

## AD LITTERAM

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### Unity in “Landmarks” (“Vekhi”)?: The tensions between Petr Struve and Mikhail Gershenzon<sup>1</sup>

BRIAN HOROWITZ

(TULANE UNIVERSITY, NEW ORLEANS, USA)

*In this article the most important text of twentieth-century Russian intellectual history, “Landmarks” (“Vekhi”, 1909) comes under reexamination. Looking at the rivalry of the volume’s two organizers, Mikhail Gershenzon and Petr Struve, Professor Brian Horowitz explains why “Landmarks” succeeded in offering such a biting critique of radical ideology, while lacking its own internal intellectual unity.*

*Keywords: Mikhail Gershenzon; “Vekhi”; “Landmarks”; Russian intelligentsia, Petr Struve; reaction to the Revolution of 1905*

Since the end of the Soviet Union, the primary texts of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian intellectual history have come under reinterpretation<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps the most vivid example of renewed interest is *Landmarks (Vekhi)* (1909), which has been republished three times since the start of the Glasnost’ era<sup>3</sup>.

In many ways the volume’s staying power is easily understandable. A collection of essays criticizing the revolutionary intelligentsia by seven non-Marxist thinkers, Nikolai Berdiaev, Sergei Bulgakov, Mikhail Gershenzon, Bogdan Kistiakovskii, Petr Struve, Semen Frank and Aleksandr Izgoev, *Landmarks* is an ideal anti-Communist guidebook. Intentionally provocative, the authors came together to repudiate the philosophical premises of revolution. Lenin condemned it, the writers were personae non grata in Soviet Russia, and the volume was taken off library shelves and banished to those special holding rooms for dangerous books. In the West it was a favorite text of conservative anti-Soviet pundits.

In today’s post-Soviet world, in contrast to other political tracts which have lost their significance with the end of the Soviet Union, *Landmarks* is still alive, since, in pursuing primarily negative criticism, the authors left a positive message relatively unstated and thus created an opportunity for contemporary readers to fill in their own positive program.

Looking today at the historiography of *Landmarks*, however, one notes a strange permanence. Admittedly with diverse reasoning, the great majority of its readers have given it a negative evaluation. In 1909, with the exception of a few outspoken clerics and political centrists, the volume was universally condemned as politically ‘reactionary,’ while later, ‘objective’ scholars expressed the unanimous view that *Landmarks* was a text flawed for literary reasons<sup>4</sup>. The best expression of the view of Western scholarship can be found in

Richard Pipes' 1980 book, *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905–1944*. There Professor Pipes writes: “And yet, judged on its literary merits, *Vekhi* is not a good book, and in parts it is a very bad one. Due to the fact that the contributors made no effort to communicate with one another once they had agreed on the book's theme, and that the editor apparently exercised little if any authority, the volume is loosely structured. Its subject matter — the intelligentsia — is nowhere defined” (Pipes, 1980: 110).

Other negative critiques of the structure of *Landmarks* can be found in the work of Jeffrey Brooks who has written, “The authors held seemingly contradictory views about what the intelligentsia was, but in its very vagueness the book presented a compelling image of the *intelligent* as an archetypical social deviant warped by an unnatural preoccupation with the ills of society” (Brooks, 1973: 21). Andrzej Walicki explains Kistiakovskii's disagreement: “How could Kistiakovskii agree [with Gershenzon's introduction]? He [Kistiakovskii] was a thinker who stressed the importance of ‘objective law,’ of the ‘external forms of community’; he was a theorist of the role-of-law state, namely a supporter of a definite ‘principle of political orders’. Consequently, his agreement with Gershenzon could only be partial” (Walicki, 1987: 374–375).

Professor Pipes' viewpoint, that the book is “loosely structured”, that the authors did not consult and that, in the end, it can be judged a “bad book” contrasts with *Landmarks'* importance at the time it appeared and vitality up to this day as an extraordinarily influential text of Russian intellectual history. To what sources might we attribute the volume's indisputable, but unexpected power? This essay is an attempt to answer this question by looking at the origins of the volume and its cultural context. Especially pertinent in this regard will be an investigation of the personal and intellectual rivalry of Petr Struve and Mikhail Gershenzon, since these two individuals together organized the volume and represent the widest intellectual antipathy among the contributors.

An examination of its origins is crucial for understanding the volume's composition. According to all the testimonies, *Landmarks* was Gershenzon's idea, and he gave it form in conversations with Struve (Kolerov, 1991). Gershenzon took upon himself the job of editor, and he wrote the introduction. According to several sources, especially Aleksandr Izgoev, once Struve got involved, he took control of the endeavor (Izgoev, 1928: 15). This, of course, cannot be totally true, since Gershenzon was the official editor, and the contributors sent their essays to him. But there are convincing grounds for partially accepting this claim. We see the struggle for control over *Landmarks* early in the way the contributors were chosen. Thanks to letters from Gershenzon's personal archive in the Russian National Library in Moscow, we now have a pretty clear understanding of how the writers were enlisted (K istorii sozdaniia «Vekh», 1992). In personal conversations with Semen Frank, Gershenzon had suggested the participation of Ivanov-Razumnik, Leonid Evgen'evich Gabilovich, a philosopher and mathematician, Bodgan Kistiakovskii and Sergei Bulgakov<sup>5</sup>. Accepting Kistiakovskii and Bulgakov, Semen Frank rejected Ivanov-Razumnik and Gabilovich, suggesting instead Iulii Aikhenval'd or Arkadii Gornfel'd, either of whom could write on the topic of “The Intelligentsia and Aesthetics”<sup>6</sup>. Struve invited Aleksandr Izgoev, while Bulgakov tried to enlist Nikolai Losskii, who refused the invitation (Vekhi ... , 1991: 502–503). Although Aikhenval'd and Gornfel'd's candidacies fizzled out, the fact that Frank and Struve rejected Gershenzon's candidates was significant. Already at the volume's inception Frank along with Struve were trying to gather together a cluster of like-minded contributors and move *Landmarks* away from Gershenzon's conception of giving ideological rivals, such as the populist Ivanov-Razumnik, a chance to participate.

The evidence that Struve and Frank were striving for intellectual unity has support in Frank's letters to Gershenzon. In a letter of October 19, 1908, Frank describes his hopes for ideological unity, wishing for that reason to remove Ivanov-Razumnik:

I would imagine that there will be a common introduction for all the contributors, in which the idea of the collection would be expressed and it would be made clear that, in criticizing the intelligentsia, we are appealing to its moral and spiritual strengths and believe in the possibility of its rebirth. This would be honest and entirely sufficient. In any case it is impossible to entrust an introductory article of this kind to Ivanov-Razumnik, whose participation I consider undesirable — he himself is too much of a 'contemporary intelligent,' with all the defects of that type [of person] (K istorii sozdaniia «Vekh», 1992: 252)<sup>7</sup>.

From the viewpoint of unity, Frank had a valid point. By "contemporary intelligent", Frank meant Ivanov-Razumnik agreed with the revolutionary intelligentsia and would be antithetical to the viewpoints in *Landmarks*. Indeed, in a 1907 article in *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*, the monthly literary journal in which Bogdan Kistiakovskii and Gershenzon were editors and Semen Frank a contributor, Ivanov-Razumnik declared his appreciation of the 1905 revolution for expanding the breadth of revolutionary activity from politics to the social realm. Ivanov-Razumnik wrote:

...our revolution is not a narrow class revolution: the peasants, proletariat and intelligentsia must consider it a 'moving force'; the struggle for democracy in the broad sense defines the character of the Russian revolution: this is a people's democratic revolution. The old formula of the People's Will Party appears as the banner of the contemporary revolutionary movement: a democratic revolution arriving at the social through the political (Ivanov-Razumnik, 1907a: 16).

With such a pro-revolutionary message — praise for the People's Will Party and enthusiasm for the expansion of the revolution — clearly Ivanov-Razumnik was unsuitable for participation in a volume the aim of which was to criticize the revolutionary intelligentsia.

Why then did Gershenzon nominate him? Since Gershenzon was familiar with Ivanov-Razumnik's book, *History of Russian Social Thought* (Ivanov-Razumnik, 1907b) and had invited him to contribute to *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*'s literary section, ignorance of Ivanov-Razumnik's politics is out of the question<sup>8</sup>. Rather, the creation of a diversity of opinions was Gershenzon's actual intention. According to the scholar Modest Kolerov, before deciding upon the creation of a separate volume, Gershenzon had hoped to realize the project of criticizing the intelligentsia on the pages of *Kriticheskoe obozrenie* (Kolerov, 1991)<sup>9</sup>. This being the case, by closely examining *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*, we can begin to understand how Gershenzon conceived of *Landmarks* and why he could nominate a political populist as Ivanov-Razumnik. *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*, which came out from 1907–1909, was in reality Gershenzon's brainchild and he managed to sell his idea to his close friend Elizaveta Orlova, who provided funding<sup>10</sup>. Associated officially with the "Commission for the Organization of Home Reading", *Kriticheskoe obozrenie* had a different aim from that of the traditional thick journal, because it was not governed either by a single ideological viewpoint or by any political party. Instead, it was supposed to be above politics and ideology, offering for its readers a wide variety of differing, even contrary viewpoints. The diversity of subjects can be perceived by the list of editors: N. Vinogradov (Philosophy), B. Kistiakovskii (Law), M. Gershenzon (Literature) N. Kol'tsov (Natural Sciences), I. Go'ldshtein (Economics) and D. Petrushevskii (History). About the way the journal was viewed by contributors we have

the testimony of Nikolai Berdiaev, who wrote in a private letter to Gershenzon from 1908, "...I suppose that the journal in principle stands on the basis of tolerance and allows the expression of various opinions, among those my own" (Berdiaev, N. <A letter to M. O. Gershenzon>. No exact date listed. Located in the Russian National Library, Moscow. Depository item: 746-26-8).

Although the names of Vinogradov, Kistiakovskii, Petrushevskii and Gold'stein, all employed in universities, show the academic bent of the journal, the contributors included major writers, poets, historians, philosophers and scientists, such as A. Belyi, V. Briusov, G. Shpet, A. Veselovskii, V. Ivanov, M. Lemke, S. Frank and A. Speranskii. Taken as a whole, the journal points to the enormous diversity in Russian intellectual life of the time, reflecting a growing maturity of a part of Russia's readership. To a certain degree, it also shows a measure of intellectual tolerance among writers, since contributors found themselves appearing on the same page with ideological rivals.

Had *Kriticheskoe obozrenie* been the vehicle for the criticism of the revolutionary intelligentsia, one would probably have found far more diverse opinions and greater tolerance among the authors, who would not have expected ideological unanimity from the very start. That, however, did not come to pass. Instead *Landmarks*, probably under Struve's increased direction, became transformed into a narrower project, that of disparaging the revolutionary intelligentsia from a far more consistent philosophical perspective. Except for Gershenzon, all the writers shared a similar intellectual evolution and relatively speaking a unified political viewpoint. They had all been Marxists who had abandoned Social Democracy in favor of Constitutional Democracy. And except for the younger Izgoev, they had all contributed to *Problems of Idealism* (1903), and had all participated in Struve's other major publications: *Polar Star*, *Freedom and Culture*, and *Russian Thought* (Pipes, 1980: 107). Struve's biographer Richard Pipes affirms that, "they constituted something akin to a party of 'Struvists'" (ibid: 108).

The polemics between Struve and Gershenzon which exploded following the volume's appearance deserve full examination, since they offer an inimitable source for understanding both writers' intentions in creating *Landmarks*. Struve's intention that the volume present a unified message can be seen in his published responses to external criticism<sup>11</sup>. For example, in response to Merezhkovskii's public talk in St. Petersburg (later published as an article (Merezhkovskii, 1909)) where the latter accused the authors of embodying several of the qualities of the intelligentsia which they rebuked — such as the inclination towards messianism — Struve voiced his differences with Gershenzon. In the April 25, 1909 issue of the newspaper *Slovo* Struve showed little tolerance for Gershenzon, characterizing the latter's ideas as "empty intellectualizing" and "historically invalid" (Struve, 1909a: 5)<sup>12</sup>. Comparing Gershenzon's "Creative Self-Knowledge" with the other essays, Struve claimed that, while sharing a common orientation with Bulgakov's article, it was alien to the other five (ibid). Although he continued to defend the volume's "single unity" (*edinstvo*), Struve rebutted Gershenzon's view of a "mystical role for the peasantry". Moreover, linking Gershenzon with intellectual rivals, Aleksandr Blok, Dmitry Merezhkovskii and Dmitry Filosofov, Struve blamed Gershenzon's attitudes on literary fashion and a lack of direct knowledge about the Russian folk. "The trace of something lifeless, far-fetched weighs upon [Aleksandr] Blok and Gershenzon's 'Slavophilism'. It is fiction. In general, in its content Slavophilism has become to a great degree exactly fiction" (ibid).

In "Creative Self-Consciousness", we recall, Gershenzon had claimed that the Russian 'intelligent' had become a psychological cripple as a result of a split between consciousness

and will. The intellectual's neglect of his will, i.e., his emotional self, and enslavement to logical reason had made him weak individually and ineffective in his work with others — i.e., in making the 1905 revolution. Moreover, the intelligentsia's atheistic attitudes alienated the folk and even caused the paradoxical situation in which the intelligentsia was fighting against the government in the name of the peasants, but actually needed the government's protection from the peasants' potential wrath<sup>13</sup>.

Against those ideas Struve shook his fist, passionately arguing that the most notable feature of the period from 1904–1909 was the closing of the abyss separating the intelligentsia from the folk and the attainment of their solidarity. Using as his proof the revolutionaries' success in mobilizing the growing proletariat and peasants for political action, Struve claimed that the government was protecting only itself and the propertied classes. The people and the revolutionaries had formed a strong bond. Struve's disagreement with Gershenson was more substantive, however, than just political commentary; it touched upon both their overall conceptions of the 'intelligentsia', a word overused and underdefined in *Landmarks*. While Struve meant the revolutionary elite which had its origins in the 1840s, Gershenson had in mind every thinking person or *Kopfarbeiter*<sup>14</sup>. According to Struve's definition, the peasants were in collusion with the revolutionaries, but Gershenson's intelligentsia, finding its origins in the reforms of Peter the Great, was historically severed from the people.

With these different definitions of the intelligentsia, a direct conflict arose over the diagnosis of intelligentsia's ills and means for its reconstruction. For example, although both Gershenson and Struve use the terms 'personal growth' and 'creativity', they meant different things by them. For Gershenson the intelligent's main problem was his reliance on rational intellect. The solution for the intelligentsia in Gershenson's view was to base consciousness upon will, subduing rational intellect in favor of religious feeling (Gershenson, 1909: 82). In contrast, Struve did not repudiate intellect. On the contrary, he considered rational intellect as a guiding force for the individual, part of a group of elements, including ethical conscience and religious feeling, which must be actively cultivated, modified and improved.

For Struve, the main problem of the intelligentsia was its uncompromising revolutionary ethos, which placed the goal of the revolution above all other goods. Characterized by "disassociation from society" and "hostility to the state", the intelligentsia had shown itself useless in building positive institutions or educating the people. Far from reality, the intelligentsia preferred merely to "tack its short, bookish slogans" onto the people's inchoate rumblings and, therefore, the revolution of 1905 was bound to fail, since, "when the hum subsided, the slogans were left hanging in midair" (Struve, 1909b: 138). The solution to the intelligentsia's ills, according to Struve, lay in education and cultural development. For this to occur, however, the intelligentsia must change its political attitude and embrace other goals besides revolution. "On the one hand, politics will cease to be an isolated sphere, independent of all other aspects of spiritual life, as it has been hitherto. For it too will be based on the idea of a person's inner improvement rather than the external arrangement of society. And, on the other hand, the domination of politics over all the non-political aspects of spiritual life must come to an end" (ibid: 142).

It is understandable why Gershenson's article had angered Struve. Beyond differences over conceptions of the intelligentsia, Gershenson had rejected the Westernizers' premise that consciousness or reason should direct will, that intellect must dominate feeling. For Struve this was unacceptable. He could not tolerate an attack on the neo-Kantian episte-

mology which served as the basis of Russian liberalism and philosophical idealism, nor would he accept Gershenson's implicit populism which located moral superiority in the unassuming and unspoiled Russian peasant<sup>15</sup>.

To appreciate Struve's disagreements with Gershenson at this time, we turn to his review of *Historical Sketches* (*Istoricheskie zapiski*) (1910), Gershenson's monograph on the Slavophiles<sup>16</sup>. By viewing this polemic — Gershenson's response and Struve's answer were published together — we can fully realize the intellectual antagonisms lodged just under the surface of *Landmarks*. Struve was upfront about his critical emphasis; he ignored the Slavophiles, claiming that "...the main interest of *Historical Sketches* is not in its historical content". The book is flawed, he wrote, since "the author wants to be more than a historiographer, he wants to be the philosopher-judge of our intellectual past and present. In concert with this [desire], he offers his own philosophy, artfully weaving it into the historical character of the spiritual development of Russia's educated class. But he does not simply present the teachers of Slavophilism, but expounds their ideas, as dear and cherished ideas for himself, which he shares with his entire being" (Struve, 1911: 470).

To disclose the inevitable philosophical fallacies of Gershenson's worldview, Struve focused on the epistemological premises of Gershenson's cosmic religion. As Gershenson explained in *Historical Sketches*, religious experience had its source in "cosmic feeling", the sensation by the individual of his unity with the whole of the universe (Gershenson, 1910a: 128). Instead of basing his observation on experience, however, Gershenson posited a "scientific law", on which "all great world religions are based; it is contained fully in the New Testament Bible" (Gershenson, 1910b: 177). This law, he claimed, had three axioms. The first stated that in each person there is a "core of sensation and will — the essence of individuality and the vehicle of his holism, which powerfully directs his entire psychic life, including his personal consciousness" (*ibid*). Unconscious will, present in all of us, is part and parcel of the single, universal will, so that "through all the individual wills a single cosmic will circulates" (*ibid*). The second rule is that "our consciousness, rooted in unconscious will through all of its roots (*korniami koreniashcheesia*) is in essence cosmic" (*ibid*).

By this, Gershenson means that all the premises and categories of our consciousness emerge from our condition as representatives of cosmic holism. Finally, Gershenson claimed that the sole correct way to live is to conform one's spirit and consciousness to the imperatives of the cosmic religion. This meant, above all, the one must modulate self-consciousness so that it reflects the idea of the "religious self-definition of the individual" — the understanding that a person is "one with all" (*ibid*). These axioms, Gershenson continues, are fixed and represent a "scientific law of the human spirit, similar to those laws of material life, which Newton, Kepler and Galileo have formulated" (*ibid*).

While not disagreeing that mystical feeling exists, Struve drew vastly different conclusions about its meaning. Attacking Gershenson's religious philosophy as a form of 'pantheism', he noted its 'abstract' quality; it neither treats religion as a social institution or set of socially conditioned rituals and beliefs, nor considers God or history as determining categories. Moreover, according to Struve, Gershenson is a hidden rationalist. "Cosmic metaphysics", he argued, actually destroys religious feeling, since by working as an iron-clad law, revealing how and why each person is connected to the force in the universe, it ultimately rationalizes religious feeling and takes something essentially transcendental and personal, i. e., religious experience, making it terrestrial and impersonal (Struve, 1911: 471).

In addition, Struve wondered about the social consequences of a cosmic religion. He doubted Gershenson's unspoken premise that the positive release from reason necessarily

leads to ethical behavior. "...Can the cosmic order or higher [spiritual] reason be expressed directly in moral law? Or, using a pretentious philosophical term, can moral law be considered identical with (*adekvatnyi*) the cosmic order?" (ibid: 474).

Assured that it could not and convinced that the rational aspects of cosmic religion made it unlike the irrational mysticism of Russian Orthodoxy, Struve asserted that Gershenzon was far from the Slavophiles who "considered the Russian people righteous for being the carrier of Russian Orthodoxy" and from Tolstoy who saw in the people "the carrier of God's truth and social justice". Rather Gershenzon "found in it the carrier of cosmic feeling" (ibid: 480). Repeating his criticism of "Creative Self-Consciousness", Struve held that, as a result of his religious philosophy, Gershenzon arrived at a mistaken view of the Russian people. "This characterization of the people is the most general, the most abstract, the most lifeless, the most murky of all the folk-adoring (*narodopoklonnicheskikh*) characterizations" (ibid). Needless to say, Struve discounted Gershenzon's political critique of the intelligentsia, since it was based on the premises of cosmic religion.

The reason Struve attacked Gershenzon has its explanation in Struve's political thinking around 1910. Rejecting any modernized version of Slavophilism, which he thought especially dangerous due to its romantic attractions, Struve thought Russia had entered a new era in which neither purely Slavophile nor Westernizer doctrines could be effective antidotes to Russia's resistant problems. The solution was not to borrow concepts from the West or to revive Russian nationalist models, but rather to end dictates from above completely. Viewing the individual himself as the object of self-improvement, he called for the development of individual creativity, religious sensitivity and moral responsibility. The path toward achieving these goals, he claims in *Landmarks*, is through 'education' (*vospitanie*), which he describes this way:

We understand education completely in contrast to the idea of 'organizing' the social environment and its pedagogical effect on the individual. This is the 'socialist' idea of education, which has nothing in common with the idea of education in the religious sense. Education in this sense is completely foreign to socialist optimism. It believes not in organization, but only in creativity, in the positive work of the individual on his own self [perfection], in the struggle within himself in the name of creative tasks... (Struve, 1909b: 143).

Although Struve did not advocate any particular political party or political system in *Landmarks*, one recalls from his speeches in the second Duma and his other writings from the period that he envisioned a liberal monarchy in which political life would be governed democratically with representatives from the State Duma holding more legislative power than the czar. In addition, he considered the Constitutional Democratic party the best vehicle for the achievement of a liberal civic society<sup>17</sup>. In comparison, although we do not know Gershenzon's concrete political preference at this time, his radical, pro-Bolshevik views of 1917 appear a consistent result of the utopian strivings expressed in his cosmic religion (Horowitz, 1994: 505–512).

The intellectual polemics emerging from *Historical Sketches* point to differences which were contained in the volume itself. Gershenzon's apolitical religiosity has definite ideological similarities with Bulgakov's position in his *Landmarks* article, "Heroism and the Heroic" and, to a less degree, Berdiaev's "Philosophical Truth and Intelligentsia Truth". In those articles, as in Gershenzon's, the utopian drives of the intelligentsia did not come under assault, only the intelligentsia's mistaken aim. Instead of revolution, the authors wanted to

direct the intelligentsia's intense passion toward the goal of religious perfection and social rebuilding. In contrast, Struve's focus on ethical responsibility and his critique of Russia's concrete political situation link his essay to those of the other contributors, S. Frank, B. Kistiakovskii and A. Izghev. These individuals framed their questions in terms clearly more in tune with contemporary Russian life, treating the political, legal, economic, and sexual consequences of the intelligentsia's uncompromising attitude toward revolution.

If the articles in *Landmarks*, as many have noted, contradict each other in a variety of ways, we might wonder why Struve was surprised at finding internal conflict. Again an examination of the relations of Struve and Gershenzon proves illuminating. By 1908 Gershenzon was a well-known historian who had published one book, *The History of Young Russia* (Gershenzon, 1908), and many articles on Russian intellectual history. Furthermore, Gershenzon was a regular reviewer for the liberal journal, *Vestnik Evropy* (*Herald of Europe*). More importantly, Struve knew Gershenzon well from earlier days. They had already collided in 1903, when Gershenzon had written a contentious letter to the editor against the ideological direction of Struve's illegal journal, *Liberation* (*Osvobozhdenie*), and Struve had published the letter and his response to it in the first issue of that year.

In his 1903 "Letter from the Shores of Lake Geneva" Gershenzon stood up for the laws of morality against the laws of politics. In much the same way as he later argued in *Landmarks*, Gershenzon complained that, in their quest to realize political goals, revolutionaries often sinned against moral norms which they would in any other case consider as absolute and inviolable. Furthermore, he claimed that there was a whole domain of morality outside the political sphere; the morality of people in their relations with others and within themselves. The government cannot take this internal freedom away from individuals. Finally, he declared that the 'intelligenty' were hypocrites who lived a lie, since, while struggling for the liberation of the peasants, they did not renounce using servants and domestic help from the lower classes (Gershenzon, 1903: 227).

Struve answered Gershenzon mercilessly. Calling him a Tolstoyan and an ethical maximalist, Struve exclaimed that in Gershenzon's moral arguments "a great lie was hidden, which lazy minds and sleepy souls always accept and which therefore sophists and apologists of force use with great ease" (Struve, 1903: 234). Russian society, Struve maintained, needs true freedom, not illusions, and it will not have real freedom until it rids itself of the yoke of autocracy. Moreover, Struve claimed that the yearning for political freedom is not autonomous or separate from internal freedom, but comes out of an entire moral and religious worldview. He writes, "Outside of and without political freedom we cannot 'live by conscience' otherwise than in a ceaseless and irreconcilable struggle with the state ruler" (*ibid*: 238).

Considering Struve's position in 1903, his unconditional adherence to political change as the basis for personal and social improvement in Russia, I think it is fair to say that by 1909 Struve had come closer to Gershenzon. Having come to regret the policy of 'no enemies on the left', Struve was no longer convinced that political solutions automatically resolve the problems of social life or that the autonomous realms of truth and beauty should be sacrificed to political considerations. Nevertheless, knowing Gershenzon and having already been at swords' points with him, Struve was probably foolish to expect that the two would reach agreement in 1909. In fact Gershenzon had changed little, his articles showed no repudiation of his adherence to Tolstoyanism and religious populism.

Why then did Struve get involved with Gershenzon in an endeavor as important as *Landmarks*? It seems to me that Struve, having wrested the choice of contributors from



Gershenson's control, was probably convinced that the final product would reflect his conception. What occurred, however, was something very different. Partially influenced by Struve and partially by Gershenson, *Landmarks* was supposed to be a unified project, while in fact the essays were only somewhat linked together. Sundered by internal contradictions and yet intending to offer a coherent message, *Landmarks* was unable to perform either function fully. It was neither a forum for intellectual sharing and mutual tolerance, nor a harmonious choir of unanimity. With two fathers it came out as best it could: it ended up a biting negative critique, a response, a "symptom", as George Florovskii famously put it.

In a sense Florovskii was right — *Landmarks* was a symptom, but it was not just a sign of conflict in the Russian intelligentsia, one part still locked in a dead-end revolutionary mentality, the other moving forward toward a more balanced acceptance of the state. By arguing against the politicization of Russian thought, the authors of *Landmarks* were edging closer to the view that philosophy deserves its own disciplinary space independent of current affairs. Although the writers themselves could not achieve this goal, their complaints were indicative of a general trend in Russian thought before the 1917 Revolution.

Since *Landmarks* veered away from Struve's conception of unity, scholars have been quick to call it a failure. But is that really a fair evaluation? If we change our focus and measure success in terms of the reaction to it, the turmoil it created, and its publicity value, we might claim that *Landmarks* performed extremely well. We recall that it incited over 250 periodical articles in the first year alone, as well as numerous conferences and countless reviews and newspaper accounts<sup>18</sup>. Pavel Miliukov went on a lecture tour to repudiate it<sup>19</sup>. Even Lev Tolstoy bought a copy and wrote a review<sup>20</sup>. Furthermore, the volume went through five editions within the year and in the end sold over 15,000 copies. To what can we attribute this marketing success?

I believe the lack of unity rather than just a hindrance was at once a vital factor in the volume's success. Without a central plan, the impression of genuine, heart-felt criticism was transmitted, as each contributor spoke not for any group, but about his own individual experience. Furthermore, the lack of unity revealed the extent of the fissure within the intelligentsia itself. This was not merely a unified group of dissidents, a single enemy. No, with a measure of ideological diversity, the contributors hit from different sides and the attack was therefore all the more surprising, damaging and sustained. Had the volume appeared without all its supposed flaws, could it have done more than it did? I think we can now agree that the volume has found strength in its flaws and has enjoyed such popularity not in spite of, but because of its internal contradictions.

#### ПРИМЕЧАНИЯ

<sup>1</sup> All translations are my own except otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> In the last decade the volume has run the intellectual gamut, having been enlisted in defense of Russian democrats, anti-democrats, political conservatives, religious moderates and Russian Orthodox revivalists. See: Kolerov, 1994a.

<sup>3</sup> *Landmarks* was published in monthly installments in the journal, *Literaturnoe obozrenie* (*Literary Review*), put out as a single volume by the publishing house, *Novosti*, in 1990 (Vekhi ... , 1990) and printed as an anthology with *Iz glubiny* (*Out of the Depths*) from *Pravda* in 1991 (Vekhi ... , 1991). *Landmarks* has also been published in an English translation (Vekhi = Landmarks, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Archbishop Antonii wrote a positive review (Archbishop Antonii, 1909) and the well-known liberal professor of history Aleksandr Kizevetter reacted positively to the volume (Kizevetter, Lurie, 1909: 127–137). For a thorough examination of the reactions to *Landmarks*, see: Oberländer, 1965.

<sup>5</sup> Leonid Evgen'evich Gabrilovich (pseudonym Galich, 1878–1953) was a physicist and privat-docent at St. Petersburg University. He was also a writer for the journal, *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*. Ivanov-Razumnik (real name Razumnik Vasil'evich Ivanov; 1878–1946) was a critic and literary historian associated with Russian Symbolism.

<sup>6</sup> See Frank's letter to Gershenzon, 19 October 1908 (K istorii sozdaniia «Vekh», 1992: 232–253; Vekhi ... , 1991: 501).

<sup>7</sup> A more extensive group of Semen Frank's letters to Gershenzon have been published by M. Kolerov (Kolerov, 1994b).

<sup>8</sup> In addition, a personal friendship had arisen between Gershenzon and Ivanov Razumnik during 1908; see: K istorii sozdaniia «Vekh», 1992: 283.

<sup>9</sup> M. Kolerov writes, “However the conception of a volume, devoted to an analysis of the ideas and way of life of the Russian intelligentsia did not immediately come to Gershenzon. Before the idea of a separate book was formed, Gershenzon thought to realize the project within the realm of those possibilities which presented themselves — the journal, *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*” (Kolerov, 1991: 11).

<sup>10</sup> Elizaveta Orlova, the granddaughter of the Decembrist Mikhail Orlov, was the official editor of *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*. About her relationship with Gershenzon, Aleksandr Gol'denveizer, Gershenzon's brother-in-law, writes in his unpublished memoirs, “M. O. Gershenzon was very close to Elizaveta Nikolaevna Orlova. Orlova, who was already at that time not a young woman [1901], came from an extremely interesting family. At that time her mother was alive, she lived to be 90 and some years old. Her father was the son of the famous Decembrist Mikhail Orlov, married to Ekaterina Raevskaia, one of the three Raevskii sisters. In Elizaveta Nikolaevna Orlova, the grand daughter of Mikhail Orlova's, hands were the extremely valuable archival materials about the Orlov, Raevskii families, the Decembrist Kritsov, etc. <...> Thanks to his closeness with Orlova, Mikhail Osipovich used these materials widely in his works” (Gol'denveizer, A. Unpublished memoirs, in the Museum of Aleksandr Gol'denveizer, Moscow).

<sup>11</sup> Years later in 1956, Semen Frank, miming Struve's criticisms, blamed Gershenzon for the volume's internal weakness. In *P. B. Struve — biografiia*, Frank claims that “...the possibility that the basic core of the participants of *Landmarks* cooperated with their initiator Gershenzon was conditioned by the fact that Gershenzon — in general a bizarre and capricious person — decided not to acquaint any of us with the articles of the other contributors before publication in the interests of independence concerning the separate contributor's judgments, so that each of us became acquainted with the content of *Landmarks* only after its publication; there was no prior editorial agreement or exchange of ideas” (Frank, 1956: 82). Frank's testimony is seriously undermined by recent evidence that at least the Petersburg participants were familiar with all the essays before publication (Kolerov, 1991: 14).

<sup>12</sup> The article was republished in a collection of articles in 1911 (Struve, 1911: 228–232).

<sup>13</sup> Gershenzon wrote, “Whatever we are, it is not only impossible to think of merging with the folk, [but] we should fear it worse than all the executions of the authorities and bless those authorities who alone with their bayonets and prisons still protect us from the people's wrath” (Levin, 1968: 156). This remark caused an outcry in the leftist press and in the second edition Gershenzon thought it better to place an explanatory footnote as to its meaning. In the second edition Gershenzon added the following: “This sentence was joyfully seized upon by newspaper critics as a public confession of love for bayonets and prisons. I do not love bayonets and I will never summon anyone to bless them; on the contrary, I see the Nemesis in them. The meaning of my sentence is that by [virtue of] its entire past the intelligentsia is [now] placed in an unprecedented, terrible situation: the folk, for whom it has struggled, despises it, and the authorities, against whom it has struggled, are turning out to be its defender, whether it likes it or not. ‘Should’ in my sentence means ‘is fated’: we, with our own hands, without realizing it ourselves, have woven this tie between ourselves and the authorities — here is the horror, and to it I am alluding” (ibid: 168).

<sup>14</sup> This paragraph is based on research by A. Levin (ibid: 18).

<sup>15</sup> R. Pipes describes how Struve's conception of Western culture conforms with Immanuel Kant's. See: Pipes, 1980: 86.

<sup>16</sup> *Istoricheskie zapiski* actually came out in print in late 1909, which explains the appearance of P. Struve's review in the December 1909 issue of *Russkaia mysl'*.

<sup>17</sup> See Struve's writings on political issues and economic problems during 1908 and 1909; for example, "Razmyshleniia na politicheskie teme" (1908), "Kleveta na predkov i na konstitutsiiu" (1908) and "Obshchee politicheskoe polozenie: A. I. Guchkov i P. A. Stolypin" (1909). Struve's bibliography can be found in: Pipes, 1980: 470–508.

<sup>18</sup> For a list of reviews written during the first year after publication, see the appendix in the fifth edition of *Landmarks: Vekhi ...*, 1910.

<sup>19</sup> For more on Miliukov and *Landmarks*, see: Zernov, 1963: 126–131.

<sup>20</sup> For more on Lev Tolstoy's attitude toward *Landmarks*, see: Poltoratzky, 1964.

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ЕДИНСТВО В «ВЕХАХ»?:  
ПОЛЕМИКА П. Б. СТРУВЕ И М. О. ГЕРШЕНЗОНА  
Б. ХОРОВИЦ  
(УНИВЕРСИТЕТ ТУЛЕЙН, НОВЫЙ ОРЛЕАН, США)

В статье предложено новое прочтение самого важного текста в истории русской интеллектуальной мысли XX столетия — сборника «Вехи» (1909). Анализируя соперничество двух организаторов работы над книгой, М. О. Гершензона и П. Б. Струве, профессор Б. Хоровиц объясняет, почему «Вехам» при отсутствии единой интеллектуальной позиции удалось предложить столь жесткую критику радикальной идеологии.

Ключевые слова: М. О. Гершензон; «Вехи»; русская интеллигенция; П. Б. Струве; реакция на революцию 1905 г.

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Horowitz Brian, PhD, Sizeler Family Chair Professor, Tulane University, Member of Association of Jewish Studies. Tel.: +1 (504) 862-30-75. E-mail: horowitz@tulane.edu

Хоровиц Брайан — доктор философии (PhD), профессор кафедры им. семьи Сайзлер Университета Тулейн, член Ассоциации иудаики США. Тел.: +1 (504) 862-30-75. Эл. адрес: horowitz@tulane.edu