

Leopold Haimson: His Historical Vision and Historiographical Legacy
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The recent death of Leopold Haimson marks the passing of yet one more member of that founding generation of post-war scholars who established the main currents of North American historiography on the Russian empire and the Soviet Union. In recent years, our wing of the profession has lost a series of historians from this cohort trained during the onset of the Cold War. The list of these recent losses includes Richard Stites, Moshe Lewin, Martin Malia, Robert “Bill” Daniels, and Haimson’s one-time friend and longtime colleague, Marc Raeff.

If these scholars did not literally found the specialty of Russian history in North America, they certainly stand out as the field’s decisive shapers. Almost all of them were the product of the remarkable mobilization of resources—intellectual, institutional and, not least financial—that took place at the beginning of the Cold War, as the American government sought to create a cadre of experts who could explain or interpret the country’s new adversary, their former Soviet partner in the Grand Alliance against the Axis. This rapid expansion of a new area of research occurred in tandem with the general growth of higher education in the United States, driven first by the GI Bill and later by the “baby boom.” Almost overnight, there sprang up across the country institutes devoted to the study of the Soviet Union, bringing in their train scores of positions in departments of history, political science, anthropology, sociology, economics, language and literature. By the time of the XX Party Conference in 1956 and the launching of Sputnik the following year, an intellectual infrastructure had come into being, with hubs at Harvard and Columbia, Indiana, and the Pacific coast, dedicated to research in and the teaching of Soviet, Russian, or Slavic Studies. Haimson played his own part in this process, helping establish a center for Russian research at the University of Chicago.¹

If all of these historians, many of whom issued from Mikhail Karpovich’s legendary Harvard seminar, shone as luminaries or lions in their own right, one can fairly argue that Haimson exerted a uniquely significant impact on American debates over and scholarship on the interpretation of late imperial and early Soviet history.² This

¹ D. C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America’s Soviet Experts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.) Of course, as is well known, as the Cold War continued into the troubled 1960’s, differences over ideology and orientation surfaced within this part of the academy as it did elsewhere as scholars took sides in a university environment increasingly polarized over questions of domestic policy, the Vietnam conflict, and the United States role in international politics. Engerman discusses the effects of these conflicts on the development of a now-maturing “Soviet studies,” and particularly the origins of “revisionism” to whose emergence Haimson’s publications made a contribution.

² On the Karpovich seminar in its Cold War context, see A Zeide, “Creating a ‘Space of Freedom’: Michail Mikhailovich *Karpovich* and Russian Historiography in America, *Ab Imperio*, 1/2007: 241-300. Also, Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*, 154-158, who also discusses Isaiah Berlin’s impact at Harvard. On Haimson specifically, see *ibid.* 168-171, 307-308. For Haimson’s own autobiographical and professional life, see

influence stemmed in significant measure from the interpretive vision laid out in his first book *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), but even more from his subsequent work, most notably a series of seminal articles published in the 1960's,³ as well as later contributions to volumes he edited on themes as diverse as the "politics of rural Russia" and the history of the Russian working class in the first two decades of the twentieth century.⁴ He also made important contributions to historians' understanding of the political course of 1917 in his life-long work devoted to the history of the Mensheviks, his first area of research and one that he pursued in a productive partnership with his former student Ziva Galili, as well as Russian collaborators.⁵

However, Haimson's contribution to our historiography owed much as to his work as a mentor of graduate students during a career that spanned more than forty years, beginning at the University of Chicago in the mid-1950's, and continuing at Columbia University in the City of New York, where he taught from 1965 until his partial retirement in the mid-1990's. By his own rough count, Haimson trained more than 100 historians. Their interests spanned a much broader variety of topics and periods than usually encountered in a professional culture that privileges increasingly narrow specialization.⁶ Among the first students from Haimson's Chicago years, one finds the

two interviews published since 2005: "O vremeni i o sebe," *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, No. 6 (December, 2005): 185-197; D-M. Fox, P. Holquist, A. Martin, "An Interview with Leopold Haimson," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, 1 (Winter 2007): 1-2.

³ "The Problem of Political and Social Stability in Urban Russia on the Eve of War and Revolution Revisited," *Slavic Review* 59, 4 (2000): 848-75; and its often-overlooked, companion-piece, "The Parties and the State: The Evolution of Political Attitudes in Post-Reform Russia," in C. E. Black, ed., *The Transformation of Russian Society: Aspects of Social Change since 1861*, ed. Cyril E. Black (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), republished in M. Cherniavsky, *The Structure of Russian History: Interpretive Essays* (New York: Random House, 1970), 309-340.

⁴ L. H. Haimson, ed., *The Politics of Rural Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979); Haimson and C. Tilly, eds., *Strikes, Wars, and Revolutions in an International Perspective: Strike Waves in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Haimson and G. Sapelli, eds., *Strikes, Social Conflict and the First World War: An International Perspective* (Milano: Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, 1992). He published much of his research on workers in French, with the assistance of French sociologist Eric Brian.

⁵ In addition to journal articles in Russia, this collaboration produced the documentary collection edited by Haimson, Galili, and A. Nanorokov, *Men'sheviki v 1917 godu: v 3 tomakh* (Moskva: Progress-akademiia, 1994). Earlier works in this vein include a collaboration with Richard Wortman and Galili, *The Making of Three Russian Revolutionaries: Voices from the Menshevik Past* (New York: Cambridge U. P., 1987).

⁶ For a concrete indication of this diversity, see the Table of Contents and "Editor's Preface" to the *Festschrift* for Haimson published in *Russian History/Histoire russe* 16, 2 (1989): 169-170. Contributors not already mentioned above included

late Richard Hellie—a specialist on the social, legal, and economic history of the Muscovite period, as well as Richard Wortman—the eminent historian of Russian thought and political culture, and the late Allan Wildman who specialized in the social history of the late imperial army, to name only a few. Haimson’s years at Columbia yielded as rich and diverse an outflow of scholars, characterized, again, by the sheer diversity of their interests: Ziva Galili; Barbara Engel, a pioneer in the study of women’s and gender history; Ronald Suny, a scholar of labor history, national identity, and the making of empire; the labor historian David Mandel and social historians Robert Edelman and Roberta Manning. Perhaps surprisingly, the Haimson “kitchen” also produced a considerable number of historians interested in the imperial state and the officials who directed it: Francis Weislo, Alexandra Korros, David Macey—now deceased, Andrew Verner, and a last “wave” that included Peter Holquist, Yanni Kotsonis, Jochen Hellbeck, and Frederick Corney. Again, such enumerations represent only an arbitrary selection of the many dissertations and careers that flowed from the demanding seminars that Haimson offered yearly to generations of graduate students.

In the same vein, Haimson also helped shape scholarship on Russia’s history through a host of workshops and conferences that he directed or helped organize in the United States, at France’s *Maison des sciences de l’homme*—where he cooperated with Fernand Braudel, among others—and, of course, in Russia itself, particularly at the St Petersburg branch of the Academy of Science’s Institute of History. Perhaps the longest-standing of these venues was the seminar he hosted monthly on Friday evenings at Columbia’s Russian (later, Harriman) Institute. Dubbed the “Little Red Schoolhouse” by many of its participants, these gatherings brought together graduate students and senior scholars from the Atlantic seaboard and elsewhere, offering a forum for the presentation of works in progress, whether dissertations or books, in an atmosphere of admirable scholarly rigor and collegiality. Participants in these forums included such prominent historians as Haimson’s close friend William Rosenberg, the late Daniel Field, Laura Engelstein, Michael Confino, and Richard Wortman—who ultimately joined his *Doktorvater* on the faculty at Columbia. Visiting Russian scholars also took part, including Academicians D. A. Koval’chenko and B. V. Anan’ich, as well as the latter’s Petersburg colleague R. S. Ganelin. Before adjourning for the customary meal at a local Chinese restaurant, each session concluded with a characteristically thoughtful, involved and insightful summation by Haimson himself.

In their respective fashions, each of these vectors—publication, training, and collaboration—allowed Haimson to explore and articulate a historical vision arresting not only for its insight and breadth, but for its originality, especially in a field divided by the ideological struggles of the Cold War, but shaped at the same time by the historiographical prejudices inherited from the nineteenth century. Most of all, he held a deep suspicion of determinism or any claims by historians to have identified underlying *zakonomernost’* in historical processes.

Haimson’s one-time Chicago students Philip Pomper, an authority on the radical intelligentsia, and Martin Miller, specialist in cultural and intellectual history of the late imperial and early Soviet periods.

Thus, his two-part article in *Slavic Review* took issue with both Soviet and Western interpretations of the workers' movement on the eve of the Great War. Haimson presented an argument for the untenability of the imperial social and political orders, which he regarded as doomed to collapse or rupture even without the strains imposed by the Great War—a stance he subsequently modified without renouncing.⁷ Here, he stressed the widening gulf, often termed “dual polarization,” separating an increasingly militant and particularistic working class from the rest of “census” society, on one hand, alongside a similar distancing of the autocratic state from *obshchestvennost'*, on the other. In Haimson's rendition, to invoke Yeats, the autocracy could not survive because the centre would not hold. Similarly, his study of political parties and their ethos during the late empire—which explored the reasons for the failure of a multi-party system to emerge in Russia—pointed unmistakably to a civic and political culture that had exhausted virtually all alternatives for its survival.

He parted company with many of his Western contemporaries, most of whom saw in Russian society after 1907 the long delayed stirrings of a reassuring shift to an identifiably European course of progress, pointing to economic growth, the emergence of a new civic culture in the constitutional order that had eventuated from the recent revolutionary upheavals, and the increasing institutionalization of the labour movement. Implicitly grounded in an optimistic modernization theory—itsself rooted in a venerable *doux-commerce* tradition dating to the Scottish Enlightenment—these historians' perspective took a Whiggish view that these developments presaged the emergence of a Russia that would have joined the general European march to modernity had not war intervened.⁸

In his rejection of determinism, and in his attention to “thick” context alongside a meticulous attention to telling detail or turns of speech, Haimson resembled one of his favorite pre-revolutionary historians, A. E. Presniakov. He never openly espoused one or another theoretical orientation, although the tenets guiding his work and his emphasis on attention to historical *method* as opposed to any *a priori* theoretical or meta-historical framework, reflect his engagement with theoretical discussions in contemporary scholarship on history, anthropology and psychology.⁹ Instead, he sought constantly to balance the tensions and interactions between the contingencies produced by specific events in the context of larger structural forces or processes, such as social organization, institutions, the constitution and practice of power, what we would now call discourses, and the subjective *moment* in individual or collective historical agents.

Perhaps the most revealing entrée into his historical perspective came in the metaphorical epigraph that opened his first published work, *The Russian Marxists*, in which he quoted Shakespeare's *Macbeth*: “If you can look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow and which will not.” This citation captures with admirable economy the tension between the “natural” tendency for seeds to grow into a mature plant, what Aristotle termed *physis*, and the accidental interventions—drought, disease,

⁷ Cf. Haimson, “The Problem of Political and Social Stability in Urban Russia on the Eve of War and Revolution Revisited,” *Slavic Review* 59, 4 (2000): 848–75.

⁸ On Soviet reactions to his thesis, see “An Interview,” 6–8.

⁹ Haimson spoke at some length about these issues in two interviews from the last five years; see note 1.

fire, or mutation—that could prevent or alter the full development of the seedling’s potential development. As he often acknowledged, Haimson shared the emphasis of his *Annaliste* colleagues on layers of determinative contexts—long, medium, and short *duree*—which he appropriated as “structure, conjuncture, and event.” Likewise, the *Annalistes*’ attention to *mentalités* as quasi-independent epiphenomena of their cultural conjunctures appealed to his interest in individual or group psychology as the seat of human action; indeed, one might add that this attraction likely derived from his own interests in anthropology and the influence enjoyed by psychological theory among Anglophone historians during the immediate post-war era.

Yet as I say, he appropriated this perspective, while refashioning it to meet his own explanatory needs. Like his French friends and colleagues—and, indeed, most historians of Russia dating to the mid-nineteenth century, Haimson understood imperial Russia as an overarching social-cultural-political system of sorts, comprised of mutually interactive components whose members were bound by certain shared assumptions and mutually intelligible discourses—or “languages”—social practices, and ongoing negotiations over questions of sub- and superordination (favorite terms of his), grievance and rectification. However, unlike the *Annalistes*, who dwelt on what one might think of the self-equilibration of early modern European systems as they absorbed new modes of production, Haimson devoted his historical attention to the gathering, and ultimately revolutionary, changes produced on the level of “conjuncture” and “event” during the late imperial period: the Great Reforms; industrialization; new modes and languages of governance; the emergence on the historical stage of such new or developing groups as the working class, intelligentsia, and “civil society”; and the consequent effects of these developments on the relationship between the autocratic state and “society” writ large, as well as the fractious relationships among all these new and older social formations. Thus, it is fair to argue that he ultimately relied on an analytic *mise-en-scène* that leaned on the structuralism endemic to the historiography of the time. This would seem a difficult approach to renounce entirely, given the historiographical conventions of the time, but even more the proto-structuralism of the historical philosophies and teleological narratives espoused by virtually every *intelligent*, revolutionary, and imperial statesman whose documents provided him his evidence. Certainly, in his emphasis on the contingent, the conjunctural and the possibility for dramatic change flowing from singular events, he strove to divorce this historiographical convention from the *teloi* to which its proponents so often oriented themselves and their interpretations.

Drawing on a variety of historiographical traditions, then, Haimson refashioned them to unpack a historical problem of much more compressed chronological scope and more immediately thoroughgoing impact than dreamt of in most *Annaliste* historiography. He sought to analyze and explain on both the systemic and particular levels the ongoing and uneven transformation of late imperial Russia, processes that strained against the conceptual fabric of the older order—its mutually supporting discursive/normative, socioeconomic, and institutional “structures”—in virtually every facet of its functioning. For Haimson, in the circumstances of stress and challenge that pulled at this society in the wake of the Great Reforms and the subsequent industrialization of the Bunge-Vyshnegradskii-Witte era, decisive events or occurrences could act to transform consciousness and unleash or realign forces, like the strike waves after the 1912 Lena massacres or the famine and epidemics of the early 1890’s, that could

end by reshaping or shattering the pre-existing structures. Yet, at the same time, the course taken by these processes was never as measured or predictable as claimed by generations of Russian-Soviet or western historians wedded to one or another interpretation of history's *zакonomernosti*. If a new "class" emerged in the empire's urban proletariat or among the *krupnaia burzhuziia*, other groups—nobles, in particular—held fast to self-representations rooted in the language of *soslovnost'*, while imperial statesmen seemingly embraced an increasingly "modern" or technocratic worldview without ever accepting the logic of including "society" in its counsels, despite the urgings of a Kakhanov Commission or a Struve. Haimson emphasized the sheer paradoxicality of these responses to the challenges of a changing empire.

Here, he laid particular stress on "language," as he put it, as a powerful nexus among a variety of phenomena: the self-representation and self-situation of social groups or individual actors; a conjunctural code of norms and/or expectations, generated alternatively by representatives of state power or actors "from below." While these languages/discourses conveyed acceptable limits to contestation or bounded horizons of possible legitimate actions, they could also act as quasi-independent causal agents on their own part, able to produce change, often dramatically, by revealing previously unthought-of aspirations or possibilities or by casting in a new and critical light long accepted norms or relationships. Again, this preoccupation with language as both signifier and potential historical agent reflected Haimson's long-term engagement with French social and historical theory.

His close attention to language also provided him with a pathway to reconstructing the psychology, identity and motivations of the historical agents he studied, none more so than the workers at the centre of his *Slavic Review* articles or in his essay on worker mobilization and identity after Lena. For Haimson, "self-representation" revealed agents' understanding of the world they inhabited and their place in it; it also revealed more deeply-held values and aspirations, that themselves changed radically when faced with such stunning events as the goldfield massacres of 1912. The same attention to language allowed him at the same to track the spreading fissures and fracture in the political and social realms of the autocratic order during its final years.

This sweeping, contingent, detailed perspective found expression in every sphere of Haimson's scholarly activity—publications, seminars, presentations, and workshops. One encounters it in whole or in part when reading his analyses of the late imperial intelligentsia and "civil society," or rural society in its evolving relationship with the post-1905 autocracy, and especially in his studies of the working class in the early twentieth centuries. This vision, as I have called it, has exerted a powerful and enduring impact on the conceptualization and practice of Russian history, particularly in North America. Even despite the increasing prominence of the "imperial turn" in our scholarship on post-reform Russia, problems he raised or debates he ignited stay loom large in our historiography; at the same time, new generations of his *Doktorkinder* refashion in turn the insights and methods that so distinguished Haimson as a teacher and critic.

The most obvious evidence of his continuing impact on our field is the debate that he largely defined nearly half a century ago with his two-article discussion of social stability in urban Russia after 1907. This scholarly discussion has pitted so-called "optimists" against "pessimists" in positions that have moved surprisingly little since

Haimson himself first characterized them.¹⁰ In many ways, these articles stand as Haimson's most enduring contribution to historians' study and thinking about the widening gyre of crisis that overtook the autocracy in what we now know to have been its final years—a view shared by much of liberal and radical intelligentsia at the time.

The “optimistic” viewpoint has developed strength and momentum since the 1960's, arguably beginning with Theofanis Stavrou's edited collection *Russia Under the Last Tsar*¹¹. The collapse of the Soviet order has helped revive this position among Russian and western scholars alike, both with the “archival revolution” and the new attention to the “alternatives” on offer to late imperial society, alternatives long obscured by the long-assumed near inevitability of the Bolshevik triumph in 1917-1920. In North America, such scholars as Joseph “Brad” Bradley¹² and the contributors to the collection *Between Tsar and People*¹³ have provided rich and persuasive empirical evidence of what one might term a thickening of civic culture during the reign of Nicholas II—the proliferation of associations, public societies, a public sphere connected by an increasingly vital and widely-read press, relatively untroubled by censorship.

As a whole, these developments seemed to promise the emergence of social and political alliances that could embody a true civil society able to transcend or dissolve older affective associations rooted in *soslovnost'* or other pre-modern modes of identity. This scholarship, in brief, echoes with impressive fidelity the aspirations and perspectives that pervaded the liberal press during the years immediately before and after, if more tentatively, 1905,¹⁴ particularly in the way both share a faith in the ability of history's *zakonomernosti* to accomplish the crucial transition from a historically outmoded autocracy, obliged by international circumstance to foster the advent of a modernity that it could not successfully accommodate, to a rule of law state under the guidance of a nation or community of citizens, the result and symbol of that modernity, now sufficiently “mature” to play its historically ordained role.

For their part, many of the “pessimists”—frequently Haimson's own students—have built on his initial insights and theses to offer a more skeptical view on the possibility or inevitability of that crucial transition, given both the contradictory processes of social change *and* changes within the autocratic state itself in the context of early twentieth-century Russia. At the same time, they have adapted to changing theoretical and discursive contexts the expansive historical perspective that distinguishes Haimson's written work and certainly shaped his critiques of the many dissertations he supervised over the four decades of his career. From various points of view and through differing entrées, they have suggested that it was precisely the problem of the transition from the *ancien* to the hoped-for new regime that posed an insuperable barrier

¹⁰ Haimson, “The Problem of Social Stability,” 619-624.

¹¹ T. G. Stavrou, ed., *Russia Under the Last Tsar* (Minnesota, 1969).

¹² J. Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism, and Civil Society* (Harvard, 2009).

¹³ E. Clowes, S. Kassow, J. West, eds., *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1991).

¹⁴ See, for example, introduction to *Politicheskii stroi sovremennykh gosudarstv* (St. Petersburg: Slovo, 1905),

alternatively to *obshchestvo* or the state, given the “problem of power” and the getting of it at the end of the Russian empire.¹⁵

Interestingly, many of Haimson’s students who have underscored the fundamental irreconcilability of state and society—to recur to a convenient shorthand—have done so by applying his method to the study of the imperial state, particularly the higher echelons of the bureaucracy, a part of the imperial order on which Haimson did not publish a great deal. The proverbial red threads binding several generations of their scholarship on this theme include attention to the growing professionalization of the civil service, including an emphasis on the appropriation of “technical” knowledge—long before Michel Foucault drew attention to this aspect of modern governmentality, educational attainment, and the conviction that state power properly and rationally applied could produce the changes in society, governance, and the economy to foster the development of a prosperous Russia able to maintain its proper place among the leading Great Powers.¹⁶ These works document the coalescence in many ministerial offices of a world-view prizing rationality and process while maintaining an insistence on the state’s monopoly of prerogative in “matters of state” [*gosudarstvennoe delo*], even as some—notably Loris-Melikov, Stolypin and, to a certain extent, Witte and Krivoshein—sought to engage “responsible” elements of society as allies but not partners in improving or modernizing the empire. To the extent that a crisis advened after the 1890’s, in this view, it proceeded along two axes, evocative of the conceptual structure of Haimson’s earlier argument. On one hand, the endless contention among officials reflecting sharply varying views on the state, the nature of the autocracy and their position vis-à-vis society brought on a fracture and, ultimately, a paralysis exacerbated by the role afforded the autocrat as the unquestionable source of authority in this system. The tension between “bureaucratic,” to use the Weberian shorthand, aspirations to a rational, procedure-driven policy-making apparatus and the “charismatic” nature of power on which that system rested, supported by many officials at the ministerial level and at Court, proved an insuperable obstacle to the creation of a coherent program for addressing challenges “from below.” At the same time, almost all representatives of the state’s brief agreed on

¹⁵ See Haimson, *Russia’s Revolutionary Experience: Two Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

¹⁶ See, for example, R. Wortman *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); F. Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia : State, Local Society, and National Politics, 1855-1914*; D. Macey, *Government and peasant in Russia, 1861-1906 : the prehistory of the Stolypin reforms* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987); A. Korros. *A Reluctant Parliament : Stolypin, Nationalism, and the Politics of the Russian Imperial State Council, 1906-1911* (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield, 2002); D. McDonald, *United Government and Foreign Policy in Russia, 1900-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); A. Verner, *The Crisis of Russian Autocracy: Nicholas II and the 1905 Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990). More recently, see Y. Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861-1914* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999); and P. Holquist. *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

the fundamental proposition that state power stood above society as a mobilizing and guiding force resting on the professionalism and “state” perspective of the government. This conviction united to an impressive extent “conservatives” and “liberals” alike, whether N. A. Maklakov, Stolypin, or that ostensibly liberal technocrat-in-becoming Krivoshein.¹⁷ This obduracy or jealousy of prerogative that divided “state” from “society,” echoed in interesting fashion Struve’s criticism of the intelligentsia for its failure to consider the problems of *gosudarstvennost’* that Haimson cited in his article on political parties as part of the force dividing “society” from “state.”¹⁸ Both sides proved unable to bridge this gap repeatedly, whether during the efforts to cobble together together a “ministry of public confidence” under Witte and Stolypin respectively in 1906, the dissolution of the first Duma, the outcome of the “western zemstvo” crisis of 1911, or the fissures reflected in relations between state, Duma, and the ill-fated “Progressive Bloc” during the Great War.

If the “optimist-pessimist” debate has proven the most enduring, or chronic, historiographical legacy of Haimson’s scholarship, his influence has shaped the strikingly broad thematic range of work produced by his students. Richard Hellie’s study dealing with the relationship between military reform and the institutionalization of serfdom bears many of the hallmarks associated with Haimson’s method, including its attention to the systemic contexts and the particular contingencies leading to an alliance between a Muscovite tsardom—caught between an ideological devotion to tradition and the political imperative to transform its army in face of more “modern” threats to the west and south—and the so-called middle service gentry. It also rests on a paradox or irony characteristic of Haimson’s work in its conclusion that this alliance that marginalized the *boyarstvo* ended up subjecting peasant and *pomeshchik* to a much more expansive and irresistible state power than had previously been the case.

In a very different vein, Haimson’s continuing interest in the history of the Russian working class and the processes that undid the autocracy has continued to elicit critical responses, especially with the appearance of *Russia’s Revolutionary Experience*. In *Slavic Review*, for instance, Anna Krylova questioned the persuasiveness of the “consciousness-spontaneity” dyad that underpinned Haimson’s reading of Lenin’s argument for a vanguard party.¹⁹ More recently, in *Kritika*, Michael Melancon, Lars Lih and others have called into doubt Haimson’s depiction of the deepening alienation separating an increasingly militant—and, by sociological composition, “spontaneous”—working class from other anti-autocratic social groups or, alternatively, his interpretation of the relationship and rivalry between Lenin and Martov as a precipitant of the

¹⁷ See Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia*; on Krivoshein, see Holquist, “In Accord with State Interests and the People’s Wishes”: The Technocratic Ideology of Imperial Russia’s Resettlement Administration,” *Slavic Review* 69, 1 (Spring 2010): 151-179.

¹⁸ Haimson, “Political Parties,” in Cherniavsky, *Structure*, 330-332.

¹⁹ See the forum in the Spring 2003 issue of *Slavic Review*, featuring A. Krylova, “Beyond the Spontaneity-Consciousness Paradigm: ‘Class Instinct’ as a Promising Category of Historical Analysis,” *Slavic Review* 61, 1 (Spring 2003): 1-23. Responses by Reginald Zelnik and Igal Halfin.

Bolshevik takeover in October 1917.²⁰ Whether one agrees with these criticisms or not, it bears noting that each of these debates demonstrates the continuing vitality and *élan* of arguments and perspectives first broached by Haimson a half-century ago.

Above all, however, one might argue that Haimson's impact or influence has, through many of his students, exerted a lasting effect on our shared field of interest, even amid the several "turns" that have overtaken it in the last thirty-odd years. In this context, it is interesting to note the degree to which many of them have adopted Haimson's own stress on the reconstructing as much as possible the psychological or subjective dimension of historical agents. Frequently, this appears in their close reading of an actor's language and its implicit framing norms, in a multiplicity of contexts, so as to reconstruct elements of his or her political or historical world-view, then explaining actions or aspirations in terms of that world-view. This approach defines Susan Heuman's intellectual biography of Bohdan Kistiakovskiy, but also, more recently, Jochen Hellbeck's reading of the diaries of new Soviet citizens with "revolution on my mind."²¹ The same applies, with more direct political implications in Yanni Kotsonis's study of the cooperative movement as a failed nexus between an emerging technical intelligentsia and the peasantry they imagined in post-reform Russia, or in his more recent work on citizenship as a civic or legal category in late imperial Russia.

If Haimson himself did not engage the momentous "imperial turn" of the last two decades, his students have also adapted his methods to this burgeoning new *problematique*. Francis Wcislo's forthcoming biography of Witte applies an exemplary reading of the statesman's "tales of empire" to reconstruct the world-view and political psychology, for want of a better term, of a true exponent of Russia's imperial mission, understood in terms familiar to many Europeans of the time.²² And Peter Holquist's latest work on the cadre of "colonizers" housed in the Office of State Domains under Krivoshein documents the crystallization of an imperial and technocratic "gaze" that framed the empire's policy on the Kazakh steppe and elsewhere throughout the imperial periphery. In their respective fashions, each of these works situates political actions within nested contexts of discourse, society, institutions, and historical conjunctures that adapt tools learned from Haimson to the newest areas of historiography.

A hastily written reflection on the legacy of this seminal historian cannot possibly do justice to his contribution, nor to those that continue to come from his students. A fuller discussion would address his relations with his Russian colleagues, both during and

²⁰ L. Lih, "1905 and All That: The Revolution and Its Aftermath," *Kritika* 8, 4 (Fall 2007): 861-876, which also reviews M. Melancon's, *The Lena Goldfields Massacre and the Crisis of the Late Tsarist State* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006; see also Melancon's "Reply to Lars Lih," *Kritika* 9, 4 (Fall 2008), which offers his concise rendering of earlier criticisms of Haimson's work.

²¹ S. Heuman, *Kistiakovskiy: the struggle for national and constitutional rights in the last years of Tsarism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1999); J. Hellbeck, *Revolution on my Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²² Wcislo, *Tales of Imperial Russia The Life and Times of Sergei Witte, 1849-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

since the Soviet period, on which he reflected in 2005. It would also flesh out much more fully his role in restoring to its proper historical place the part played by the Mensheviks in Russia's revolutionary experience. It might likewise reflect on his marked inattention to the questions of gender, ethnicity, and empire that have gained long overdue prominence in our historiography. Yet, even a brief sketch such as this suffices, I hope, to convey however minimally the versatility, breadth, erudition, and originality of a scholar who changed our field both on the written page and in the intellectual *kukhnia*. He managed to raise questions and suggest answers that still command our attention and provoke debate, nearly sixty years since the appearance of his first book. In the minds of some, he founded a historiographical "school" which continues to flourish. Despite difficult and sometimes contentious relationships with some students and many colleagues, he earned recognition and respect in Russia and the West alike as a brilliant and unique scholar. This is no mean legacy for a historian who began his career as a fifteen-year old refugee from Belgium matriculating at Harvard College in 1943 barely three years after his family had fled to the United States. The precocity evident at that moment continued to surprise and sometimes consternate his colleagues and students over the ensuing years; it will be sorely missed. But even more, his colleagues and his students will remember him warmly, because, in so many ways, he was unforgettable.