

S. HARRISON THOMSON, 1895–1975

S. Harrison Thomson, professor emeritus of medieval history at the University of Colorado, died on November 19, 1975, in Boulder. He was eighty years old.

To readers of the *Slavic Review*, he is known primarily as the dean of native American authorities on Czech and Slovak history and as one of the founders of East European studies in the United States. His annotated editions of Jan Hus's *Tractatus Responsivus* (1927) and *Tractatus de Ecclesia* (1956) drew praise from hypercritical Czech reviewers, and his pioneering study, *Czechoslovakia in European History* (1943), was awarded the Czechoslovak State Prize in 1944. In 1941, he founded the *Journal of Central European Affairs*, editing it for a quarter-century, and throughout his life he gave his name and his talents generously to the many scholarly organizations and enterprises that established and shaped the East European field.

At the same time, Thomson also enjoyed a distinguished career as a European medievalist and Latin paleographer. From 1936, he edited *Progress of Medieval Studies in the United States and Canada*, and in 1943 he founded *Medievalia et Humanistica*. His *Latin Bookhands of the Later Middle Ages* (1969) won him the Haskins Medal of the Medieval Academy of America in 1971. Indeed, it was his interest in the intellectual and religious history of the later Middle Ages, especially in John Wyclif, that led him via Princeton and Oxford to Eastern Europe in the early twenties, where he studied with the renowned Hussite scholar at Charles University in Prague, Václav Novotný. He thus brought to the new field a wonderful breadth of training—in literature, philosophy, theology, history, and particularly in languages—from the old.

Thomson spent most of his long working life, from 1936 to 1964, industriously teaching, writing, and editing at Colorado. A bibliography of his publications in 1963 already listed 7 books, 126 articles, and 268 reviews. Prestigious fellowships, honorary memberships, and important offices flowed to him from American and foreign sources. What he prized most, however, was his own demanding and uncompromising code of personal and professional conduct. The man who would excoriate a piece of shoddy scholarship in print would also spend vast amounts of his precious time encouraging and helping (often anonymously) the young and the unfortunate who sought him out. The qualities he saw and publicly esteemed in Hus—his honesty, consuming devotion to truth, love for humanity, and courage and serenity in the face of adversity and death—were mirrored in himself. He was that combination of outstanding scholarship and unblemished integrity that one finds so rarely and never forgets.

JOSEPH FREDERICK ZACEK
State University of New York at Albany

MAURICE HERBERT DOBB, 1900–1976

Maurice Herbert Dobb, the most outstanding British Marxist economist of the present century, was the first economist of any persuasion in the English-speaking world to undertake a substantial investigation of the Soviet system. In 1927, when planning and even growth were topics well over the horizon of nearly all other Western economists, and the Soviet Union was widely believed to be merely a strange or dangerous oddity, Dobb completed his *Russian Economic Development since the Revolution* (published in 1928). He had not yet learned Russian, but relying on the evidently very competent services of H. C. Stevens as a translator, he mastered a variety of Soviet journals, books, and newspapers, which remained unused by other scholars for a quarter of a century. He visited the USSR at the same time as Keynes in 1925, and took part in extensive discussions in Narkomfin and Gosplan. (Dobb wrote to me