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Our colleague Professor Ronald Robel died of cancer last August.

He was known within the ISCSC for his book and peer reviews and as the man to consult on arcane points in Chinese history. Ron was also an emergency local arrangements chair for the Mobile meeting in 2000 after plans for another location had gone astray and had expected to be Program Chair for the 2007 Asilomar meeting when his illness recurred. He is remembered, too, for his ad hoc tours of Chinese exhibits when the ISCSC visited museums, the last being the art museum in Minneapolis in 2005.

Ron was director of the Career Languages Center and a member of the Department of History at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. A graduate of Grinnell College with MAs in history and Far Eastern Languages and Literature from the University of Michigan, he received his Ph. D. from Michigan in 1972.

He published many reviews of books on East Asian history in History: Reviews of Books, The Comparative Civilizations Review, The Anniston Star, Mythosphere, and Historian. Besides making presentations on East Asian history at meetings of the ISCSC over the past two decades, he also gave frequent presentations on education, language and history at meetings of the Alabama Humanities Super Institute for Alabama High School Teachers of World History.

Ron was president of the National Association of Self Instructional Language Programs from 1992-1994 and of the West Alabama Language Alliance in 1994-1995. He was a Distinguished Teaching Fellow from 1996-1999 and winner of Alabama's Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award in 1997.

He was always a gentleman, courteous in debate, and a generous and reliable source of information on Eastern and world history.

Matthew Melko