict delimitation of separate spheres of human experience and consciousness. It was the common concern of the contributors that morality, religion, philosophy, and positive science each be given its own autonomous space and that no one of them usurp the legitimate rights of the others. The conflation of these relatively distinct spheres, or the hypostatization of one at the expense of another, results in various forms of utopianism, from scientism to chiliasm and millenarianism. Russian neo-idealists used the term (or, when not the term, the concept) "contraband" to describe the intellectual distortion and muddling that result when elements from one area of thought (ethical or metaphysical) are smuggled into another (empirical or natural scientific). Lopatin appears to have introduced the concept in the first volume of his influential *Positive Tasks of Philosophy* (1886). He wrote there that the inevitability of metaphysical suppositions needs to be acknowledged and justified. "Why not call things by their names?" Otherwise, metaphysical ideas can figure in thought only as contraband, distorting it on an unconscious level and preventing clear and precise intellectual discourse. "Is it desirable to perpetuate such contraband of reason? . . . Every case of lack of consciousness in the scholarly sphere leads only to confusion of concepts, ambiguity, and lies."

Bulgakov's essay, "Basic Problems of the Theory of Progress," opens *Problems of Idealism* with the "contraband" critique of positivism. For Bulgakov, the quest for an integral, whole worldview is inherent to humanity. Such integrity requires free expression of each of the individual elements in our intellectual and spiritual nature. "Man cannot be satisfied by exact science alone, to which positivism hoped to limit him; metaphysical and religious needs are ineradicable and have never been removed from the life of man. Precise knowledge, metaphysics, and religion must exist in a certain harmonious relation, the establishment of which always constitutes the task of philosophy." Positivists deny metaphysics the right to exist, yet they cannot help asking metaphysical questions: they merely fail to do so squarely and honestly. Metaphysics thus enters into their inquiries on an unconscious level, leading to distortion and conflation. This is clear, Bulgakov shows, in sociological theories of progress based on the idea of human perfectibility (on this idea, see also A. S. Lappo-Danilevskii's essay in this volume). Such theories are, he explains, secular transpositions of religious faith (eschatology in particular) under the guise of science. The result is the "religion of progress," a strange admixture of religious themes (faith in salvation) with scientific pretension. Bulgakov
identifies these transpositions as a major source of utopianism (thus anticipating subsequent western scholarship in intellectual history). The solutions positivists devise to the problem of progress are fraudulent because they use contraband, introducing under the banner of positive science elements foreign to it (17/96).

Such conflation puts positive science in an ambiguous position and, together with that, cruelly violates the rights of metaphysics and religious faith. Therefore, what is necessary first of all is careful differentiation of the various elements and problems that are conflated in the theory of progress. It is necessary to return to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. The correct formulation of the theory of progress must . . . delimit and, within the proper sphere, restore in their own rights science, metaphysics, and religion. (32/107).

This was a classic formulation of one of the most important principles in the neo-idealistic development of Russian liberalism.

Bulgakov was not, however, very consistent in his defense of this principle. For he also proposes that the problem of progress should be approached from a “metaphysics of history.” In this mood Bulgakov maintains that (1) a theory of progress presupposes that history has meaning, (2) philosophy of history constitutes a theodicy, and (3) history is a revelation of higher reason, which is simultaneously transcendental to and immanent in history (32/107). These positions are problematic from a consistently neo-idealistic point of view (such as Novgorodtsev's), according to which history as a whole cannot be an object of analysis since we are participants in it and therefore lack an Archimedean perspective on it (in this sense history as a whole is noumenal and inaccessible to reason).

Bulgakov is explicit that he has gone well beyond Kantian idealism: “I know that for many Kantians, the concurrence of transcendence and immanence seems to be an epistemological contradiction . . . Together with Hegel, Schelling, Solov'ev, and others, I do not see a contradiction here” (32n./122, n. 33). As a result, he can claim that the meaning of history is straightforward: history is the revelation and fulfillment of a creative and rational plan, of cosmic, providential meaning, in which the cunnings of absolute reason is triumphant. In the end, however, Bulgakov expresses reservations about his idea for a metaphysics of history, as if anticipating the objections of critical philosophy. He grants that absolute reason in history is epistemologically inaccessible to us; our link to it is conscience, the moral law. “From this point of view, progress is not a law of historical development, but a moral task . . . not 'is,' but absolute 'ought’” (37/111). In this, Bulgakov returns to the safer ground
of his contraband critique of positivist conceptions of historical progress. Progress should not be ascribed to history as a natural law, nor should it be awaited as divine dispensation. Rather, it is something we must take responsibility for.

Several contributors to Problems of Idealism (Struve, Novgorodtsev, and Kistiakovskii) saw a clear case of contraband in Russian “subjective sociology,” advanced by the prominent populist thinkers Petr Lavrov and Nikolai Mikhailovskii. The subjective sociologists argued that man and society could not be studied with the methods of natural science alone, since human beings have the capacity to act according to values and ideals (such as justice). The putative advantage of the “subjective method” was that it recognized these values and approached social evolution as an interaction between objective factors and subjective aspirations. Progress, in particular, was not a necessary historical law but a category of historical interpretation (which varied according to subjective criteria about what was progressive) and, most importantly, a moral task to be accomplished by “critically thinking individuals” (Lavrov). In the prevailing climate of “objectivist” positivism, subjective sociology played an important role in rehabilitating human will and purposiveness as real influences in the historical process. It also tended, however, to undermine the pursuit of objective knowledge in the social sciences by suggesting that the investigator could not escape his or her own subjective value judgments and preferences (and, indeed, should not try to escape them). Historical and sociological knowledge could never be “value-free.” By the same token, subjective sociology fostered the notion that values were “merely subjective” and deprived of any “objective” validity (including an objectivity that might be of an order different from that in natural science).

Struve’s essay reveals the importance the “contraband” critique of subjective sociology had in the development of neo-idealism. Mikhailovskii sought to integrate the categories of “what is” and “what ought to be” in one worldview. According to Struve, he failed at the task because he approached it primarily as a positivist, when it falls instead to the metaphysician. “In the figure of the philosophizing Mikhailovskii there were two personae who neither recognized themselves nor delineated between themselves, and who therefore only interfered with each other. In him positive science was unconsciously distorted by metaphysics, while metaphysical thought was burdened, bound, and made barren by its subordination to ‘positive science’” (84/151). Despite this judgment, Struve felt a certain sympathy for the subjective sociologists, because in them ideal demands, although not fully articulate, were at least not completely silenced. This was a necessary element in the revolt against positivism, one Struve expressed in his call for the critical rehabilitation of the utopianism for
which Marxism berated populism. But there was another necessary element in the revolt, and this time, Struve contends, Marxism made the positive contribution. In his account, the Marxist polemic against subjective sociology singled out the illegitimate intrusion of ethical problems into what the Marxists saw as their own sphere — objective, scientific sociology. Struve explains that in this debate Miliukov, whom he calls one of the most visible Russian positivists, took the side of the Marxists, “of course because he clearly saw in Marxism a reaction of the positive-scientific spirit against an alien ‘ethical’ element intruding into science” (84/152). Struve’s argument is that subjective sociology and Marxism each made a positive contribution to the revolt against positivism. In the first case it was the rehabilitation of ethical ideals and consequent erosion of the view that positive science could answer all human aspirations, and in the second case it was criticism of the conflation of distinct areas of thought (the contraband critique). The Marxist charge that populism was utopian captured both contributions, although in different ways.

The problem is that Marxism did not highlight the need for the mutual autonomy of positive science and ethics; it simply denied the existence of ethics altogether. In this, it was much more a case of contraband than was subjective sociology. Struve himself recognizes how strained his argument is that even orthodox Marxism made a positive contribution to the critique of positivism. But it is interesting that he now sees the conflation of separate spheres of human experience as so characteristic of positivism that he tries to interpret his own Marxist past as preparing the way for the defense of their autonomy. In his self-evaluation, “P. G.” acknowledges the role of subjective sociology, but still he wants to stress that of Marxism: “Mikhailovskii’s idea about ‘what ought to be,’ as a category independent of ‘what is’ in experience and therefore having autonomous value,” is recognized by the former Marxists.

But it is also these writers who have stressed that posing this question within the limits of positive science and in its terms is illegitimate and does not make sense, that doing so is an uncritical conflation of metaphysics with empirical knowledge, or with positive science. Thus it is not true that the philosophical direction of such metaphysicians-idealists as Struve shares nothing in common with Mikhailovskii, but it is still less true that this current, which came out of Marxism, has capitulated before “subjective sociology.” (85/152–153, emphasis Struve’s).

In this effort to depict his own recent intellectual development as a certain synthesis of subjective sociology and Marxism, Struve might have done better to cast the Marxist contribution in terms of “objectivity” rather than auton-
omy. As we have seen, Struve squarely faced the problem of objectivity in ethics, but it was a different type of objectivity than that which the Marxists presumed to command. It was an objectivity that sought to provide a firmer basis for the ethical ideals subjective sociology helped recover from positivist reductionism. It was an objectivity that, for Struve, came to rest ultimately in metaphysics.

Bogdan Kistiakovskii, in his contribution to Problems of Idealism, also develops the contraband critique of subjective sociology and addresses the problem of objectivity in ethics, although for him this problem does not require a metaphysical solution. His criticism of subjective sociology is important; no less a social theorist than Max Weber commended it. Kistiakovskii shows how the subjective sociologists, within the confines of their positivist worldview, formulated the concept of an ideal not in terms of “ought,” but in terms of “possibility.” Instead of what “ought to be,” they use the category of what is “possible” or “impossible.” Mikhailovskii, for example, speaks of something as “impossible” when he should rather say that it is not what “ought to be.” This is a clear example of how “contraband” results in the muddling of concepts. The subjective sociologists failed, in short, to understand that the criterion of an ideal is not “possibility,” but “ought,” which we recognize in conscience. “We strive for the realization of our ideals not because they are possible,” Kistiakovskii concludes, “but because our conscious duty imperatively demands it of us and everyone around us.” Consciousness of duty does not, however, entail metaphysics. The category of “ought” is its own type of objectivity or necessity, which Kistiakovskii defines as “transcendental-normative.” This was the basis for what he later formulated as “scientific-philosophical idealism,” in contrast to the more common metaphysical direction in Russian neo-idealism.

Novgorodtsev pursued the contraband critique in much of his work. In Problems of Idealism, he strenuously objects to the attempts of Russian subjective sociology to include ethics within its sphere in the hope of redressing exclusive objectivism. The mistake of the subjective sociologists was that instead of strict delimitation of the ethical element from the scientific, they permitted their compounding. From this came the unsuccessful concept of subjective sociology and the idea of the “subjective method,” surprising in its philosophical untenability. It is understandable that as a whole this construction had to evoke protests both from the side of positive science and the side of moral philosophy, for the correct correlation of these two spheres is their complete delimitation. Morality shows its distinctiveness precisely in that it judges independently of the necessity disclosed by science; it has its own necessity.
This evaluation of subjective sociology has much in common with Struve's and Kistiakovskii's; Novgorodtsev points out that the mistake he outlines has already been subjected to irrefutable critique.

Novgorodtsev presents a clear and concise statement of the contraband approach to positivism in one of his companion articles to *Problems of Idealism*, "The Significance of Philosophy," written in 1903 as an introduction to a course on the history of German idealism that he delivered at the Higher Women's Courses and Moscow University. Disillusionment with Comtean positivism was one of the first indications of today's idealist revival, Novgorodtsev observes. Comte had enjoyed great popularity in Russia, but his ideas have become increasingly outmoded with the realization that science cannot take the place of religion and metaphysics. Novgorodtsev stresses the careful delimitation of science and the autonomization of philosophy from positivist reductionism (paradigmatic in Comte's hypertrophy of science). The integral worldview emerging from this process will accommodate not only scientific interests, "but also the so-called metaphysical requirements and mystical needs, all the dreams and hopes that comprise the deepest foundation of our spirit." In the ongoing collapse of positivism, Novgorodtsev sees a return to Kant, whose system of transcendental idealism makes possible the noumenal world by limiting science to the phenomenal.

Economic materialism, even more influential in Russia than Comtean positivism, has shared its same fate, Novgorodtsev proclaims. The enthusiasm for orthodox Marxism has already spent itself. Its decline—in terms of intellectual influence, Novgorodtsev is right to describe it this way—is further evidence of heightened consciousness toward the ideal. This is clear first of all in the intellectual evolution of the former "legal Marxists." Novgorodtsev has no quarrel with the historical observation that economic factors have a definite and continuous effect on historical phenomena, writing that "in this modest aspect economic materialism exists even now." But the reductionist premise, which is the gist of the doctrine, that economic materialism is the "universal explanation of all thought, life and history," exposed its patent inadequacy as a philosophical system, "and in the end all the main and most talented representatives of the school went off in other directions, to seek satisfaction first in Kant and Fichte, then in the works of Russian philosophical thought, especially in Vladimir Solov'ev."

Novgorodtsev's conclusion, then, is that idealism has arisen from disaffection with the reductionist doctrines of "scientific philosophy," Comtean positivism and economic materialism first of all. In this Novgorodtsev no doubt wants to point back to the influence of *Problems of Idealism*; A. S. Lappe-Danilevskii's essay, which is a significant contribution to the history of positiv-
ist thought, shows the large extent to which Comte relied on concepts (such as purposiveness) that were inconsistent with his theory of knowledge, while E. N. Trubetskoi's powerful immanent critique of Marxism argues that economic factors cannot be the only ones fundamentally at work in human affairs, for the simple but compelling reason that people are ashamed of their selfish interests and try to mask and justify them with various ethical, religious, and legal ideas. Disillusionment with these doctrines was inevitable: the ideal aspirations inherent to human consciousness resist reduction to the empirical. With the return to idealism, "clear consciousness has emerged that these doctrines take for themselves more than they can give," as Novgorodtsev puts it. This formulation captures very well the force behind the contraband critique. First, it indicates that reductive positivism, despite itself, cannot eradicate or ignore the idealist impulse, which is not only moral but more generally metaphysical. Second, although positivist doctrines fail to block the idealist impulse, in trying they must promise to somehow make good on it—this is what they "take for themselves." But here they are utopian and constitute a form of contraband that abuses the authority of the natural sciences to predict the historical realization of ideal hopes. Following up on this pattern, Novgorodtsev writes, "the first problem over which the narrow formulations of the positivists and economists fell apart was the moral problem," because it encapsulates all our ideal aspirations that cannot long be resisted. "And with this once more arises the whole set of so-called metaphysical questions, which might temporarily be held in contempt, but to which human thought constantly turns anew, as soon as it comes to consciousness of its deepest foundations and ambitions."

In 1904 leading Russian positivists responded to Problems of Idealism with a collection of their own, Essays in the Realist Worldview. Kotliarevskii's review of this volume, "On True and False Realism," further develops the contraband critique. First, Kotliarevskii finds that he must help the realist-positivists define their own basic concepts, which they have left unclear. Therefore, he proposes that realism is the claim that all knowledge is empirical; nothing is known a priori. From this epistemological premise most realists (like S. A. Suvorov) make the ontological claim that nothing nonempirical exists. Realism is, in short, the reduction of being to phenomena (naturalism). Metaphysics is an empty, illusory world. Realists have, however, put themselves in the difficult position of needing to explain how ethical and metaphysical ideals arise in the first place and exert such hold on us if what is positively given in empirical experience exhausts the possibilities of being. Ultimately, they must dismiss such ideals as naturalistically explicable psychological illusions, again the unreal world of metaphysics. This explanation cannot satisfy
even the realist-positivists themselves; the presence and force of ideals remain, although at a repressed, subconscious level. And with this, Kottiarevskii writes, “banished metaphysics, renounced religion, take their revenge, bursting lavishly into the realm of real science and greatly obscuring its pure realism. . . . Most dangerous of all, this metaphysics looms unconsciously, so to speak, passing under a foreign flag,”204 or as contraband. The “false realism” of scientific monism is thus inherently unstable. The proper relationship between the distinct spheres of human experience and inquiry is not mutual usurpation (Kottiarevskii’s term) but mutual delimitation, making possible the integrity of “true realism.”209

NATURAL LAW AND PROGRESS

The revival of natural law, its elevation to an ethical ideal that could serve as a measure of and spur toward liberal progress, can be treated as an outstanding example of the neo-idealist autonomization of philosophy from positivist reductionism. This is a Novgorodtsev’s approach in his Problems of Idealism essay, “Ethical Idealism in the Philosophy of Law: On the Question of the Revival of Natural Law.” The specific form of positivist domination in jurisprudence was historicism, a nineteenth-century reaction to Enlightenment conceptions of natural law, which historicists characterized as abstract, overly speculative, rationalistic, and utopian. The turn-of-the-century revival of natural law after the dominance of historicism typifies a pattern in the history of ideas. Novgorodtsev describes how a given intellectual current, suppressed for a time, experiences a revival when an opposing intellectual current has exaggerated its own claims to such an extent that its one-sidedness becomes obvious. The cycle then recurs. Both currents offer their own genuine insights and valuable perspectives.210 In his first book, The Historical School of Jurists: Its Origin and Fate, Novgorodtsev strove for a balanced approach to the relative merits of both historicism and natural law.211 His Problemy essay concentrates rather on the philosophical justification for the urgency of the revival of natural law.

To historicist methodology, which properly examines the historical and sociological context, Novgorodtsev contrasts philosophy, which (he states boldly) focuses on the autonomous person. Historicism ought not to be concerned with values and absolute ideals, since these are properties of persons, not their environment. In his concern with relativism in values, Novgorodtsev makes some categorical assertions: “The concept of personhood and the absolute principles connected with it are foreign and inaccessible to historical method.” This is rather the domain of “special philosophical analysis.” “Philosophy must restore its own rights and show history its limits” (240–
247/277). It would be difficult to find more forceful statements among Russian idealists of the need for the autonomization of philosophy from the dominance of historicism and positivism. The special philosophical methods for the study of the concept of personhood constitute ethical idealism, of which the revival of natural law was an integral part.

Natural law meets the requirement of the idealistic and progressive side of human nature to look forward to the realization of our present aspirations and hopes. In an allusion to the urgency of constitutional reform in Russia, Novgorodtsev wrote, “this need [to turn to the future] is especially striking in epochs of crises and turning-points, when past forms of life clearly expose their decrepitude, when society is seized by an impatient desire for new structures” (250/283–284). But idealistic and progressive aspirations are a constant feature of human motivation. Novgorodtsev’s appreciation of them was a main underpinning of his philosophy of progress and theory of natural law: “Human thought has this quality of living not only in the present, but also in the future, of bringing to the future its ideals and aspirations, and in this sense natural-law constructions are an integral property of our spirit and testimony to its higher calling” (250–251/284). Idealism designates not only theoretical philosophy but also the progressive, idealistic, and even utopian strivings in human nature. The progressive ideas of the future are often first conceived in the dreams and bold projects of utopians and visionaries. “The creativity of life is broader than limited human experience, and therefore it constantly happens that utopian theory is more far-sighted than sober practice” (263/292). In this, Novgorodtsev shared the common concern of the new Russian idealists to refute associations of idealism and reaction. In the inexhaustibility of the utopian impulse he saw further evidence that consciousness is not limited to the empirical, phenomenal world but is connected to absolute, noumenal reality. At the same time, he insisted that utopian ideals be made ideals in the strict (transcendent) sense. Attempts to fully realize them in history defeat the genuinely progressive spirit.

Novgorodtsev distinguishes between two interpretations of natural law: idealist, and the claim that it is given by nature as an eternal, unchanging norm common to all cultures. Historicism typically define natural law according to the second interpretation. In contrast to this are Rudolf Stammel’s concept of “natural law with changing content” and V. M. Hessen’s “evolutionary natural law.” Since the variability of legal ideals is accepted by all modern advocates of natural law, the historicist characterization is a strawman. But if even natural law evolves, “where then is the break with the historical outlook?” (254/286). The distinctiveness of the philosophical approach to natural law consists in the idealist opposition between the categories das Sein and das
Sollen. In looking to the future, we think not of what will be, but of what ought to be. We envisage a future that unfolds not by historical inevitability, but by our moral evaluation of the present and the course of action deemed necessary to improve it.

According to Novgorodtsev, the task of natural law is to order ideal paths of progressive development. Natural law seeks criteria for moral evaluation of history in the service of a better future. Therefore, it cannot draw its principles from history itself. "To the question of what ought to be, knowledge of what has been and what is cannot give an answer. Here it is necessary to turn to the a priori indications of moral consciousness." This makes the theory of natural law autonomous, "sharply distinguishing it from the purely historical question of the development of law," which can describe its past but cannot prescribe its future (255/286–287). Historicism must recognize that natural law, as a special problem of moral philosophy, does not fall within its proper domain, because historical necessity excludes the very possibility of evaluation and criticism of law. By historical methodology, critique of historical events is no more justified than critique of processes of nature. History exceeds its bounds in making moral conjectures — this is philosophy's area of competence. The same applies to sociology. Novgorodtsev does, however, somewhat soften his attack in granting that historical and sociological study of law and morality is fully justified, as long as it is recognized that this approach does not exhaust their very essence. But on the basis of the familiar reduction of "what ought to be" to "what is," positivists are prone to make illegitimate knowledge claims. "Thus does fully legitimate sociological analysis turn into a highly pretentious construction, claiming to explain 'the ultimate foundations of law and society' " (270/297). Together with historical and sociological research, philosophical approaches are needed, "not in the least supplanted by the sociological method nor any less important" (273/299).

Novgorodtsev's own philosophical inquiry into morality and natural law was deeply indebted to Kant and culminated in a well-developed philosophy of progress. Neo-idealism is inherently progressive and open-ended: for true idealism, the ideal (in epistemology, ethics, and legal and social philosophy) is a transcendent, absolute goal that can never be mistaken for any of its relative approximations. The absolute quality of the ideal relates only to its form, not its content. In this, Novgorodtsev follows Stammler's concept of natural law with changing content, which he celebrates as the direct conclusion of ethical idealism. The overriding concern is to prevent the absolutization of the content, mistaking it (which is temporary and historical) for the ideal itself. The absolute, ideal form is given a priori to consciousness, "but the content of this form must be sought, and therefore moral life presents itself as constant cre-
ativity" (287/309). Progress is the constant pull toward the ideal. Since the philosophy of progress is firmly grounded in the absolute (the ideal form), it is also a thoroughgoing critical philosophy. Positivism and relativism are neither progressive nor critical, since they deny the absolute. They have no standard of criticism and nothing toward which to strive. As is often the case, Novgorodtsev's is a Kantian formulation: "the categorical imperative is the form of and call to searching. This form must be fulfilled, and the call must lead to a definite result. But this absolute form can never be filled by an adequate content, and the moral call can never be satisfied by an achieved result." The often bemoaned "merely formal" character of Kantian ethics and philosophy of law does not strike him as a problem. Rather, "the formal moral principle is the recognition of the idea of eternal development and improvement" (288/309).

The incompatibility of Novgorodtsev's philosophy of progress with conservatism is obvious, but he also drew out its resistance to utopianism: the ideal advances as the content catches up. "But this must lead not to an utter denial of the achieved stage or to doubts in the possibility of progress, but to improvement of the present and to a search for the higher" (289/309). The distinction between the ideal and the historically real ought not to be despised, for it is clear consciousness of the ideal that spurs continuous real movement toward it. Progressive approximation of the ideal is the only way to be worthy of it. Such idealizing progress is the "justification of the good" (Solov'ev). Utopianism collapses all this. Another aspect of the critical side of Novgorodtsev's attitude to utopianism was his conception of philosophy as an exacting and rigorous discipline having nothing to do with ideology or utopia. The time has passed when philosophers could take to flights of fantasy (295/314). This in no way excluded Novgorodtsev's own search for a higher metaphysical synthesis of "is" and "ought."

Novgorodtsev always remained true to the neo-idealist defense of progressive, rule-of-law liberalism, giving it further profound development in his future works. Berdiaev, by contrast, soon drew quite illiberal conclusions from idealism. But for the moment, in Problems of Idealism, he too supported the neo-idealist defense of liberalism. At this stage, his fervent individualism had not yet become anarchism. He has a liberal appreciation of the importance of society in the development of personhood. The person has ethical primacy over society ("ethical individualism"). "But the moral law is embodied in the life of humanity through social progress; the human person develops and works out its own individuality through diverse interaction with the social sphere, in social-psychic intercourse with people" (116–117/178). The goal and justification of social progress is the full development of the person. The rule of law ensures that the end (the person) is not compromised by the
necessary means (society). "The external relations of people must be regulated and formalized. . . . Legal and political progress is nothing other than the realization and guaranteeing of the absolute natural rights of man [estestvennoe pravo cheloveka]" (117/178). Here Berdiaev explicitly follows Novgorodtsev and Struve in proclaiming natural law an integral part of the idealist revival in Russia. Like them, he revises the Enlightenment view of natural law by equating the concept of "natural" with that of "normal," or that which corresponds to the ideal norm. "The historical variability and relativity of law cannot be an argument against 'natural law,' because 'natural law' is 'what ought to be,' and not 'what is'; it is a 'norm' that ought to be realized in the historical development of law" (I 17n./195, n. 45). Likewise with the Enlightenment notion of popular sovereignty: it is the person who is sovereign; nothing is higher than its intrinsic value and rights (118/179).

Berdiaev put particular stress on the progressive social and political implications of idealism. "The idealist spirit is a spirit of freedom, a spirit of light, which calls forward, to the struggle for the right of humanity to infinitely improve itself" (119/179). Like Struve, he points to Solovëv's The National Question in Russia as a classic example of the idealist critique of reactionary nationalism in Russia. Berdiaev encouraged the growth of civil society in late imperial Russia, noting that the struggle for rights has historically been most effective when waged not by individuals but by civic associations and social groups. The formation of such groups (gruppirovka) opens up wide prospects for the human spirit to create a better, freer future. In this connection he again highlights the importance of natural law: "The new idealist direction, to which I proudly attach myself, draws the necessity of the liberation struggle for 'natural law' from the spiritual hunger of the intelligentsia [intelligentsy] soul" (135/189).

With this reference to the "intelligentsia soul" Berdiaev signals his disdain for bourgeois culture. He fits well within Ivanov-Razumnik's interpretation of the history of Russian social thought as a struggle for universal intelligentsia ideals against bourgeois meshchanstvo (philistinism). He had little sympathy for bourgeois economic liberalism; his liberalism was not "ideological" (in the Marxist sense of class interests) but a rarefied doctrine of the superclass intelligentsia. Berdiaev defends liberalism only "in its ideal essence," and looks to socialism for new methods of realizing the eternal liberal principles of personhood, natural rights, freedom, and equality. The tendency toward social-economic collectivism is a useful and even necessary means, although ethical and spiritual collectivism is a terrible evil. For Berdiaev, liberalism represents the immediate interests of the proletariat more than those of the bourgeoisie: "In concrete historical circumstances the struggle for the 'natural rights' of
man takes the form of a struggle for the oppressed and exploited. In contemporary society, for example, it takes the form of a struggle for the rights of the working masses" (118/179). In general, Berdiaev continued to follow the Marxist point of view on the social and economic development of Russia.

THE AUTONOMY OF PHILOSOPHY AND VALUE OF ITS HISTORY

Neo-idealism was not only a theory of liberalism; it was, first of all, a defense of the autonomy of philosophy against reductive positivism. In this, Problems of Idealism was clearly the product of its institutional sponsor, for the Psychological Society had promoted the free development of Russian philosophy for fifteen years. Novgorodtsev, in his foreword to the symposium, declares that “the directions that sought to eradicate philosophy, or else supplant it with constructions based exclusively on the data of experience, have lost their leading significance” (vii/81). The decline of positivism and return to the “authentic sources of philosophical knowledge” reflected the recognition, which at any rate was becoming more widespread, that moral ideals cannot be derived from empirical experience. Problems of Idealism dwells on the importance of ethics in the overall rehabilitation of philosophy because it is here that the inaccessibility of philosophy’s subject matter to positivist approaches is most clear. In its domain of the ideal, ethics is not, however, a peculiar philosophical discipline but a typical one; it exemplifies the epistemic autonomy of philosophy as a whole.

We have seen that Novgorodtsev treats the revival of natural law as a case study of the neo-idealistic autonomization of philosophy. His Problemy article draws on his 1901 book, Kant and Hegel in Their Theories of Law and the State, the methodological introduction to which he also published as a separate article in Voprosy filosofii. The essay, “On the Historical and Philosophical Study of Ideas,” is a straightforward statement of the autonomy of philosophy. Novgorodtsev identifies three types of positivist reductionism: historical, psychological, and sociological. None of these explain thought; an autonomous and creative intellectual core remains that cannot be accounted for by the set of factors each approach respectively privileges. Novgorodtsev does not, of course, deny that these approaches inform the study of ideas; he warns only against the reduction of ideas to the contexts within which they are articulated and develop. The history of philosophy, for example, helps us to appreciate that, as S. N. Trubetskoi put it, “genius is not explained without historical conditions ... but its whole peculiarity consists precisely in the fact that it is not explained by them alone.” In addition to the contextual methodologies, Novgorodtsev recommends the analysis of ideas on their own terms, or by what he calls the philosophical method.
In answering a review of his book on Kant and Hegel, Novgorodtsev counters the view that the history of philosophy is of historical interest only, an archive of outdated theories. It is rather a living and progressive unveiling of truth.\textsuperscript{213} In this Kant has special importance; he need not necessarily be the culmination of the contemporary development of idealism in Russia, but he ought to serve as the point of departure and reference. Of Kantian philosophy, Novgorodtsev writes,

\begin{quote}
We are convinced that some of its foundations—in theory of knowledge and in moral philosophy—must remain the secure property of thought; but together with this what we consider necessary is the broadest study of the historical past of philosophy and the most active relation to the tasks opening before its future. “Back to Kant!” means first of all, “back to serious philosophical education!” This education was missing in the recent epoch of enthusiasm for positivism, and it is necessary now to revive it.\textsuperscript{216}
\end{quote}

The deepening of philosophic consciousness in Russia requires systematic study of the history of philosophy, not necessarily originality, and certainly not originality for its own sake. Novgorodtsev again quotes Sergei Trubetskoi, this time from his Problems of Idealism essay, “What the History of Philosophy Teaches”: “Philosophy seeks truth, not originality. Independence in philosophical work is determined not by subjective arbitrariness, not by absence of proper education or positive knowledge, but by depth, sincerity, integrity of philosophical interest, and breadth of conception.”\textsuperscript{217}

Prince Sergei Trubetskoi was one of the Psychological Society’s most respected members. His contribution to Problems of Idealism is an eloquent defense of philosophy. For Trubetskoi, the very possibility of philosophy rests on the ideal or transcendental nature of consciousness. Positivists denigrate philosophy as “merely speculative” when its claims cannot be verified by empirical knowledge. Yet this is Trubetskoi’s very point: it is startling that speculative ideals should arise in the first place, when sense experience conveys only empirical data and contingent facts. Even the category of “contingency” presupposes that of “necessity,” a metaphysical idea and a priori condition of the awareness of contingency. Philosophy, “no matter how we define it, strives toward a universal, integral worldview; speculation seeks a final system of knowledge, explanation of the origin and final cause of our existence.”\textsuperscript{218}

Every worldview, positivist no less than openly metaphysical, involves integral understanding, the quest for unity, system, and necessity. The Kantian question Trubetskoi poses is not whether understanding can proceed from pure experience excised of all speculative elements (it cannot), but whether such a priori elements are critically analyzed or remain unconscious metaphysical assump-
tions. The idea of pure experience is itself a speculative abstraction; like all systematic thought, it transcends experience in seeking to understand it.

The very capacity for philosophy is, in this way, the ground of its autonomy. Its ideals cannot be derived from empirical experience alone. The speculative ideals of philosophy persist, against positivist injunctions, because they seek to complete in an ever higher unity the synthesizing work of reason that makes experience possible in the first place. In this, Trubetskoi is heavily indebted to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason. Consciousness transcends experience by enabling it a priori. Or, as Trubetskoi writes, “our reason is an innate metaphysician, and it cannot limit itself to phenomena alone” (222/263).219 But if speculative philosophy is inevitable, why can it not reach its goal? The answer, it is clear, consists in the nature of the ideal as such. “Consciousness of the ideal is given to man, and in this consciousness is the force that gives flight to his thought, lifting it high into the air. But this same consciousness indicates to him all the difference between the ideal and what he possesses in reality. As long as he sees this distinction, he will not lose consciousness of the ideal and will continue to strive toward it” (225/265). This was the principle behind the neo-idealistic philosophy of progress. It also explains why “philosophy, in the precise sense of the word, is not ‘wisdom’ . . . but rather ‘love of wisdom’ ” (225/265). The history of philosophy teaches, in short, that it is consciousness of the ideal that makes us capable of philosophy at all.

The autonomy of philosophy and value of its history are the framework within which I. Aikhenval’d reviewed Problems of Idealism, and the point of view from which he took to task those contributors whom he calls “recent or new guests in the home of abstract thought.”220 Aikhenval’d contends that the volume does not entirely succeed on its own terms: if the authors intended to base their “civic worldview” (liberalism) on philosophical idealism, “then the speculative significance of this attempt turns out to be rather slight and the predominating role in the book falls to the lot of social, not philosophical, elements” (335). This is because several contributors dwell on Russian publicistic writers rather than the philosophers to whom they could have turned more often for theoretical substantiation of liberalism. Struve, for example, writes about the publicist Mikhailovskii under the title, “our philosophical development.” The former Marxists even include themselves in the history of Russian philosophy. “They quote, encourage, and praise each other” (338). Berdiaev is a particular example of the distasteful tendency to evaluate one’s own philosophical significance (this irritates Aikhenval’d). Reading the symposium, Aikhenval’d has the impression he is in the presence of dilettantes. “It is as though writers, once professing economic materialism, have unexpectedly learned of the existence of moral philosophy, of the Critique of Practical
Reason, of Fichte. And having learned of these fine things, they, of course, witnessed completely new horizons and had to impart them to their readers” (338).

Aikhenval’d prefers scholarship to confession of personal philosophies. He suggests that Lappo-Danilevskii’s article may well be the best in the collection, and also thinks well of the contributions by E. N. Trubetskoi, S. N. Trubetskoi, and Novgorodtsev. Sergei Trubetskoi’s essay is a “profound justification of philosophy and valuation of its theoretical and practical significance” (343). Novgorodtsev’s article is “an exhaustive analysis within the reach of only a jurist” (353). By contrast, the articles by the former Marxists are, for the most part, lacking in solid and convincing argumentation. The attempts by Berdiaev, Frank, and Zhukovskii to bridge Kant and Nietzsche are highly dubious; instead Aikhenval’d commends Askol’dov for seeing that Nietzsche’s ethics was based on the idea of beauty. Berdiaev promises to pass “from epistemological premises to further examination of the ethical problem,” but keeps turning to other problems, such as his relations with Struve and their previous publications. Bulgakov on the second page of his article says that reason is unable to give integral knowledge, but one page later talks about metaphysics (and later metaphysics of history). S. F. Ol’denburg is wrong to celebrate Renan’s skepticism as a solution to dogmatism; the proper solution is the critical search for objective truth, not indifference toward it. In light of all this, Aikhenval’d can only conclude that, “Problems of Idealism” victoriously struggles with utilitarian ethics and gains the upper hand over the ‘subjective method’ of Russian sociology. But . . . victory over them is easy. Problems of Idealism shows well that service to progressive civic ideals and a spiritualist worldview are fully compatible. But no one familiar with the history of philosophy ever doubted it” (356).

Aikhenval’d’s criticism may have a certain validity from a purely philosophical standpoint, but this does not diminish the importance of the volume in Russian intellectual history. Part of what makes intellectual history fascinating is the unique and powerful formulation of ideas at certain historical moments, when they acquire a special clarity and urgency. Idealist philosophy within the social and political context of the Russian Liberation Movement was such a moment. From this perspective, even the essays by the former Marxists have an importance Aikhenval’d slighted, apart from their developmental interest in view of the later philosophical and theological achievements of these thinkers (which Aikhenval’d did not, of course, foresee). True, Frank’s essay is perhaps mostly developmental, and Berdiaev’s already bears the style that would long irrate some professional philosophers (while engaging most other readers), but Struve’s is a nice résumé of an important juncture in Russian thought,
and Bulgakov’s essay is widely recognized as a classic. More generally, it may well be, as Aikhenval’d contends, that the history of philosophy leaves no doubt of the compatibility of idealism and liberalism, but the main task of *Problems of Idealism* (as Aikhenval’d himself recognized) was to convey that to a broader audience in the interests of constitutional reform, in a country where (as elsewhere in Europe) it was hardly the common assumption.

**Continuations and Differentiations**

*Problems of Idealism* and its successor volumes, *Vekhi* (*Landmarks*, 1909) and *Iz glubiny* (*Out of the Depths*, 1918), spanned sixteen years of intellectual development among their common contributors, as well as three revolutions. Thus it is not surprising that there are significant differences among the three collections, but there are also impressive continuities. On the whole, *Problems of Idealism* is a more constructive work than its successors: its positive task was to advance neo-idealism as a theory of liberalism, although this required, as we have seen, refutation of the common view that positivism was the natural philosophical basis of progress. The successor volumes concentrated rather on the negative task of criticizing the psychology of the Russian intelligentsia and its “mystique of revolution.” In this, however, the *Vekhi* group could, and did, draw heavily on the *Problemny* critique of positivism.²²²

For example, Berdiaev’s *Vekhi* essay, “Philosophical Verity and Intelligentsia Truth,” proceeds from the neo-idealist defense of the autonomy of philosophy in arguing that the intelligentsia conception of “truth” (*pravda*) did not respect philosophical “truth” or “verity” (*istina*). Before the intelligentsia can come to “a synthesis which will satisfy its valuable demand for an organic union of theory and practice, of ‘just truth’ and ‘true justice,’” it needs to recognize truth as a value in itself.²²³ Berdiaev laments the continuing politicization and ideologization of philosophy at the hands of the positivist intelligentsia (his example is A. A. Bogdanov). He recommends Lopatin, chair of the Psychological Society, as a true representative of philosophy, although Bogdanov would no doubt always be preferred, since “Lopatin’s philosophy demands serious intellectual effort, and no programmatic [or partisan] slogans follow from it.”²²⁴ The contraband critique, which underlies Mikhail Gershenson’s description of positivism as the “general constitutional derangement of consciousness,”²²² also reappears in *Vekhi* (Bulgakov and Frank, in particular) and in *Iz glubiny* (Novgorodsev and others). It informs some of Struve’s important writings in this period as well,²²⁶ and many of Novgorodtsev’s. Another continuity is the idea that the relative autonomy of the parts is
necessary for the integrity of the whole (either self or society)—freedom of conscience in its broader sense. It underlies part of the sharp criticism of intelligentsia maximalism and nihilism, and is also evident in the related concern, expressed in some of the Vekhi and Iz glubiny essays (i.e., the ones that are most consistently liberal), for the development of legal consciousness, civil society, and free cultural creativity.

One of the main criticisms Vekhi and Iz glubiny level against the radical intelligentsia is that its attitudes were not propitious for the development of personhood. In this, Problems of Idealism and the Psychological Society exercised perhaps their strongest influence on the Vekhi group as a whole: neo-idealist personalism. But while recognition of personal autonomy and dignity is a necessary foundation of liberalism, it is not a sufficient one. Liberalism also requires a normative sense of the rule of law, which safeguards the scope of negative liberty necessary for self-realization by setting limits to the exercise of state power, and the power of one person over another. In other words, liberalism requires not only an abstract recognition of personhood, but also citizenship, conceived as respect for and willingness to defend each other's civil rights, or as the basis of civil society (probably a condition, in turn, of the fullest development of personhood). Legal consciousness was the subject of Kistiakovskii's classic Vekhi essay, "In Defense of Law," but some members of the Vekhi group combined personalism with disregard for the idea of law and civil society, for the relative autonomy of spheres such as church and state, and, in general, for the necessary distinction between the absolute and relative (in metaphysics and philosophy of history as well as social philosophy). For this reason, it is risky to say that the group as a whole criticized the intelligentsia from a consistently liberal perspective. Meanwhile, some scholars, notably Leonard Schapiro, have tried to situate Vekhi squarely within the philosophical tradition of Russian liberalism, comparing it to one of the best representatives of that tradition, Chicherin. Vekhi can be placed within the tradition (if not perfectly), as long as it is kept in mind that Chicherin, the other Psychological Society neo-idealists, and Problems of Idealism laid the tradition itself. Among the contributors to Vekhi and Iz glubiny, I would identify the following as most consistently liberal: Struve, Frank, Kistiakovskii, Novgorodtsev, and Kotliarevskii.

The great divide that separates Problems of Idealism from its successor volumes is the Revolution of 1905, the hopes before it and the bitter disappointments after it. Problems of Idealism was conceived and its contributions were written, as indicated above, when the founding fathers of the Liberation Movement hoped to rely on the zemstvo milieu in persuading the autocracy to introduce constitutional reform. This initial approach was soon abandoned in
favor of "no enemies on the left," a policy endorsed at the July 1903 Schaffhausen conference that preceded the formation of the Union of Liberation. Present at Schaffhausen were most members of the Problemy project. They seem to have accepted the idea of a united front between liberals and radicals, convinced by the intransigence of the autocracy that only working in concert with all disaffected groups in Russian society, regardless of their level of civic consciousness, could force the tsarist regime to give in. Kistiakovskii was one of those who participated in the Schaffhausen meeting. But he took exception to the policy of radicalization, warning against facilitating the replacement, in his words, of the Romanov autocracy with a Leninist autocracy.  

Although the neo-idealistic critique of positivism was implicitly critical of the outlook of most Russian intelligentsia, this was not given the sharp edge in *Problems of Idealism* that it acquired with Vekhi. Such discretion proved fortuitous, once the Liberation Movement shifted leftward and began soliciting the support of the "democratic intelligentsia." The progressive character of neo-idealism, which its representatives had been so concerned to stress, could now be given a different spin, as if to convince the positivist radicals that the idealists in the Union of Liberation posed no threat to the united-front strategy. This was apparently Novgorodtsev’s intent when he seemed to write with regret in 1904:

> In the oppressive atmosphere of our social life, theoretical disagreements that divide people who are otherwise apparently close in their social ideals and that, generally speaking, are a necessary condition of the free development of thought, nonetheless take on the character of tragic clashes, providing material for whole social dramas, in which one side inevitably turns out to be in the position of representing an evil force, while the other considers itself to be the defender of the true good.

What matters is that everyone is progressive. This was the implication when Novgorodtsev went on to say, in words I have already quoted, that for all the theoretical differences among even idealists themselves, the practical principle on which they are in full agreement is the absolute dignity of the person. "But in the end do not all living and progressive movements of Russian thought meet on this point?"

Thus, in the interests of the united front, the idealist critique of the intelligentsia remained muted. This is not necessarily to say that the neo-idealists, or liberals more generally, in the Liberation Movement violated their own principles. It may well be that only something very much like the united front that the liberationists forged could have brought Nicholas II to grant a constitution. After all, their strategy worked. The issue seems to reside more in
whether, as Richard Pipes writes, "once unleashed, Bakunin's 'evil passions' might not subside, even after the country had been given its freedom." In any event, the perception after 1905 among the idealists who formed the Vekhi group was that the radical intelligentsia caused the miscarriage of Russian liberalism by blocking constructive work with what might otherwise have become a real Duma monarchy. Given this perception (right or, more probably, wrong), the idealist focus shifted from liberal theory in *Problems of Idealism* to relentless critique of the intelligentsia in *Vekhi*. And as idealism had been commended for its inherent progressive aspirations and therefore as the best philosophical foundation of liberalism, now the positivist intelligentsia was condemned for its rigid—indeed, conservative—mentality and inability to adjust to constitutional life, civic responsibility, and the demands of freedom.

Neo-idealists and other liberals in the Liberation Movement faced dismal prospects over the longer term. For while it did prove possible to unite society for the immediate political goal of forcing the autocracy to capitulate, this expedient (and short-term) unity was very far from the type of civil society on which the fate of a liberal Russia ultimately depended. The autocracy had for too long prevented the development of citizenship and a commitment to the rule of law among all but a small section of the population, and it continued to do so after 1905. The result was that when the old regime collapsed in 1917, Russian civil society was too thin and fragile to long sustain itself before the workers, soldiers, and peasants, each concerned with their own particular interests rather than with the defense of universal civil rights. This was the situation that enabled the Bolsheviks to come to power. The clarify and force of the neo-idealist defense of Russian liberalism were not enough in a country where the autocracy had deprived liberalism of the necessary social support. The tragic irony was that the same frail social basis of Russian liberalism that contributed to its strength in theory (by making its intellectual defense all the more necessary) also prevented it from being realized in practice.

**Notes**

Editor's Introduction


8. In 1974 the exiled Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and several intellectuals still in Russia published a collection of essays entitled Iz pod glib (From Under the Rubble), which was modeled on Out of the Depths (whose title it echoes) and Vekhi. It, too, can be seen as a (remote) successor volume to Problems of Idealism. A. Solzhenitsyn et al., From Under the Rubble, trans. A. M. Brock et al. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975).
9. An important source on him and the Psychological Society is Nikolai Iakovlevich Grot v ocherkakh, vospominaniakh i pis'xakh tovarishchei i uchenikov, druzei i pochitatelei (St. Petersburg, 1911).


11. N. Ia. Grot, “Eshche o zadachakh zhurnalaca,” VFP 2: 2, kn. 6 (1891), p. i. According to Ivanov-Razumik, Istoria russkoi obshchestvennoi myslii, II, the journal “played a large role in the history of the revival of philosophical thought in Russia. Perhaps it received its special importance because it was not the organ of a particular philosophical group but was, on the contrary, nonpartisan in the philosophical sense. True, the directors of this journal and the large part of its continuous contributors quite definitely adhered to ‘idealism’ in one respect or another; but at the same time the pages of the journal were always open to the most ‘realistic’ doctrines and to lively exchange of opinions among opposing philosophical views. . . Readers thus had before them a kind of ‘parliament of philosophical opinions’” (p. 452).


17. Vladimir Solovyov, Lectures on Divine Humanity, trans. Boris Jakim (Hudson, N.Y.: Lindisfarne Press, 1995). These seminal lectures were delivered in St. Petersburg, 1878–1881. Godmanhood, which can also be translated “divine humanity” or the “humanity of God,” is the main subject of Paul Valliere’s new study, Modern Russian


19. A prominent example is Chicherin’s Filosofia prava (Philosophy of Law, 1898–1899).


21. Chicherin died on 3 February 1904, just after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. His last works, Filosofia prava (Moscow, 1900) and Rossia nakonane dvadsatogo stolettiia (Berlin, 1900), were powerful intellectual spurs to the Russian Liberation Movement, especially in its initial phase, when the constitutionallists hoped to rely mostly on the zemstvo milieu for social support.

22. In March 1903, on the very pages of Osvoboedienie, Struve specified the connection between Problems of Idealism and the Liberation Movement. He wrote that Problems of Idealism represented the strengthening and broadening of the union between philosophical idealism and liberalism (“practical-political idealism”) established by the brilliant publicistic writings of Vladimir Solov’ev. The task of the Russian Liberation Movement, Struve concluded, was to base its own “self-consciousness and dignity” on the ideas and principles that idealism showed to be irrefutable. P. B. Struve, “O chem dumaet odna kniga?” Osvoboedienie, I, no. 18 (2/15 March 1903), pp. 311–312. Also see Catherine Evtuhov, The Cross and the Sickle: Sergei Bulgakov and the Fate of Russian Religious Philosophy, p. 88.
23. A learned society of philosophers and social theorists had special significance in Russia, where, as mentioned in the text, the weak social foundations of liberalism made its intellectual defense all the more important. This historical peculiarity helps explain why, "as Russian liberalism broadened from its gentry base, professors were among the earliest and most prominent adherents from the professions," according to George Fischer in his pioneering study, Russian Liberalism: From Gentry to Intelligentsia, p. 53. In the face of government infringement of university autonomy, especially after the University Statute of 1884, professors turned increasingly to learned societies. A. D. Stepanov, "Liberálnaia intelligentsia v obshchestvennom dvizhenii Rossii na rubezhe XIX--XX vv.," Istoričeskie zapiski 109 (1983), p. 68, describes their significance: "The most influential and authoritative organizations of the Russian intelligentsia [in the broad sense] were the learned societies... The leading role in these societies was played by the professoriate, in which the cultural intelligentsia saw their natural leader (and not only in scientific questions). Learned societies made an enormous contribution to the country's culture." Valuable studies on the professions, learned societies, and civil society in late imperial Russia include Richard S. Wortman, The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia, ed. Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Harley D. Balzer, ed., Russia's Missing Middle Class: The Professions in Russian History (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1996); Laura Engelstein, The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1992); Nancy M. Frieden, Russian Physicians in an Era of Reform and Revolution, 1856–1905 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Samuel D. Kassow, Students, Professors, and the State in Tsarist Russia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); James C. McClelland, Autocrats and Academics: Education, Culture, and Society in Tsarist Russia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Charles E. Timberlake, "Higher Learning, the State, and the Professions in Russia," The Transformation of Higher Learning, 1860–1930, ed. Konrad H. Jaracz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); and David Wartenweiler, Civil Society and Academic Debate in Russia, 1905–1914 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

24. Emmons, The Formation of Political Parties, pp. 21–72, esp. p. 64, emphasizes this aspect of the history of the constitutional reform movement in Russia. Liberal professionals themselves often had a zemstvo background. A highly visible example of this combination was the "professor-zemstvo." The Psychological Society was home to several such figures, including B. N. Chicherin, S. N. Trubetskoi, E. N. Trubetskoi, S. A. Kotliarevski, and V. I. Vernadski. The zemstvo service records and other data on these five men can be found in the appendix, "Zemskie glasnye (gubernskie i uradnye), uchastvuische v zemskom liberal'nom dvizhenii kontsa XIX-nachala XX veka," to P. Rumy, Zemskoe liberal'noe dvizhenie, pp. 232–283, and, for the last three, in the appendix, "Party Alignments of Zemstvo Activists in 1905 and 1906," to Emmons, The Formation of Political Parties.

25. The convergence of interests between traditional zemstvo constitutionalists and the "new liberals" has been an influential paradigm in the historiography ever since George Fischer's 1958 study, Russian Liberalism: From Gentry to Intelligentsia (see esp.
pp. 83–116). Gregory L. Freeze, “A National Liberation Movement and the Shift in Russian Liberalism, 1902–1903,” Slavic Review 28: 1 (1969), pp. 81–93, clarified the picture by stressing that the leadership itself of the Liberation Movement did not shift “from gentry to intelligentsia,” since from the beginning it took the form of an alliance of zemstvo, intelligentsia, and representatives of the learned professions (especially jurists and professors). The shift consisted in their reappraisal of the dynamics and available social support for the Liberation Movement, from initial reliance on the zemstvo milieu to a policy of “no enemies on the left.” This paradigm is employed extensively in Shatsillo, Russkii liberalism.

26. N. M. Pirunova, Zemskoe liberal'noe dvizhenie, p. 91; in the appendix she identifies 241 oppositional or liberal zemstvo deputies (a much broader category than the constitutionalists). For comparison, the Zemstvo Statute of 12 June 1890 assigned the number of zemstvo deputies at the district level to 10,236 and at the provincial level to 1,618, as reported in Kermit E. McKenzie, “Zemstvo Organization and Role within the Administrative Structure,” The Zemstvo in Russia: An Experiment in Local Self-Government, ed. Terence Emmons and Wayne S. Vucinich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 44.


31. E. N. Trubetskoi, Vospominaniia (Sofia, 1923; reprinted Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1976), pp. 179–185. In addition to the philosophers, the regular guests were Mikhail Nikolaevich’s colleagues from the judicial profession; Moscow University professors, including the historians V. I. Ger’E, V. O. Kliuchevskii, and M. S. Korelin; V. A. Gol’tsev, editor of Russkaia mysl’; S. A. Iur’ev, a well-known Russian litteraturo, from the generation of the 1840s; V. P. Preobrazhenskii, an editor of Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii; and I. I. Polivanov, a respected pedagogue, gymnium director, and specialist in Russian language and literature. All were members of the Psychological Society. Also see N. P. Korelina, “Za pia’desiat let (Vospominaniia o L. M. Lopatinе),” Voprosy filosofii, no. 11 (1993), pp. 115–121. Nadezhda Petrovna Korelina was married to M. S. Korelin (1855–1899), a historian of Italian humanism and active member of the Psychological Society. After her husband’s death, she became secretary of Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii in January 1900 and served it the remaining eighteen years of its existence. She was Lopatin’s valuable colleague and an important factor in the continued success of the journal.


34. Emmons, “The Beseda Circle,” pp. 489–490, for membership. Five members of the circle were professors (p. 467); three of them were the Psychological Society philosophers. Sergei Trubetskoi was one of only two Beseda members without formal ties to zemstvo or gentry institutions (the other was V. A. Maklakov).

36. D. I. Shakhovskoi, “Soiuz Osvoobozhdeniia,” Zarnitsy, 1909, no. 2 (Part II), p. 85. Prince Dmitrii Shakhovskoi (1861–1939) was a Beseda member and one of the most prominent figures in the Liberation Movement.


38. D. N. Shipov, Vospominaniia i dumy o perezhivotom (Moscow, 1918), p. 128. Further consideration, however, led Shipov to the judgment that Witte’s purpose in arguing that autocracy and local self-government were incompatible was, in fact, to demonstrate the inevitability of a constitution (pp. 129–130). Shipov was a strong defender of zemstvo autonomy, but his neo-Slavophile social philosophy rejected the need for a constitution. Therefore, his second reading of Witte’s memo distressed him as much as the first.

39. Trubetskoi, Kniaz’ S. N. Trubetskoi, p. 34. Trubetskoi himself refers obliquely (but transparently enough) to the Witte document in a penetrating analysis of Russian state and society, written just after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War: “In the course of a quarter century they have tried to convince us that autocracy is incompatible with zemstvo self-government, with freedom of conscience and the press, with freedom of association, with inviolability of the person, with a universal [vesesolovny] civic order, with an independent and open court, with university autonomy. Not only the opponents of autocracy, but still more its appointed guardians have unanimously demonstrated this. And it has been indisputably and incontrovertibly proved not by arguments, not by pamphlets or ministerial memoranda and official documents, but by the facts themselves,” S. N. Trubetskoi, “Na rubezhe,” Sobranie sochinenii Kn. Sergeyia Nikolaevicha Trubetskogo, I. Publitsisticheskie stat’i (Moscow, 1907), pp. 459–460.


42. Ibid., pp. 482–485.


48. Shatsillo, Russkii liberalism p. 76.


51. See M. A. Kudrinetskii [Kolerov], "Arkhivnaia istoriia sbornika 'Problemy idealizma' (1902)," pp. 158–160, for the details in this paragraph. Bernice Glatter Rosenthal and Bohachevsky-Chomiak, in their introduction to A Revolution of the Spirit, p. 21, also identify Zhukovskii as the financier of Problemy idealizma.


54. Frantsiskanskii ordre i rimskaiia kuriia v XIII i XIV vv. (The Franciscan Order and the Roman Curia in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, 1901), for the magister, and Lamenn e i novosti kato litsion (Lamenn e and Recent Catholicism, 1904), for the doctorate.


56. Ocherki realisticheskogo mirovozzreniia: Sb. statei po filosofii, obshchestvennoi nauke i zhidm (St. Petersburg, 1904) was the most significant positivist response to the idealist revival. It included articles by V. A. Bazaro v, A. A. Bogdanov, A. V. Lunacharskii, and S. A. Suvorov. On the polemic, see A. A. Ermichev, "Problemy idealizma' i 'Ocherki realisticheskogo mirovozzreniia’—polemika o sotsial’nom ideale," Filosofii i os nov bodeist’noe dvizhenie v Rossii, eds. A. A. Ermichev, S. N. Savel’ev (Leningrad, 1899), pp. 167–184.


59. V. I. Vernadskii, "O nauchnom mirovozzrenii," VFP 13: 5, kn. 65 (1902), pp. 1409–1465. On 20 August 1902 Vernadskii wrote to his wife: "I am now working out one of the first introductory lectures to my course [on the history of physical-chemical and geological sciences], which perhaps I will publish separately in ‘Voprosy filosofii.’ The lecture is about the relation of science to philosophy (and in part religion) in the development of thought (...). These old ideas, arising in me long ago, have become especially clear these days thanks to conversations with Pavel Ivanovich [Novgorodtsev] (with whom I do not completely agree)." Quoted by Kudrinetskii [Kolerov], p. 162 (ellipses his).

60. "Moskovskoe Psikholoogicheskoe Obshchestvo," VFP 16: 1, kn. 76 (1903), pp. 145–147. Vernadskii’s paper, "Kant i estestvoznanie XVIII stoletia," appears in the
same issue, pp. 36–70. Also see V. I. Shubin, “Kant i Vernadskii,” in Kant i filosofia v Rossii, eds. Z. A. Kamenskii and V. A. Zhuchkov (Moscow: Nauka, 1994), pp. 212–226.

61. Bailes, Science and Russian Culture, p. 34.


64. Emmons, The Formation of Political Parties, pp. 66–67, stresses this in his account of the Priutino Brotherhood.


67. Quoted by Bailes, Science and Russian Culture, p. 28.

68. I wish to acknowledge here G. M. Hamburk’s valuable suggestions about possible connections between the Bratsvo Priutiino and the Problems of Idealism project.

69. The conversion of the “legal Marxists” to idealism has long been considered a milestone in Silver Age intellectual history, and is one of its best known chapters. In addition to Richard Pipes’s classic two-volume study of Struve, see Richard Kindersley, The First Russian Revisionists. A Study of ‘Legal Marxism’ in Russia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), and Arthur P. Mendel, Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia: Legal Marxism and Legal Populism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961). Hereafter, I follow Kindersley’s suggestion: “inverted commas properly enclose ‘legal Marxism,’ but it would be tedious to persist with them.”

70. Quoted by Shatsillo, Russkii liberalizm, p. 60.

71. As Rosenthal and Bohachevsky-Chomiak write in their introduction to A Revolution of the Spirit (p. 20): “The philosophers were their first, and natural, allies in the process. A concrete result of that collaboration was . . . the symposium Problemy idealizma.”

72. Spektorskii’s review is reprinted in Nikolai Iakovlevich Grot v ocherkakh, vospominaniakh i pis’makh tovarishchei i uchenikov, drugoi i pochitatelei (St. Peters-
burg, 1911), pp. 374–386; here, p. 374. Evgenii V. Spektorskii (1873–1952) was professor (from 1913) and later rector at Kiev University, president of the Philosophical Society there, and an active émigré scholar after the Revolution in the theory of the social sciences, philosophy of law, and philosophy of religion.

73. S. N. Bulgakov, "Chto daet sovremennomu soznaniyu filosofia Vladimira Solov'eva?" in Ot markizema k idealizmu: Sbornik statei, 1896–1903 (St. Petersburg, 1903), pp. 195–262. This essay was first published in VFP 14: 1–1, kn. 66–67 (1903).


75. S. N. Bulgakov, "O zakonomernosti sotsial'nykh iavlenii," VFP 7: 5, kn. 35 (1896), pp. 575–611. Struve's response was "Svoboda i istoricheskai neobkhodimost'," VFP 8: 1, kn. 36 (1897), pp. 120–139. Arthur P. Mendel, Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia, p. 167, writes that in Struve's article, "Legal Marxism took its first hesitant step . . . toward neo-Kantian idealism." Bulgakov at the time was still committed to positivism and Marxism. On this debate, see also Richard Pipes, Struve: Liberal on the Left, pp. 184–189.

76. For Bulgakov's development from Marxism to idealism, see the fine studies by Evtuho', The Cross and the Sickie, pp. 28–65, and Paul Vulliere, Modern Russian Theology, pp. 227–251.


81. Walicki, Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism, treats Chicherin under the rubric of the "old liberal" philosophy of law and Solov'ev and Novgorodtsev as representatives of new liberalism, a contrast that involves differences not so much between philosophical foundations (all three were idealists) as between their own social backgrounds (zemstvo in Chicherin's case and urban professional in the other two) and in the social content of their respective liberal philosophies (classical liberal versus the new right to a dignified existence). This distinction helps explain why Solov'ev and Novgorodtsev were more popular among the former Marxists than Chicherin was. Chicherin, a Hegelian, cannot be called a neo-idealist without qualification. Yet, his Philosophy of Law "appeared not as the work of an epigone but, rather, as a milestone on the new road," Walicki writes. "It was indeed such a revival of the old philosophical idealism, which took account of new trends in philosophy and the theory of law, and could therefore be treated as representing a neo-idealist current in legal philosophy" (p. 161).

82. The Trubetskoi and Of'denburg were not present at the Schaffhausen conference. See Shatsillo, Russkii liberalizm, p. 158, for Schaffhausen attendance. Pipes, in Struve: Liberal on the Left, makes the connection between the Problemy authors and Schaffhausen. Referring to the four former legal Marxists, he writes, "In the winter of 1902—
members of this group published an important symposium, Problems of Idealism, in which they attempted to provide a generalized metaphysical and religious foundation for liberal politics (p. 334). The other two contributors to Problems, A. S. Lappo-Danilevskii and S. A. Askol’dov, had no significant role in the Liberation Movement, insofar as I know.

83. Since Kotliarevskii and Vernadskii were not contributors, I will briefly note here their political activity during this period, which has parallels with Novgorodtsev’s. Kotliarevskii was co-opted with Novgorodtsev onto the Council of the Union of Liberation immediately after its constituent congress. Both served in “Group A” of the Moscow branch of the Union of Liberation, as did Vernadskii. Group A, which consisted primarily of zemstvo and professors, was the union’s theory and policy planning center. In his important role in Group A’s work on a draft constitution for the Russian Empire, Kotliarevskii was nearly alone in insisting on women’s suffrage. He and Vernadskii were founders and Central Committee members of the Kadet party, and Kotliarevskii was a deputy to the First State Duma. See Shatsillo, Russkii liberalizm, pp. 158, 204, 259–260; Emmons, “The Beseda Circle,” p. 469; and Shakhovskoi, “Sovuz Osvobozhdenii,” pp. 122–123.


86. For example, see S. N. Trubetskoi, “O prirode chelovecheskogo soznaniia” (1889–1891), and “Osnovaniia idealizma” (1896), reprinted in Sobranie sochinenii Kn. Sergeia Nikolaeovicha Trubetskogo, II, Filosofskie stat’i (Moscow, 1908), pp. 1–110, 161–284; L. M. Lopatin, “Uchenie Kant o poznanii” (1905), reprinted in his Filosofskie kharakteristik i techi (Moscow, 1911), pp. 56–69; and Evgenii Trubetskoi, Metafizicheskie predpochineniia poznanii. Opyt predoilenii Kantia i kantiansstva (Moscow, 1917).


89. Struve, “Predislovie,” p. xxxii. Richard Kindersley, The First Russian Revisionists, pp. 118–122, analyzes Struve’s argument from duty and free will to the substantiaility of the self, or the entailment of ontology from ethics.


91. Struve, “Predislovie,” p. xxxii.

92. P. L. Novgorodtsev, Kant i Gegg v ikh ucheniakh o prave i gosudarstve. Dva
tipicheskikh postroeniiia v oblasti filosofii prava (Moscow, 1921), pp. 98–99 (note). The
words he quotes from Struve (he does not give the citation) can be found in Struve,
94. P. Borisov [Struve], "V chem zhe istinnyi natsionalizm?" VFP 12: 4, kn. 59 (1901),
pp. 493–528; reprinted in his collection of articles, Na raznye temy (St. Petersburg,
95. P. Borisov [Struve], "V chem zhe istinnyi natsionalizm?" pp. 503, 517.
96. Ibid., pp. 504, 520.
97. Ibid., p. 507 (emphasis Struve's).
98. Ibid., p. 512.
(1901), pp. 315–361.
100. Novgorodtsev, Kant i Gegel' v ikh ucheniakh o prave i gosudarstve, pp. 146–
147. In the journal article, "Uchenie Kanta o prave i gosudarstve," see the corresponding
section on natural law, pp. 350–361. Walicki devotes a chapter of his Legal
on Novgorodtsev's Kant i Gegel' v ikh ucheniakh o prave i gosudarstve, see pp. 304–
306.
101. Novgorodtsev, Kant i Gegel' v ikh ucheniakh o prave i gosudarstve, pp. 148–
149.
102. Ibid., pp. 150.
103. Struve, "Predislovie," p. lviii. Also see his essay, "K voprosu o moralii," from
104. E. N. Trubetskoj, "Novoe isscledovanie o filosofii prava Kanta i Gegelia," VFP 13:
1, kn. 61 (1902), p. 602.
105. P. I. Novgorodtsev, "K voprosu o sovremennikh filosofskikh iskaniiakh. (Otvet
of P. I. Novgorodtsev, Ob oshchestvennom ideale (Moscow: Pressa, 1991; Voprosy
filosofii series), p. 5.
107. Quoted by Dimitrii Levinskii, "P. I. Novgorodtsev," Russkaia religioznio-
filosofskaiia mysli XX veka, ed. Nikolai P. Poltoratsky (Pittsburgh, PA.: University of
108. P. I. Novgorodtsev, "Sushchestvo russkogo pravoslavnogo soznaniia," Pravo-
slavie i kultura. Sbornik religioznio-filosofskikh statei, ed. V. V. Zen'kovskii (Berlin,
1923), p. 22. A translation of this essay can be found in A Revolution of the Spirit, eds.
Bermic Glatzer Rosenthal and Marta Bohachevsky-Chomiak.
1991, p. 218, reprinted from Rossiia i Slavianstvo (Paris), 27 April 1939. Walicki, Legal
Philosophies of Russian Liberalism, pp. 340–341, also stresses the continuity in Nov-
gorodtsev's thought.
110. Struve, "Filosofskaia idei' nogo dobra ili apologiia real'nogo zla?" Na raznye temy,
The First Russian Revisionists, p. 145, also point to Struve's about-face on Solov'ev.


113. This did not prevent him, however, from attempting to appropriate for Russian liberalism Ivan Aksakov’s defense of freedom of conscience (“V chem zhe istinyi natsionalizm?” pp. 513–519). See the section below, “Freedom of Conscience.”


115. Ibid., pp. 125–126.

116. Ibid., p. 119.

117. Ibid., p. 120.

118. The following details and quotations in this paragraph are from Kudrinskii [Kolerov], “Arkhvinaia istoriiia sbornika ‘Problemy idealizma’ (1904),” pp. 157–158.

119. Kudrinskii [Kolerov], p. 158, provides the initial table of contents. Most of the proposed contributors were zemstvo and/or professors. Kudrinskii [Kolerov], p. 159, reports that through K. K. Arsen’ev (whom Pipes, Struve: Liberal on the Left, p. 341, calls “the idol of Struve’s youth”), Struve became acquainted with the “Bratstvo Priutino,” one of his connections, in turn, to Novgorodtsev. According to Emmons, The Formation of Political Parties, p. 65, from the late 1880s Arsen’ev organized regular “evenings” and colloquia in St. Petersburg between zemstvo and nonzemstvo professionals and intellectuals that were attended by, for example, Struve and S. A. Kordiarevskii.


121. D. N. Shipov, the head of the neo-Slavophile direction, himself rejected the label and did not think that Orthodoxy was superior to other Christian faiths. See Emmons, The Formation of Political Parties, p. 407, nt. 120; and Leonard Scharlau, Rationalism and Nationalism in Russian Nineteenth-Century Political Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 148.

122. P. Borisov [Struve], “V chem zhe istinyi natsionalizm?” pp. 505–506. Struve does not provide a specific citation for Novgorodtsev. In the fourth edition of his excellent Lektsii po istorii filosofii prava: Uchenia novogo vremen, XVI–XIX vv. (Moscow, 1918), Novgorodtsev’s consideration of Williams (on which it is clear Struve entirely bases his account) is on pp. 65–68. Both Novgorodtsev and Struve refer to a series of articles by M. M. Kovalevskii, “Rodonachal’nik angliiskogo radikalizma,” Russkaia mysl’ (January–March 1892).


124. Andrzej Walicki, The Slavophile Controversy: History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth-Century Russian Thought, trans. Hilda Andrews-Rusieck (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), striving for fairness, identifies the arguments that could be made on Aksakov’s behalf, including his defense of freedom of conscience and speech. “All these facts do not, however, affect the over-all diagnosis that Ivan Aksakov
represents a glaring example of the evolution of Slavophilism towards chauvinistic nationalism and extreme social and political reaction," which included anti-Semitism (p. 501).


127. Walicki, Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism, p. 312. Walicki provides a full analysis of Novgorodtsev’s essay (pp. 312–318).

128. G. M. Hamburg, Boris Chicherin and Early Russian Liberalism, pp. 225–233, provides a full account of Chicherin’s lecture and its reception. According to Hamburg, "by expressing only the conservative dimension of conservative liberalism, the inaugural lecture opened Chicherin to the charge that he had abandoned liberalism altogether, that he was nothing but a reactionary anti-revolutionist and, worst of all, a blind worshiper of the state" (p. 228). Hamburg also considers Aksakov’s criticism of Chicherin (pp. 230–231), which appeared in the periodical Den’ (21 November 1861).

129. P. Borisov [Struve], "V chem zhe istinny natsionalizm?" p. 513 (note). Walicki, Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism, p. 137, notes that Struve was wrong in describing Chicherin’s earlier views as positivistic.

130. Ger’ë (1837–1919) was an active member of the society from its earliest years, and was elected to honorary membership in January 1899, "in commemoration of Vladimir Ivanovich’s outstanding services, well-known to everyone, before Russian philosophical thought." See "Moskovskoe Psikhologicheskoe Obshchestvo," VFP 10: 7, kn. 46 (1899), pp. 68–69, 78. Following the defense of his doctoral dissertation, Leibnits i ego vek (St. Petersburg, 1868), he became professor of European history at Moscow University. His works focused on the history of political thought, philosophy of history, and historiography. He devoted three of his later books to church history and the idea of the "Kingdom of God" in medieval historical and political thought: Blachennyi Avgustin (Moscow, 1910), Zapadnoe monastirov i papstvo (Moscow, 1912), and Rasstvuet zapadnoi teokratii (Moscow, 1916). His important book, Filosofia istorii ot Augustina do Hegelia (Moscow, 1915), includes a chapter on theocratic ideas of human history. Ger’ë also wrote Frantsisk [St. Francis of Assisi], apostol nischtet i liubvi (Moscow, 1908). His work in church history stressed that theocracy can be no less transcendent an ideal than the Kingdom of God itself, not a practical goal of politics. Western Christianity, in the final analysis, recognized this. "The papacy," Ger’ë wrote in a review, "even in the epoch of its greatest triumph, did not reject in principle the independence of political power and civil law." See his "K voprosu o sushchnosti teokratii," VFP 10: 3, kn. 48 (1899), p. 311.


cept of autonomy was central to the neo-idealistic development of liberalism in the Psychology of Society.


136. E. N. Trubetskoi, Mirosozertsanie V. S. Solov’eva, I (Moscow, 1913), p. 177. Trubetskoi’s classic two-volume study takes as its overall framework the critique of Solov’ev’s utopianism.

137. E. N. Trubetskoi wrote two substantial volumes on the idea of theocracy in medieval Europe: Religiozno-obshchestvennyi idej zadapnogo khrisntanstva v V veke: Mirosozertsanie bl. Augusta (Moscow, 1892); and Religiozno-obshchestvennyi idej zadapnogo khrisntanstva v XI veke: Ideja bozheskogo tsarstva v tvoremichkh Grigorii VII-go i ego publitistov—sovremenikov (Kiev, 1897). Novgorodtsev’s debut on the pages of Voprosy filosofii took the form of a review, co-authored with V. I. Ger’e, of the second volume: “K voprosu o subshchsti teokrati,” VFP 10: 3, kn. 48 (1899), pp. 304–311. Also see Ger’e’s works cited above. Novgorodtsev’s major study, Ob obshchestvennom ideale (Moscow, 1917), claims that every utopia “in essence reproduces the idea of medieval theocracy about the salvation of people through a society of the faithful” (pp. 17–18). S. A. Kotliarevskii also wrote a great deal on religious history, including his first two dissertations (cited above). The great historian V. O. Kliuchevskii, another member of the Psychological Society (although not an idealist in his philosophical views), authored a series of articles entitled, “Zapadnoe vliianie v Rossii XVII v. (istoriko-psikhologicheskiy ocherk),” VFP 8: 3, 3–4, kn. 36, 38–39 (1897), in which he argued that the impact of western ideas in Russia was so great because the Russian church failed to provide a strong source of indigenous intellectual traditions. Kliuchevskii pointed in particular to the debilitating effects of the seventeenth-century Schism, which increased the church’s dependence on the state and led to a precipitous decline in its influence on educated society. Deprived of religious vospitanie, Russians turned to ideology as a surrogate for spiritual satisfaction the Russian church could not provide. Kliuchevskii’s student Pavel Miliukov, also a (nominal) member of the Psychological Society, pursued essentially the same argument in his Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul’tury (Studies of Russian Culture), which first appeared in 1896. See Melissa Kirschke Stockdale, Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 70–71.

138. See Solov’ev’s series of articles published from 1881 to 1883 in Ivan Aksakov’s
Rus’: “O dukhovnoi vlasti v Rossii,” “O tserkvi i raskole,” and “Velikii spor i khristianskaya politika.” They have recently been collected in V. S. Solov’ev, Sochinenii v dvukh tomakh, I, Filosofskaya publiitsistika (Moscow: Pravda, 1989; the Voprosy filosofii series). For summary and analysis, see E. N. Trubetskoi, Mirosozertsamie V. S. Solov’eva, I, pp. 437–448; Losev, Vladimir Solov’ev i ego vremia, pp. 342–347; Mochul’skii, Vladimir Solov’ev, pp. 134–144; and Streumoukhoff, Vladimir Soloviev and His Messianic Work, pp. 141–146, 187–188.

139. Especially important in this respect is Solov’ev’s Evreistvo i khristianskii vopros (Jewry and the Christian Question, 1884); Sobranie sochinenii Vladimira Sergeevicha Solov’eva, vol. 4, pp. 135–185.

140. According to Losev, “Of all of Solov’ev’s ideas, none was so far removed from contemporary Russian public opinion [obshchestvennost’]. Everyone considered this Solov’evian theocracy something queer” (p. 629).

141. Walicki, Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism, p. 191.

142. Solov’ev was involved in organizing famine relief. He was among the thirty prominent citizens who met at the Moscow apartment of I. I. Petrunkevich for this purpose at the end of September or beginning of October 1891. The meeting was convened by V. I. Vernadskii, his wife Natasha Egorovna, A. A. Kornilov, and D. I. Shakhovskoi, all members of the Bratstvo Priitutino. See G. V. Vernadskii, “Bratstvo Priitutino,” Novyi Zhurnal 28: kn. 95 (1969), p. 204; also, more generally, S. M. Solov’ev, Zhizni i tvorchestva evoliutsionista Vladimir Solov’eva (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chretien, 1977), p. 298. For Solov’ev’s articles on the famine, “Narodnaia beda i obschestvennaia pomoshch’,” and “Nash grekh i nasha obizannost’,” see V. S. Solov’ev, Sochinenii v dvukh tomakh, II (Moscow: Pravda, 1989; Voprosy filosofii series), pp. 370–386.

143. E. N. Trubetskoi, Mirosozertsamie V. S. Solov’eva, II, pp. 7, 10. Trubetskoi devotes this entire chapter of his study to arguing that Solov’ev’s disappointment in Russian state and society spurred the collapse, or at any rate marked de-utopianization, of his theocratic project (pp. 3–38).

144. The lecture was an event: 80 members of the society and about 300 guests were present. “Psikhologicheskoe Obshchestvo,” VFP, kn. 10 (Nov. 1891), p. 91. The censors banned publication of the lecture, together with two articles on the famine (by N. Ia. Grot and L. N. Tolstoi) that were scheduled to appear in the same issue of Voprosy filosofii. The lecture was later published in the 1901 issue dedicated to Solov’ev’s memory: “O prichinakh upadka srednevekovogo mirosozertsamia,” VFP 72: 1, kn. 56 (1901), pp. 138–152.

145. A few of Solov’ev’s comments, such as his suggestion that a few hardworking atheists contribute more to Christian progress than many believers, were infelicitous with respect to the possible reception in officially connected circles. Ia. K. Kulovskoi, “Iz literaturnykh vospominanii,” Istoriicheskii vestnik, tom cxxxvi (April 1914), pp. 139–143, provides an eyewitness account of the lecture and the ensuing controversy. Solov’ev’s lecture, the debate on it in the Psychological Society, and two of Solov’ev’s letters to Moskovskie vedomosti are included in V. S. Solov’ev, Sochinenii v dvukh tomakh, II, pp. 344–369; the editors of this volume reconstruct the history of the affair (pp. 689–692). On it also see Losev, Vladimir Solov’ev i ego vremia, pp. 481–490, and Mochul’skii, Vladimir Solov’ev, pp. 193–196.
146. I believe Losev is correct in maintaining this, as he does throughout Vladimir Solov'ev i ego vremia. Evgenii Trubetskoii, by contrast, argues for the utter collapse of the theocratic idea in the 1890s.

147. Dmitrii斯特rmooukhoff, Vladimir Soloviev and His Messianic Work, pp. 247–250, appraises the 1891 Psychological Society lecture as particularly revealing of Solov'ev's new outlook: "The new elements in this attitude are a more active alliance with the liberals, ... positive criticism of the Church, and finally a new theory in which the manifestation of the Kingdom of God is taking place through progress" (p. 250).


149. Ibid., p. 345 (emphasis Solov'ev's).

150. Ibid., pp. 334–355.


153. Novgorodtsev, Lektsii po istorii filosofii prava, p. 3.

154. Ibid., p. 5.

155. Ibid., p. 6. Novgorodtsev does not specify that he is quoting from Solov'ev's "O prichinakh upadka srednevekovogo mirosozertsania," no doubt because it was still banned at the time he was writing. The quotations can be found in V. S. Solov'ev, Sochinenia v dvukh tomakh, II, pp. 354–355.

156. Novgorodtsev, Lektsii po istorii filosofii prava, pp. 4–6.

157. According to Kudrin'skii [Kolerov], "Arkhivnaia istoria sbornika 'Problemy idealizma' (1902)," pp. 159–163, Struve soon discovered in the first, "narrowly political" conception of the project much broader perspectives that offered him and the other former Marxists the opportunity to defend their intellectual evolution. With that he expanded the focus from freedom of conscience to the "defense of idealism." Berdiaev and Bulgakov at once wrote Struve of their eagerness to contribute to the project. Novgorodtsev invited the participation of A. S. Lappo-Danielevskii, who had connections to the Priuistintsy, and S. A. Askoldov (perhaps on the recommendation of E. N. Trubetskoii). He also wanted L. O. Petrazycki, expecting from him a "very valuable" article. Struve objected rather strongly to Petrazycki's candidacy, after which it was apparently dropped. Novgorodtsev expressed reservations about the participation of M. I. Tugan-Baranovskii and S. L. Frank, both proposed by Struve, fearing they might compromise the clear idealist direction he (Novgorodtsev) intended for the sbornik. Tugan-Baranovskii declined to contribute. The article Frank wrote for Problemy, on Nietzsche, confirmed Novgorodtsev's misgivings. As a student, B. A. Kistiakovskii had been close to Marxism; after his final break with it in 1899 he impressed Novgorodtsev (thus, either Struve or Novgorodtsev could have involved him).


159. See note 81 above.

160. Vernadskii cannot be described as a neo-idealist; his philosophical views were eclectic. Bailes, in his Science and Russian Culture in an Age of Revolutions, writes that
the evidence suggests “that there were both rationalist and mystical sides to his nature, although rationalism usually predominated. The nature of his philosophical outlook in this respect is not altogether clear, but one fact is certain: Vernadsky ... had great respect for the religious side of mankind's nature (even as a stimulus to science) and worked well with religious figures who shared his own ideals for a more progressive and democratic Russia” (p. 34).


162. In. Aikhenvald's review appears under “Obzor knig,” VFP 14: 2, kn. 67 (1903), pp. 333–356; quotation at p. 334. Ivanov-Razumii, Istoriia russkoi obschestvennoi mysli, II, similarly writes, “Idealism demonstrated that it is possible to combine democratism with a metaphysical and even religious philosophical basis” (p. 467).


166. Ibid.


169. For the Kantian “autonomy of the good” in Solov’ev’s tract, see Sergius Hessen’s major essay, “Bor’ba utopi i avtomatomiia dobra v mirovozzrenii F. Dostoevskogo i VI. Solov’eva,” Sovremennye zapiski (Paris), nos. 45–46 (1931), especially no. 46, pp. 340–342. More recently, V. V. Lazarev, “Kategoricheskii imperativ I. Kanta i etika V. Solov’eva,” Kant i filosofia v Rossii, ed. Z. A. Kamenskii and V. A. Zhuchkov (Moscow: Nauka, 1994), pp. 42–80, has drawn attention to Solov’ev’s rehabilitation of Kant’s clear distinction between “is” and “ought,” a distinction Hegel’s monism collapsed in asserting that “what ought to be” already is. At the same time, Lazarev dwells on what he sees as Solov’ev’s main criticisms of Kant, including the argument that an act done by inclination, and not by duty alone, is not necessarily deprived of ethical value. The criterion is not motive, but the internal moral quality of the act. There is no necessary incompatibility between inclination and duty; I can, in fact, desire to do what I know by duty I would be obligated to do, even were I not so inclined. Solov’ev’s line of criticism has certain merits (in regard, for example, to holy beings who, presumably, never experience a contradiction between duty and inclination, and yet are no less the good for it), but it glosses over Kant’s main point: freedom consists in the capacity to determine the will by duty, in opposition to natural inclination, in instances of such opposition.

170. P. I. Novgorodtsev, “O filosofskom dvizhenii nashikh dnei,” p. 66. Not all “living and progressive movements” could defend the dignity of the self as consistently as neoidealism, which was precisely the thrust behind the idealist rejection of positivists’ claims to be the best philosophical representatives of liberalism. However, the politic Novgorodtsev passes over this in silence now, in the interests of the Union of Liberation’s unifront strategy (see the section that ends this chapter, entitled “Continuities and Differ-entiations”).
171. Solov'ev himself came to reject the idea of personal substantiality, in three late essays on epistemology, first published in Voprosy filosofii (1897–1899) and later collected under the title Theoretical Philosophy. There he criticizes Descartes's cogito ergo sum on the grounds that the substantiality of the subject is not revealed in, and cannot be inferred from, consciousness. See V. S. Solov'ev, Sochineniiia v dvukh tomakh, I (Moscow: Moskva', 1990), pp. 736–797, esp. p. 776. Lopatin responded to Solov'ev's Theoretical Philosophy in a paper he read before the Psychological Society in October 1899, “Vopros o real'nom edinstve soznaniia” (“The Question of the Real Unity of Consciousness”), VFP 10: 5, kn. 50 (1899). According to Lopatin (p. 870), “it is difficult to imagine a more decisive expression of a purely phenomenalist [fenomenicheskii] view of spiritual life” than Solov'ev's essay “Pervoe aschalo teoretitcheskoii filosofii” (“The First Principle of Theoretical Philosophy”), the first in the set. E. N. Trubetskoii, in his Mir i sobotstvaniie VI. S. Solov'eva, II, pp. 247–249, offers a more benign interpretation of Solov'ev's denial of personal substantiality. Solov'ev ascribed substantiality to God alone, who (according to Christian dogma) has the power of creation ex nihilo. Souls that were in the strict sense substantial could not be created, since they would have always existed, nor would they be capable of self-improvement, since they would already be perfect. These reasons explain why, according to Trubetskoii, “for Solov'ev in the last period of his creativity God was the only substance in the real sense of the word,” and why the soul was not substantial but rather a hypostasis [postas] or podstavka for God (pp. 247–248, 251). Or, in Walicki's suggestive formulation, “only after death is man finally substantiated in eternal ideality; substantiality, therefore, is the ultimate destiny and not an innate property of the human soul.” Andrzej Walicki, A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism, trans. Hilda Andrews-Rusiecka (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), p. 389. Significantly, E. N. Trubetskoii places Solov'ev's conception of personal progress toward substantiality within the overall de-utopianization of his thought in this period. Self-perfection must be a process and transcendent goal, not a presumed state by virtue of a premature substantiality. Seen in this perspective, Solov'ev did not advance a radical de-ontologization of the self, only a delay in its ontological self-realization.

172. That would exclude A. S. Lappo-Danilevskii, S. F. O'Lengthburg, and D. E. Zhukovskii, although Lappo-Danilevskii did significant work in the theory and methodology of history.

173. In fact, Frank does not even claim that the self is irreducible (see below).


176. S. L. Frank, “O kriticheskom idealizme,” Mir Bozhii 13: 12 (December 1904), p. 252, compares Hegelianism and Marxism in their “complete ethical indifferentism.” In both, “the idea of what ought to be [dolzhnoe] has no significance in itself.”

177. It is interesting to observe that in countries where the positivist background was more empirical than rationalistic, less reductive, and granted more room to the individual, the neo-idealist revival drew more on Hegel: Great Britain (T. H. Green, E. Caird, F. H. Bradley, B. Bosanquet, R. G. Collingwood), Italy (B. Croce, G. Gentile), and America (W. T. Harris and the St. Louis Hegelians; J. Royce, J. E. Creighton and the Cornell School of objective idealism; W. F. Hocking). France, by contrast, seems to fit the German
and Russian pattern. The historical determinism and scientistic sociology (or sociologism) of Comte's positivism easily compares to "scientific socialism," while the best-known French neo-idealistic Charles Renouvier thought of himself as a Kantian and called his own philosophy "neo-criticism."

178. S. N. Bulgakov, Ot markizma k idealizmu: Sbornik statei, 1896–1903 (St. Petersburg, 1903).

179. The relevant quotation can be found in Arthur P. Mendel, Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia, p. 188.

180. S. L. Frank, "O kriticheskom idealizme," clearly suggests the return to utopianism in Berdyaev and Bulgakov as they embraced absolute idealism: "The proximity of Marxism to Hegelianism or, more precisely, the identity of their basic view on the relation between 'what is' and 'what ought to be,' is useful to recall just now, when some former Marxists, having recognized the philosophical inadequacy of Marx's doctrine, are, as a result of their metaphysical roving, turning into true students of Hegel" (p. 252).

181. S. N. Bulgakov develops the concept of contraband in his Problemny essay. N. A. Berdyaev uses it in his article "O novom russkom idealizme," VFP 15: 5, kr. 75 (1904), p. 700.

182. Aileen M. Kelly, "Which Signposts?" in her Toward Another Shore: Russian Thinkers Between Necessity and Chance (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 155–200, contrasts the utopianism of both Berdyaev and Bulgakov to Struve and Frank. Catherine Evtuhov, The Cross and the Sickle: Sergei Bulgakov and the Fate of Russian Religious Philosophy, advances a very different interpretation that emphasizes Bulgakov's liberalism and anti-utopianism, particularly with regard to the "sofistic economy" (see esp. pp. 182, 183, 249). Certainly Berdyaev's utopianism is the more obvious.


184. N. A. Berdyaev, "Ericheskaiia problema v svete filosofskogo idealizma," Problemy idealizma, pp. 91–136; quotation at p. 95 (note). In the present edition, see p. 192, n. 15. Subsequent page references (to Russian/English) cited parenthetically in text.


187. It is revealing that Frank dropped several paragraphs (including the one containing this sentence) from the conclusion of his essay when it was reprinted in his collection, Filosofia i zhizn' (St. Petersburg, 1910), no doubt finding them incompatible with the more consistently idealist position he had by then adopted.

188. "Bizarre" is Swoboda's apt characterization in his The Philosophical Thought of S. L. Frank, p. 257. Swoboda provides a full analysis of Frank's essay (pp. 250–292). Also see Boobbyer, S. L. Frank, pp. 23–28.

to any empirical end, not only must it always be seen in empirical life as an end in itself, and not as a means, as this was put by Kant's ethics, but it can just as little be made the servant of any transcendent principle or force surpassing it. The self can have neither an empirical nor a metaphysical owner. If human reason has the need to recognize as sacred the whole of life and its bearer, then we once more recall that this whole, from the point of view of critical idealism, is consciousness, and its bearer, the transcendent self" (p. 261). Soon Frank began to move, however, toward the metaphysical position expounded in his major treatise, Predmet znania (The Object of Knowledge, 1915), that absolute being is the ground of consciousness.


192. He writes that Russian Marxism represented a case of the basic error of positivism, the monstrous idea of scientific ethics, the reduction of "what ought to be" to "what is." "P. G." recalls that, "at the time Struve lacked the philosophic clarity that, as a matter of principle, does not admit such subordination" (85/152).


198. Ibid., p. 112.

199. Ibid.

200. Ibid., p. 113.

201. On Lappo-Danilevskii, see Alexander Vucinich, Social Thought in Tsarist Russia, pp. 110–124. In connection with the importance freedom of conscience had in the conception of Problems of Idealism, it is interesting that Comte found the dogma a "revolting

203. Ibid.
204. Ibid., p. 114.
205. See note 56, above.


208. Ibid., p. 627.
209. Ibid., pp. 642–643.


211. P. I. Novgorodtsev, Istoricheskaia shkola iskusstv: ee proiskhozhdenie i sud'ba (Moscow, 1896).

212. Bulgakov also voiced this notion of absolute form and changing content: "Every age, every epoch has some historical task of its own, determined by the objective course of things. Thus, although the moral law is absolute, and its imperatives have significance sub specie aeterni, still its content is always given by history," Problems of idealism (40/113).


216. Ibid., p. 124.

219. The phrase "the human mind is an innate metaphysician" is Lopatin's: Polozhit'nye zadachi filosofii: Chast' pervaja, p. 433.

221. It is interesting to contrast Frank's celebration here of Nietzsche's "love of the

222. I will use the term "Vekhi group" to designate the authors of both Vekhi and Iz glubiny, who were united by a general idealist critique of the intelligentsia, although not all were consistently liberal in this critique.

223. Shatz and Zimmerman, trans. and eds., *Vekhi. Landmarks*, p. 15. "Just truth" and "true justice" are free but suggestive translations of trut-verity (pravda-istina) and truth-justice (pravda-spravedlivost), i.e., pravda in its dual meaning of truth and justice. On this, see Struve's essay (Chapter 3) of this book, note 28, as well as Kistiakovskii's essay (Chapter 9).

224. Ibid., p. 7.

225. Ibid., p. 59.


227. See, for example, the essays by Bulgakov and Struve in *Vekhi*, pp. 33–34, 36–37, 119–120, 124–127.

228. To repeat, personal autonomy and dignity do not necessarily mean ontological substantiality ("spiritualism" in the philosophical sense), but they did for most Russian idealists.


230. Berdiaev is the best example of this. In his essay "O novom russkom idealizme" VFP 15: 5, kn. 75 (1904), pp. 683–724, he still employs neo-idealism in the defense of liberalism, including a liberal interpretation of natural law and affirmation that Christian eschatology should not be interpreted as salvation in history (pp. 717–721). Subsequently, however, his idealism developed in directions incompatible with liberalism. This evolution has been reconstructed by Andrzej Walicki, "Russian Liberalism and the Religio-Philosophic Renaissance in Russia," paper for the 1991 National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. Walicki shows that Berdiaev fused a redefined notion of natural law with his eclectic ideas of stateless theocracy or theocratic-mystical anarchism. Since this order would function by divine rule of law alone, without any state organization or institutionalized forms of power (ecclesiastical or secular), it would be a theocracy rather than a theocracy in the strict sense, "theocratic anarchism." Whatever Berdiaev's new ideas might entail, they had very little to do with liberalism. Rather, his new religious consciousness was a utopianization of the idealism he had embraced in *Problems of Idealism*.

231. Aileen M. Kelly thus writes about "Which Signposts?" in her *Toward Another Shore*, pp. 155–200. She argues that Berdiaev, Bulgakov, and Gershenson (three of the seven Vekhi authors) adhered to an illiberal, Slavophile-inspired religious and national messianism. The case of Bulgakov is, however, more complicated: see Catherine Evrnoch,


233. With the notable exception of his increasing Russian nationalism, which became a matter of dispute between him and Kistiakovskii, Kotliarevskii, and E. N. Trubetskoii.

234. This can also be said of A. S. Izgoev, whose essay in Iz glubiny, "Socialism, Culture and Bolshevism," is very incisive, but he stands somewhat apart from the others because he was not much interested in idealist theory. I. A. Pokrovskii also wrote an interesting liberal critique in Iz glubiny of the intelligentsia and revolution.

235. Shatsillo, Russkii liberalism, provides the quotation at p. 153.


237. Ibid., p. 66.


239. By 1909 obschechestvo (liberal educated society) seems to have been reintegrating a significant part of the once alienated intelligentsia so deplored by Vekhi. See Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West, eds., Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

240. The inability or unwillingness of Russian monarchs to conceive the state as a public sphere rather than as their own private domain was especially pronounced under Alexander II and Nicholas II. See Richard S. Wortman, Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy, vol. 2 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000). According to Wortman, "The Russian state never assumed an existence independent from the person of the monarch... The notion of the state as an impersonal institution, operating according to laws of its own, remained an ideal of enlightened officials through the early twentieth century, but it could not take hold in the highly literal and personalized symbolic world of Russian monarchy" (p. 7).

Sergei A. Askold’ov (1870–1945) was the son of Russian philosopher Aleksei A. Kozlov. (Askold’ov was a pseudonym; his legal name was Alekseev, i.e., “son of Aleksei,” because he was born out of wedlock and could not take his father’s surname.) He continued the Russian neo-Leibnizian tradition of “panpsychism” that was founded by Kozlov, but developed it much further in the direction of religious philosophy. After graduating from the Physics-Mathematics Faculty of St. Petersburg University, Askold’ov entered government service as a chemist, hoping to have enough spare time to study philosophy. In 1900 he made his philosophical debut with Osnovnye problemy teorii poznaniia i ontologii (Fundamental Problems of the Theory of Knowledge and Ontology). Like his father, he turned to an academic career only later in life. In 1914 Moscow University awarded him the magister degree for his book Myst’ i deistvitel’nost’ (Thought and Reality), in which he criticizes neo-Kantianism for a misplaced emphasis on “consciousness in general” instead of the concrete living person. He believed that unless consciousness were grounded in substantial reality, ultimately in God, idealism was a “lifeless worldview.” Hence his abiding interest in “philosophy and life,” the theme of his essay in the present volume. Askold’ov was an active member of the Moscow Psychological Society, the St. Petersburg Religious-Philosophical Society, and the Vladimir Solov’ev Religious-Philosophical
Society in Moscow. He remained in Russia after the Revolution, initially in Kazan (1918–1920) and then in Petrograd/Leningrad, where he taught chemistry at the Polytechnical Institute until the mid-1920s. In 1921 he founded a secret religious-philosophical society, known after 1926 as the Brotherhood of St. Seraphim of Sarov. In 1928 the group's members were arrested, and Askol'dov was exiled to the northern Urals. In 1935 he was permitted to move to Novgorod, where he taught school mathematics. After Novgorod was occupied by the Nazis in World War Two, Askol'dov fled to Riga, Prague, and Berlin. He died in Potsdam in May 1945, in the Soviet occupation zone, under threat of arrest by Red Army counterintelligence.

Nikolai A. Berdiaev (1874–1948), perhaps the most famous Russian philosopher outside Russia, was a religious thinker, personalist, and existentialist champion of the freedom and creativity of the individual human spirit. He was born near Kiev into a family of landed gentry with a military tradition, and always remained proud of his aristocratic heritage. He entered Kiev University in 1894, but was arrested and expelled in 1898 for Marxist activities; that marked the end of his formal education. In 1900 he was exiled to the northern town of Vologda. There he traveled the path from (critical) Marxism to idealism, guided by Petr Struve, who arranged for the publication of (and wrote a foreword to) Berdiaev's first book Sub'ektivizm i individualizm v oshchestvennoi filosofii: Kriticheskii etud o N. K. Mikhailovskom (Subjectivism and Individualism in Social Philosophy: A Critical Study of N. K. Mikhailovskii) (1901). There immediately followed a series of articles, including the essay in the present volume, which marked Berdiaev's conversion to idealism. In 1903 he returned to Kiev, spent some time in Germany, and helped organize the Union of Liberation. The following year he moved to St. Petersburg, where he was an editor of the religious-philosophical journals Novyi put' (New Path) (1903–1904) and Voprosy zhizni (Problems of Life) (1905), and was otherwise an integral part of the search for a "new religious consciousness." In 1908, having turned to a more traditional form of Christianity, he relocated to Moscow and became a prominent figure in the Vladimir Solov'ev Religious-Philosophical Society (1905–1918) and in the religious-philosophical publishing house Put' (The Way) (1910–1919). His culminating work of this period is Smysl tvorchestva: Opyt opravdania cheloveka (The Meaning of Creativity: An Essay in the Justification of Man) (1916), the first comprehensive account of his religious philosophy. In 1917, he welcomed the February Revolution but opposed the Bolsheviks. Even so, during the winter of 1918–1919 he was able to found the Free Academy of Spiritual Culture in Moscow, and in
1920 was elected professor of philosophy at Moscow University. In 1922, however, he and many other Russian intellectuals were expelled from the country. He lived in Berlin until 1924, then in Paris, where he directed the Russian Religious-Philosophical Academy (founded by him in Berlin), edited the religious-philosophical journal Put' (1925–1940), and served as editor-in-chief of the YMCA Press, the most important Russian publisher in the emigration. With the appearance of his widely translated book Novoe srednevekov'ce: Razmyslenie o sud'be Rossii i Evropy (The New Middle Ages: Reflections on the Destiny of Russia and Europe) (1924), his reputation spread throughout Europe and beyond. In his many subsequent books, he explored further his main themes of spiritual freedom and creativity, developed an eschatological philosophy of history, but gave little attention to concrete social and political philosophy, in which he was content with a form of anarchism. He died in Clamart, a suburb of Paris.

Sergei N. Bulgakov (1871–1944), major Russian philosopher and theologian, was born in Livny, Orel province, the son of a provincial priest, from a long line of priests (six generations). At the age of thirteen he entered Orel Theological Seminary, but lost his faith and transferred to a neighboring gymnasium. As a student at Moscow University, he was already interested in Marxism. He graduated from the Faculty of Law in 1894 and began graduate studies, also at Moscow University, in political economy. His first book, O rynkakh pri kapitalisticheskom proizvodstve (On Markets in Capitalist Production) (1897), made him a nationally prominent “legal Marxist.” After two years of study abroad, mostly in Germany, he defended his magister dissertation, Kapitalizm i zemledelie (Capitalism and Agriculture, two vols.) (1900), and was appointed professor of political economy at Kiev Politechnical Institute (1901). His dissertation research convinced him that Marx’s critique of capitalism was flawed. This, together with his interest in neo-Kantianism, brought about his conversion to idealism. At this point (1902–1903) he took an active part in the Russian Liberation Movement: he collaborated on P. B. Struve’s journal Osvoobozhdenie (Liberation) and was a founder of the Union of Liberation and a member of its council. In 1904 he was a contributor to the journal Novyi Put’ (New Path) and in 1905 a co-editor (with N. A. Berdiaev) of Voprosy zhizni (Questions of Life). One of his main concerns was liberation of the Russian church from autocratic state control, which he hoped would lead to the overall religious renewal of society. To that end, he joined the Brotherhood of Christian Struggle (1905) and formed a (short-lived) Union of Christian Politics (1906), which advocated a program of Christian socialism. In 1907 he served as a (nonparty)
deputy to the Second State Duma. By then he had moved from Kiev to Moscow and was appointed professor of political economy at the Higher Commerce Institute, directed by P. I. Novgorodtsev. He was a leading figure in the Vladimir Solov'ev Religious-Philosophical Society (1905–1918) and in the religious-philosophical publishing house Put' (1910–1919). In this period he published two important works in social and religious philosophy: *Filosofia khoziaistva* (Philosophy of Economy) (1912), for which Moscow University awarded him the doctorate, and *Svet nevechernyi* (Unfading Light) (1917). In 1917 he was named professor of political economy at Moscow University. As a prominent lay delegate to the Russian Church Council that opened in August 1917, he played an important role in the restoration of the patriarchate. In June 1918 Bulgakov was ordained a priest. He then moved to the Crimea, where he taught at the University of Simferopol’ until 1920. He was deported in December 1922. He settled first in Prague, where he taught church law at the Russian Faculty of Law, organized by Novgorodtsev at Charles University. Bulgakov moved to Paris in 1925, where he became founding dean and professor of dogmatic theology at the Orthodox Theological Institute. In this period he produced a large body of work in dogmatic theology, culminating in the trilogy *O Bogoche-lovechestve* (On the Humanity of God) (1933–1945). He died in Paris.

Semën L. Frank (1877–1950), prominent twentieth-century Russian religious philosopher, was born in Moscow to Jewish parents. At the age of sixteen he joined a Marxist circle at his gymnasium in Nizhni Novgorod (his family had recently moved there). He soon returned to Moscow to study law and political economy at Moscow University (1894–1899) but was arrested and expelled for inciting student unrest. He continued his studies in Berlin (1899–1901), concentrating on political economy and philosophy. Within a year of the publication of his first book *Teoriia tsemnosti Marksa i ee znachenie* (Marx’s Theory of Value and Its Significance) (1900), Frank had abandoned Marxism for an eclectic, transitional philosophical position that combined elements of Nietzsche, Kantianism, and (by 1904) Fichtean idealism. A major influence on him was P. B. Struve; their lifelong collaboration began in 1898. They worked closely together in the Liberation Movement (on its journal *Osvobozhdenie* and in the Union of Liberation). Frank represented Struve at the founding congress of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party in October 1905, but otherwise did not have a significant role in the party. With Struve he edited the political weekly *Poliarniaia zvezda* (Polar Star) and its sequel *Svoboda i kul'tura* (Freedom and Culture) (December 1905–May 1906). During this period Frank defined his philosophi-
cal position as “humanist individualism.” From 1907 to 1917 he was an editor and frequent contributor to Russkaia mysli (Russian Thought). In his well-known contribution to Vekhi (Landmarks) (1909), he indicated that his philosophical outlook had shifted to “religious humanism.” In 1912 Frank was baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church and became a lecturer in philosophy at St. Petersburg University, where four years later he defended his magister dissertation, Predmet znaniia (The Object of Knowledge) (1915). This was his first major work and the foundation of his mature metaphysical system of “all-unity.” His second book, Dusha cheloveka (Man’s Soul) (1917), a treatise on personhood and the metaphysics of human nature, could not be defended for the doctorate because of political circumstances. This did not prevent him from serving as professor of philosophy and dean of the Historical-Philological Faculty at the University of Saratov (1917–1921). He returned to Moscow in 1921, was elected professor of philosophy at the University of Moscow, and was active in Berdiaev’s Free Academy of Spiritual Culture. Frank was deported in 1922. For the next fifteen years he lived in Berlin, where he was professor at the Russian Scientific Institute (1923–1933). He fled Nazi Germany in 1937, settling first in Paris, then, for the last five years of his life, in London. In exile Frank characterized himself as a “Christian Platonist” and produced a number of important works, including Dukhovnye osnovy obshchestva: Vvedenie v sotsial’nyi filosofiiu (The Spiritual Foundations of Society: An Introduction to Social Philosophy) (1930), Nepostizhimoe: Ontologicheskoe vvedenie v filosofiiu religii (The Unknowable: An Ontological Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion) (1939), and Svet vo t’me: Opity khristianskoi etiki i sotsial’noi filosofii (The Light Shineth in Darkness: An Essay in Christian Ethics and Social Philosophy) (1949).

Bogdan A. Kistiakovskyi (1868–1920) came from a prominent Ukrainian family and grew up in the atmosphere of the Ukrainian national movement, in which his father, Aleksandr F. Kistiakovskyi, professor of criminal law at Kiev University, was involved. Bogdan Kistiakovskyi was committed to the development of Ukrainian culture and national identity. At the same time, he was part of Russian intellectual life, and his works in sociology and legal philosophy deserve to be seen as contributions to both Ukrainian and Russian intellectual history. As a student he belonged to various study groups in Ukrainian history and culture; for such illicit activities he was expelled from Kiev University, and then from Kharkov University. In 1891 he enrolled in the Law Faculty of Dorpat (Tartu) University, where he promptly joined a Marxist circle. In 1892 he was arrested for distributing subversive literature
in Volynia and imprisoned for several months from late 1893 to early 1894. In 1895 he went to Germany to pursue graduate studies, first with Georg Simmel in Berlin and then with Wilhelm Windelband in Strasbourg, where he defended his doctoral dissertation, *Gesellschaft und Einzelwesen (Society and the Individual)*, published in 1899. The book established his reputation as a neo-Kantian social and legal philosopher and marked his break with Marxism. Henceforth Kistiakovskii divided his time between Russia and Germany. He was active in the Russian Liberation Movement, helping P. B. Struve to edit the journal *Osvobozhenie (Liberation)*, attending the Schaffhausen conference, which planned the Union of Liberation, and working in the Kiev branch of the Union of Liberation. In Germany he collaborated with Max Weber, who commended Kistiakovskii’s essay in *Problems of Idealism*. In Russia, beginning in 1906, Kistiakovskii taught at the Moscow Higher Commerce Institute, Moscow University, and the Demidov Lyceé in Iaroslavl. In 1912 he became editor of the revived *Iuridicheskii vestnik (Juridical Messenger)*, the prestigious journal of the Moscow Juridical Society. He is perhaps best known for his essay “In Defense of Law: The Intelligentsia and Legal Consciousness,” which appeared in *Vekhi (Landmarks)* (1909). His magnum opus is *Sotsial’nye nauki i pravo (The Social Sciences and Law)* (1916), for which Kharkov University awarded him a second doctorate. After the February Revolution Kistiakovskii was appointed to the chair in law at Kiev University. In 1919 he was elected to the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. He died in Ekaterinodar.

Aleksandr S. Lappo-Danilevskii (1863–1919), Russian historian and philosopher of history, was born into an aristocratic family in Ekaterinoslav province, Ukraine. In 1886 he graduated from the Historical-Philological Faculty at St. Petersburg University. After the defense of his *magister* dissertation, *Organizatsiia priamogo oblozheniia v Moskovskom gosudarstve so vremen Smuty do epokhi preobrazovanii (Organization of Direct Taxation in the Muscovite State from the Time of Troubles to the Reform Era)* (1890), he was appointed *privat-docent* in Russian history at St. Petersburg University. A year later he became professor of history at the Historical-Philological Institute in St. Petersburg. In 1905 the Academy of Sciences elected him to full membership. His main areas of research were Muscovy, eighteenth-century Russia, economic and legal history, intellectual history, theory of history and the social sciences, and the identification and analysis of historical sources. His most important work is *Metodologiya istorii (Methodology of History, two vols.)* (1910–1913). Lappo-Danilevskii’s conception of Russian history was essentially liberal and owed much to the “state school” of
Russian historiography: he believed in historical progress and thought that its measure was the emancipation of the individual, the growth of personal autonomy, and the institutionalization of the rule of law. In 1917 the Provisional Government appointed him to the committee charged with preparing the electoral law for the Constituent Assembly. He died two years later.

Pavel I. Novgorodtsev (1866–1924), editor of the Russian edition of Problems of Idealism, was a jurist and arguably the most significant legal and social philosopher of twentieth-century Russia. He founded and headed the Russian neo-idealistic school of the philosophy of law, which promoted the revival of natural law and a human rights–based understanding of the rule-of-law state. Novgorodtsev, the son of a Russian merchant, came from Bakhtmut, a small town in the Ekaterinoslav province of Ukraine. After graduating from Moscow University’s Faculty of Law in 1888, he pursued graduate training there in the history of the philosophy of law. He studied in Berlin and Paris for several years, and in 1897 was awarded the magister degree for his first book, Istoričeskaia shkola juristov: Ee proiskhozhdenie i sud’ba (The Historical School of Jurists: Its Genesis and Fate) (published in 1896). For his next book, Kant i Hegel v ikh ucheniiakh o prave i gosudarstve (Kant and Hegel in Their Theories of Law and the State) (1901), he received the doctorate from St. Petersburg University. In 1903, he was appointed associate professor, and in 1904 full professor, at Moscow University, in the history and philosophy of law. By this time he had a prominent role in liberal politics. From 1901 to 1905 he helped organize and lead the Liberation Movement, serving on the Council of the Union of Liberation. He also served on the bureau of the Academic Union, formed in early 1905 as the corporate voice of the Russian professoriate in the Liberation Movement. He was an influential member of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party from its beginning in 1905. In 1906 his native province of Ekaterinoslav elected him to the First State Duma. By signing the Vyborg Appeal (1906), Novgorodtsev forfeited membership in future Dumas, as well as his professorship at Moscow University, although he continued to teach there as a lecturer. In 1911, he resigned (along with 100 of his colleagues) from Moscow University in protest over government violation of university autonomy. From 1906 to 1918, he was professor and director of the Moscow Higher Commerce Institute, which he organized along broad educational lines and made into one of the most popular “polytechnics” in Russia. After the February Revolution he was reinstated in his professorship at Moscow University. In May 1917 he was elected to the Central Committee of the Kadet Party, and by January 1918 was its acting chairman. He led Kadet
efforts, such as the formation of the National Center in May 1918, to coordinate effective resistance against the Bolsheviks. Novgorodtsev left Moscow at the end of 1918 for Ukraine and southern Russia, and in 1919 headed the Ekaterinodar Kadet Party office. After the defeat of Gen. Anton Denikin, he went to Berlin, where he helped edit the Kadet émigré newspaper Rul’ (1920). Finally settling in Prague, in May 1922 he founded the Russian Faculty of Law at Charles University. He died in Prague in April 1924. His other works include *Krisis sovremennoogo pravosoznaniia* (The Crisis in Modern Legal Consciousness) (1909) and *Ob obschestvennom ideale* (On the Social Ideal) (1917).

Sergei F. Ol’denburg (1863–1934), Russian Orientalist and Indologist, was born into a family that descended from the Mecklenburg nobility of Germany, and that moved to Russia and became part of the service nobility under Peter the Great. After graduating from the Oriental Languages Faculty of St. Petersburg University in 1885, Ol’denburg spent three years in Western Europe pursuing graduate research. With the completion of his dissertation *Buddiiskie legendy* (Buddhist Legends) (1894), he became professor of Indian language and literature at St. Petersburg University. He soon achieved an international reputation as a scholar and was elected to the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1900. He became its permanent secretary in 1904, and held that position until 1929. A liberal by conviction, he assisted P. B. Struve in going abroad to set up the journal *Osvooboizdenie* (Liberation), but otherwise seems not to have played a major role in the Liberation Movement. In 1906 he was elected to the State Council by the Academy of Sciences. In May 1917 he became a member of the Central Committee of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party, and served on the Council of the League of Russian Culture, organized by Struve at that time to preserve Russian national culture. In the Provisional Government Ol’denburg was minister of education from July to August. After the Bolsheviks came to power, his overriding concern was to maintain the autonomy and integrity of the Academy of Sciences. For ten years, he was remarkably successful in that effort. He was removed from his post as permanent secretary in 1929, when the Academy was finally brought under Communist control. Even then, Ol’denburg was not purged but was permitted to serve as director of the Academy’s Institute of Oriental Studies from 1930 until his death in 1934.

Pëtr B. Struve (1870–1944) conceived and planned *Problems of Idealism* before Novgorodtsev assumed most of the editorial responsibility in late
Struve, whose grandfather was a famous astronomer and whose father was a provincial governor, was an outstanding scholar and thinker of encyclopedic breadth in fields such as economics, law, history, and philosophy. Together with Berdiaev, Bulgakov, and Frank, he is well known for his dramatic intellectual evolution from Marxism to idealism. In the 1890s he was a leading Russian Marxist. His first book, *Kriticheskie zametki k voprosu ob ekonomicheskom razvitii Rossii* (Critical Notes on the Question of Russia’s Economic Development) (1894), was a Marxist critique of Russian populism, but in it Struve already suggests that Marxism needed to be supplemented by neo-Kantianism. In 1898 he wrote the manifesto of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party for its first congress. A year later his essay *Die Marxische Theorie der sozialen Entwicklung* was in some respects more “revisionist” than Eduard Bernstein’s theses. By 1901 Struve had completed his evolution toward neo-idealism in philosophy and liberalism in politics, as traced in his collection of articles from 1893 to 1901, *Na raznye temy* (On Various Themes) (1902). He went abroad, and in July 1902 began publishing his famous émigré journal *Osvoobzhdenie* (Liberation), which was smuggled back into Russia and was the most important organ of the Liberation Movement. After his return to Russia in late October 1905, he was elected to the Central Committee of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party at its second congress (January 1906). In 1907 he served as a deputy in the Second State Duma. After its dissolution, he turned to editing the influential liberal journal *Russkaia mysl’* (Russian Thought), and to teaching at the St. Petersburg Polytechnical Institute. His 1908 article “Great Russia” signaled an increasingly nationalistic and imperialistic position. In 1911 he published *Patriotica*, a collection of his essays from 1905 to 1910. His views on the nationality question, particularly on Ukraine, led to his resignation from the Kadet Central Committee in 1915. His two-volume work *Khoziaisstvo i tsena* (Economy and Price) (1913–1916) earned him the magister degree from Moscow University and the doctorate from Kiev University. In 1917 he was elected to the Academy of Sciences. In the Provisional Government he briefly held a position in the Foreign Ministry. In 1918 he organized and contributed to *Iz glubiny* (Out of the Depths), a volume of essays on the Russian Revolution. During the Civil War he was active in the White movement, and in 1920 he became foreign minister in Gen. P. N. Wrangel’s government in the Crimea. In European emigration he devoted himself to editorial work, scholarship, and Russian émigré politics. He died in Paris.

Evgenii N. Trubetskoi (1863–1920), jurist and major Russian religious philosopher, was a disciple of Vladimir Solov’ev. He and his brother Sergei were
princes and came from one of the most distinguished aristocratic families in Russia. After graduating from the Faculty of Law at Moscow University in 1885, Trubetskoi taught at the Demidov Juridical Lycée in Iaroslavl. His magister and doctoral dissertations were critical studies in the intellectual history of theocracy in medieval Europe, two volumes under the general title, "The Religious-Social Ideal of Western Christianity in the Fifth and Eleventh Centuries": the first was on St. Augustine (1892), the second on Gregory VII (1897). His university appointments were in the history and philosophy of law, first at Kiev (1892–1905) and then at Moscow (1906–1918), where he in effect succeeded his brother. He had a prominent role in the Moscow Psychological Society, the Vladimir Solov'ev Religious-Philosophical Society, and the religious-philosophical publishing house Put'. He was deeply influenced by Solov'ev, to whom he devoted a fundamental two-volume work, Mirosozertsanie VI. S. Solov'ev (VI. S. Solov'ev's Weltanschauung) (1913). In politics, Trubetskoi belonged to both the Union of Liberation and the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists. With P. I. Novgorodtsev, he was a central figure in the Academic Union. He was a founding member of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party, but resigned from it in January 1906. Later that year he joined the Party of Peaceful Renewal, which shared with the right Kadets and left Octobrists a political program of moderate liberalism. This program was advanced in the newspaper that Trubetskoi and his younger brother Grigorii published from March 1906 to August 1910, Moskovskii ezhegodnik (The Moscow Weekly). Trubetskoi served in the State Council from February 1907 to August 1908. During the Great War he wrote a number of essays in which he developed a liberal conception of Russian national identity. In 1917, he was lay co-chair of the Russian Church Council, and with S. N. Bulgakov was influential in the restoration of the patriarchate. He rejoined the Kadets at the party's seventh congress in March 1917, and contributed to the White movement, mostly by lecturing and writing. He died of typhus in Novorossiisk in January 1920. His other works include Metafizicheskie predpolozhenia poznaniia: Opyt preodoleniiia Kanta i kantianstva (The Metaphysical Premises of Knowledge: An Essay in Transcending Kant and Kantsianism) (1917) and Smysl zhizni (The Meaning of Life) (1918).

Sergei N. Trubetskoi (1862–1905), major Russian idealist philosopher and historian of philosophy, was the scion of one of Russia's great aristocratic families. He was close, both personally and intellectually, to Vladimir Solov'ev, whose ideas he developed in a liberal direction. His own conception
of an ontological, "concrete idealism" had great influence on the development of Russian philosophy during this period. In broadest terms, he aspired toward a universalistic, philosophical theism. Trubetskoi graduated in 1885 from the Historical-Philological Faculty of Moscow University, where he then devoted himself to graduate work in philosophy. His magister dissertation, *Metafizika v drevnej Grekii* (*Metaphysics in Ancient Greece*) (1890), established his reputation as a major historian of philosophy and earned him appointment as associate professor at Moscow University. Ten years later he defended his doctoral dissertation, *Uchenie o logose ve ego istorii* (*The Doctrine of the Logos in Its History*), and was made full professor. He was deputy chair (1901–1905) of the Moscow Psychological Society and co-editor (1900–1905) of its journal, *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* (*Questions of Philosophy and Psychology*). He published several major essays in the journal, including "O prirode chelovecheskogo soznaniiia" ("On the Nature of Human Consciousness") (1889–1891), "Osnovaniia idealizma" ("The Foundations of Idealism") (1896), and "Vera v bessmertie" ("Belief in Immortality") (1902–1904). Trubetskoi, the philosopher, was also a public figure who emerged as a national symbol of rule-of-law liberalism and moderate constitutionalism. In June 1905 he presented, as head of a national zemstvo delegation, a petition to Nicholas II that urged the tsar to summon a representative assembly. Among Trubetskoi's most abiding concerns were separation of church and state and freedom of conscience. He was also a forceful advocate of university autonomy, convinced that the university should be administered by professors, not bureaucrats, and that students should have the right to academic association. The culmination of his struggle for the university came on 27 August 1905, when Nicholas II, apparently influenced by a memorandum he had asked Trubetskoi to prepare, granted autonomy to the universities. Within a week Trubetskoi was elected rector of Moscow University. He died twenty-seven days later, on 29 September 1905. His funeral procession drew a crowd of many thousands.

Dmitrii E. Zhukovskii (1868–1943), wealthy landowner and veteran zemstvo constitutionalist, financed both the journal *Osvobozhdenie* (*Liberation*) and *Problems of Idealism*. He began studies in the natural sciences at St. Petersburg University, but was arrested and expelled in connection with the student disturbances of 1887. He went abroad, and obtained a doctorate in zoology from Heidelberg University, where he also attended Kuno Fischer's lectures in the history of philosophy. His political evolution passed from
Tolstoianism to socialism and finally conservative liberalism. He was close to Struve, became a leading figure in the Russian Liberation Movement, and organized the Schaffhausen conference. He had philosophical interests and was a publisher of philosophical works. His last known position was that of assistant in the Faculty of Botany at the Crimea Pedagogical Institute in Simferopol’. He was arrested in the 1930s and may have perished in the camps.