

**T. H. Rigby**  
*(1925–2011)*

In memoriam



Harry Rigby, Professorial Fellow (later, from 1987 until his retirement in 1990, Professor) of Political Science in the Research School of Social Science at the Australian National University in Canberra, was for many years the doyen of Soviet and post-Soviet studies in this country.

Following military service in World War II, he took an MA in Russian and Political Science at the University of Melbourne and won a travelling scholarship to undertake postgraduate study at the University of London. He was appointed a research officer in the Foreign Office in 1953, returning to Australia two years later to take up a senior lectureship in Russian at Canberra University College (now the ANU). In 1956 he held a research post at the University of London, and from 1957–58 served as Second Secretary at the British Embassy in Moscow before resuming his academic career in Australia as Associate Professor in Russian

at CUC (from 1960 the ANU). In 1963 he was appointed professorial fellow in the Research School of the Social Science where he was to spend the rest of his career, latterly (since 1990) as Professor Emeritus and University Fellow.

His many publications in the field of Soviet (and post-Soviet) society and politics earned him an international reputation, as is attested by his appointment over the years to a number of prestigious visiting professorships at Oxford, Moscow, Washington, New York and Cologne. He was a founding member and first president of the Australian Association for the Study of Socialist Societies (now AACPCS, the Australian Association of Communist and Post-Communist Studies). The following tributes are reprinted with their authors' permission from the Association's newsletter in recognition of his distinguished career and outstanding achievement.

**Stephen Fortescue**

### **Reminiscences of Harry Rigby**

The dedication in the recent book written in honour of T. H. Rigby (*Russian Politics from Lenin to Putin*, Palgrave, 2010) states: 'In honour of T. H. Rigby. Friend, colleague, teacher, mentor'. I would like to think that Harry Rigby filled all those roles for me.

The first contact I had with Harry was in 1970 in his role as teacher, a guest lecturer in Arthur Stockwin's Soviet Politics course in the ANU's Department of Politics. Harry was, frankly, not the greatest of lecturers, but I was hooked. Despite the somewhat halting presentation there was a clear but accessible structure and fascinating content in everything he said.

Our first face-to-face meeting was late the following year, as it was arranged for me (I was too shy in those days to arrange it for myself) that he supervise my honours thesis. I can't say I remember that first meeting vividly. I do remember the nervousness with which I approached the Mt Olympus of the ANU, the Institute of Advanced Studies, and one of its gods, and was genuinely taken aback that this god invited me any time I liked to come to his office and borrow his books – which meant that I had a major Soviet Studies library at my personal disposal. But I also learned at that first meeting that there was some stern steel behind the mild manner. As I came to the end of a tough third year of my undergraduate studies