



OBITUARY

STANISŁAW KUCZERA
(5 MAY 1928–28 JULY 2020)

Sergey Dmitriev*

Abstract

Stanisław Kuczera (May 5, 1928–July 28, 2020) was an eminent figure in Polish, Soviet, and Russian Chinese Studies, holding the position of one of leading experts in a vast number of fields (most prominently, archeology, epigraphy, and the translation of classics) over a period decades, until his last days. His life, filled with a thirst for knowledge and harsh vicissitudes, is a story that is worthy of being told and remembered.

At 11 am on July 28, 2020, while on a walk near his home after having spent the morning at his writing desk, Stanisław Robert Kuczera suffered a heart attack and passed away instantly. He was one of the major figures in Polish, Soviet, and Russian sinology of the second half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. To his last day he remained one of the most productive and influential Russian experts in

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the field of ancient Chinese history and archaeology. He was one of the most “westernized” Soviet orientalists, a friend and correspondent of many outstanding scholars of the past, and a true legend himself. Now, sadly, this legend survives only in our memories and in his books.

Stanisław Kuczera (Gu Zhe 顧哲) was born on May 5, 1928, in Lwów, Poland. He was part of a distinctive, declining Polish community of Lwów (*Lwowianie*), who were separated from their motherland after 1939, doomed to cherish the memories of their city’s happier days. The phantom city of *Leopolis semper fidelis* (“Leopolis (Lwów) always faithful,” a heraldic motto bestowed on the city in 1658 by Pope Alexander VII) survived in its former residents, a people barely related to the modern Ukrainian city of Lviv.

Kuczera was born into an urban family of Czech origin. He convinced his parents to let him start school one year early. His mother Paulina died when he was in primary school, and, together with his elder sister and younger brother, he was raised by his father Józef Kuczera, a skillful woodworker and a restorer of wood decorations for many old churches in Lwów. “Józef Kuczera, a sculptor” figures in a curious document from the archive of Pilsudski Institute of London dated from September 1914, a list of Lwów citizens who were in contact with the Russians and therefore considered suspicious by the Austro-Hungarian authorities at the beginning of the First World War.¹ This “Russophile” tradition would be continued by his son.

The Secret Protocol to the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 defined Lwów as a target of Soviet expansion in the near future. On 1 September 1939 Poland was invaded by German forces from the west. On 17 September the Red Army attacked from the east. On 22 September Lwów was captured and became part of Soviet Ukraine.² Stanisław’s school building was given to the army, and the schoolchildren were hastily moved to another place. On 23 December 1939, one third of the class, altogether around ten children, disappeared. Their families were deported to Siberia. It was at this time, in the spring of 1940, that, as Kuczera recalls, he was passing by a Ukrainian theater and suddenly realized he would become a scholar, although he didn’t know in which field.

1. See Instytut Piłsudskiego, www.pilsudski.org.uk/archiwa/dokument.php?nonav=&nrar=701&nrzesp=1&sygn=109&handle=701.180/3698

2. Stanisław Kuczera remembered the day when the Soviet troops entered the city. The citizens lined the streets to watch them, and were shocked at the ragged, haggard, and poor appearance of these “soldiers of the victorious Red Army.” When a child accidentally dropped an unfinished bun he was eating, one of the soldiers rushed to grasp it as if he had never eaten such things before.

As the Soviet-German war broke out in June 1941, Lwów was taken by the German army. While retreating under the attacks of Ukrainian nationalist guerillas who were taking advantage of the situation, the Red Army had just enough time to kill around four thousand of the inmates in the Lwów city prison. Stanisław Kuczera was among those who opened cells full of their still-warm corpses. Things did not improve after the arrival of Germans. On July 3, twenty-five professors of Lwów's Jan Kazimierz University (ranked second in Poland after Jagiellonian University in Krakow) were arrested, and they were summarily executed along with their families the next day. Polish culture was not acceptable to the Third Reich. Shortly thereafter Stanisław's father was executed for hiding Jews. With the help of friends, Stanisław was urgently sent to his elder sister in Warsaw. He never returned to Lwów except on a short tour during the Soviet times, which left him with a bitter impression of a dear home inhabited by strangers.

In Warsaw, together with the whole country, he struggled to survive this strange period of occupation. For some time, he was a promising apprentice to a cartwright, then he worked at a canning factory. He also traveled around Poland (often by fastening himself to the railcar roof with a special rope), trying to barter clothes or other city products for some food still available in the countryside. Later he "slightly" (as he put it himself) participated in *Armia Krajowa* resistance and the tragic Warsaw uprising of 1944, which, along with the Soviet bombardment, left the city in ruins. After the end of war he attended what was then one of the best schools in the city, *Liceum im. Juliusza Słowackiego* and earned some money as a tutor of physics and math for his classmates, most of whom were the veterans of *Armia Krajowa* and were much older than he. He was the only one in the class who declared himself agnostic and was therefore permitted to not attend the lessons in religious education. Still, he decided to participate in this course and, as chance would have it, was the only student who never skipped a single class.

In 1947 he became a student of *Instytut Orientalistyczny Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego* (the Institute of Oriental Studies of Warsaw University).³ His was the first class admitted after the war, and one of the first tasks for students was cleaning up the ruins and rebuilding the Institute, which had been nearly destroyed. Stanisław Kuczera was the only student admitted between 1947 and 1948 who did not give up his studies. Almost all of his classmates, many of whom began their studies before the war, lost their families and did not have any financial support to continue. It was a difficult time.

3. The same year he also joined the Department of Physics, which he abandoned after two years of study.

Why did Kuczera become an Orientalist? Among other things, his choice was influenced by the childhood memories, particularly a book by a Hungarian belletrist Mór Jókai (Móric Jókay de Ásva) (1825–1904) *Eppur si muove—És mégis mozog a föld* (And yet it moves), which depicts Orientalists as bright polyglots of vast erudition, true scholarly superstars. In his own words, Kuczera at first approached Oriental Studies as one field without inner subdivisions, and he studied Chinese, Japanese, Sumerian, Egyptian, Persian—in a word, everything that was on offer. Later on, Rudolf Ránoszek (1894–1986), a brilliant professor of Hettology and Sumerology, advised him to concentrate his efforts on Sinology and study under the supervision of Professor Witold Andrzej Jabłoński (1901–1957), the only Polish Sinologist at this time.

Witold Jabłoński had fought in the Polish independence war against Soviet Russia in 1920–1921, then studied at Warsaw university (1919–1924) and in Paris (1924–1930, *École des Hautes Etudes Chinoises*, *École Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes*). In 1930–1932 he was a consultant on the education reform in China for the League of Nations. He taught French language and literature at Qinghua University in Beijing in 1931–1932, and then Chinese language at Krakow University. He was one of the authors of the Polish phonetic transcription system for the Chinese language, and he translated *Zhuangzi* into Polish. At the beginning of the Second World War, he bricked up a large part of the library of the Institute of Oriental Studies in the basement of his house. Later, when the house collapsed under the bombardment, the books were buried in the debris, which accidentally saved them from burning, so the library survived and was recovered after the war. Under the Nazi occupation when all higher education was prohibited for Poles, he secretly taught a seminar on Chinese literature at his home, an activity that would have necessarily resulted in the death of all participants if discovered by the German authorities. How many among us would be able to carry on their study and research under such conditions?

Witold Jabłoński was a charming professor. His seminars were not particularly well organized, as he could start with the policies of Qin Shi-Huangdi and then jump to poetry, art, and architecture. Sometimes his lectures took place at a restaurant where the professor not only taught but also fed his only, and always hungry, student. The only available textbook in the Chinese language was an old dictionary of de Guignes, which was often more useful for studying French than Chinese. At this time, Kuczera also made good progress in English, as he was spending days in the back rows of the cinema watching the US cowboy movies that were extremely popular in post-war Poland. In 1952 Stanisław Kuczera became a Master of Philosophy, successfully defending his dissertation titled “The Basics of Taoist Philosophy.” In February 1953, he was among

the first western students allowed to visit “Red China” where he became a graduate student in the History Department of Beijing University. His decision to study history was advised by Prof. Jabłoński, who had plans for the future Polish sinology. According to this plan, Janusz Chmielewski (1916–1998) took charge of Chinese linguistics, and Stanisław Kuczera became the first Polish specialist in Chinese history.

Kuczera’s graduate school experience, which lasted until the end of 1960, was an unusual one. He mastered Old Chinese under the supervision of Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺 (1912–2005), one of the few famous experts in ancient Chinese philology who stayed in mainland China. Beijing University at first claimed they were unable to provide a specialist in ancient Chinese history, but the threat to appeal to all-mighty Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) made them more appeasable. Kuczera also mastered spoken Chinese (mainly outside the classroom). He visited many places in China, and organized trips for foreign students. He knew how to fill the “pilgrimage to retrace the Long March” with real content of historical cities and the beauty of sacred mountains. He made many friends among the Czech, East German, Hungarian, and Romanian students, even one American soldier, a POW of the Korean War. They spent hours playing volleyball and table tennis. One story from this period illustrates his personality especially well. Before the closure of the industrial exhibition of Polish People’s Republic in China, some excellent clothes were available at a reduced price. Taking advantage of the opportunity, he ordered about 100 shirts in order to close this issue for the rest of the life and never again be distracted by the need to purchase shirts. Some three dozen of these shirts survived him.

In 1957, the first group of Soviet students went to China, many of whom became Kuczera’s friends. (Nine years later, he married one of these students, Natalia Svistunova, who later translated the Ming legal code (Da Ming lü 大明律). They stayed together until his last day.) It was at that time that he mastered Russian, the language he previously studied for one year during the pre-war period of Soviet control of Lwów. Kuczera had also learned Ukrainian for a few years during his years in school. Although his Ukrainian was forgotten, the groundwork remained and proved helpful in studying Russian. However, he never expected this would become the language of almost all of his future books and papers.

It was also at this time that Kuczera began full-time work as a professor. In March 1957 he replaced Mieczysław Künstler (1933–2007, one of the best-known Polish sinologists, author of many works on Chinese history, language, literature and culture, translator of *Lun yu* 論語) as the head of the Department of Polish Language and Culture at the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (外國語學院). He filled this position

until October 1959. China changed quickly during these years. One day he found his normally very diligent and attentive students falling asleep during the lecture. In the midst of the Great Leap Forward, the students had been melting steel all night long. He let them sleep calmly and stood watching by the door to make sure nobody noticed this.

Growing complications in the relations between China and its hitherto-esteemed *lao da ge* 老大哥 (“big brother”) the Soviet Union affected the fate of Kuczera’s doctoral dissertation, which was titled “The Class Structure of Ancient Chinese Society Based on the Materials of *Zhou li*.” The committee, headed by the dean of the History Department Jian Bozan 翦伯贊 (1898–1968), one of the leading Marxist historians of China (a few years later he would be fired, denounced by the Red Guards, and, together with his wife, forced to commit suicide), strongly opposed Kuczera’s opinion that China never went through the slavery stage (while Chairman Mao himself clearly said that it did!). Not only was Kuczera a citizen of one of the most “revisionist” countries of the Socialist Bloc, Władysław Gomułka’s Poland (shortly thereafter, all Chinese students in the Department of Polish Language were persecuted as “rightists”), he also did not embellish his paper with citations from the Chairman, an unacceptable offence at that time. Stanisław Kuczera agreed to add the required citations and wisely asked the vice-dean, Zhou Yiliang 周一良 (1913–2001; he had previously studied in the USA and therefore was required to be a much more fervent Marxist than anybody else), to help him select the most suitable ones.⁴ Even with these citations added,⁵ the thesis defense was still in question. Luckily, in November 1960 Liu Shaoqi 劉少奇 visited Moscow and Soviet–Chinese relations seemed to have improved. When this news arrived on 5 December, Stanisław Kuczera was awakened at 7 am—his defense was scheduled in thirty minutes. It was a hard, four hour-long trial. At the end, the thesis was accepted, though no degree was conferred, since academic degrees did not exist in the People’s Republic of China until 1981. Two weeks later, Kuczera left China, as the country was rapidly turning unfriendly to foreigners.

Kuczera did not find himself welcome in Poland either. Professor Jabłoński had passed away in 1957, and Chmielewski, who replaced him, had a radically different view on the future of Polish Sinology.

4. A Polish translation of Zhou’s article about Hu Shi became Kuczera’s first scholarly publication. See Czou I-liang, “Zachodnia sinologia i Hu Szy,” *Zagadnienia Nauki Historycznej* 1.6 (1956), 180–97.

5. During his twenty-five years of work in the Soviet Union, Kuczera only once cited the “classics of Marxism-Leninism.” This was a quotation from Friedrich Engels, which, according to Kuczera himself, “was relevant to the problem, that’s why I cited it.”

He decided to concentrate on language and literature, and he made it clear to Kuczera that there was no place for him at Warsaw University. After a few months as a grantee of the Polish Department of Higher Education, he found a job as an adjunct of the Department of Asia and Africa at the Polish Institute for Foreign Relations (*Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych*). He was writing the surveys of the current situation in the Far East and giving popular lectures on Chinese history, poetry, architecture, economy, and politics from antiquity to the Mao era at the Association for Polish–Chinese Friendship (*Towarzystwo Przyjaźni Polsko-Chińskiej*) in Warsaw and elsewhere. China was popular in Poland, and good lecturers were in great demand. But Kuczera saw himself as an academic scholar, and this direction was clearly barred for him in Poland. Instead, a diplomatic career increasingly appeared to be the only feasible option, something that Kuczera was determined to avoid at all costs.

On his way from China to Poland, Kuczera passed through Moscow in December 1960, where he gave a few lectures and met his friends from the times he studied in China. He was also introduced to a prominent scholar of Japan and China, member of the Academy of Science Nikolaj Konrad (Николай Иосифович Конрад, 1891–1970), who was one of the first students of Vasilij Alekseev (Василий Михайлович Алексеев, 1881–1951)⁶ and a close friend of Nikolaj Nevskij (Николай Александрович Невский 聶歷山, 1892–1937, the scholar who decrypted the Tangut script and was executed during the Stalinist purges). During the 1950s, Konrad was involved in the relocation of the Institute of Oriental Studies from Leningrad to Moscow, while at the same time trying to reform the institute as a brand-new research center where specialists would not be separated by regional specialization and would research Oriental civilizations in a holistic fashion. In the spring of 1960, the Institute was renamed as the Institute of the Peoples of Asia of the USSR Academy of Sciences (*Институт Народов Азии Академии Наук СССР*), and in 1961 it was integrated with the previously separate Institute of Sinology (*Институт китаеведения АН СССР*).⁷ Konrad had a considerable influence on Stanisław Kuczera, and in August 1966 Kuczera moved to

6. A student of Edouard Chavannes (1865–1918), Vassilij Alexeev is considered the founder of Russian academic sinology.

7. But not for very long. In 1966, many Sinologists were moved to the new Institute of the Far East (Институт Дальнего Востока АН СССР) established primarily for the ideological fight against the “Maoist perversions of Marxism,” while the Department of China was reserved for more academic research of premodern China. In 1969, the Institute of the Peoples of Asia once again changed its official name to the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences (*Институт востоковедения АН СССР*)

Moscow; from April 1967 he started work at the Department of China at the Institute of the Peoples of Asia. Konrad's goals proved far too idealistic to succeed in practice. Academic specialization was too deeply entrenched for the scholars to be effectively united by "common tasks." Yet Kuczera kept his promise to Konrad and worked at the Institute for more than fifty years—to the very end of his life.

Soviet Sinology was living through difficult times. Khrushchev's Thaw (*Оттепель*) was fast approaching its close. As the Soviet tanks invaded Prague in 1968, the head of the China Department, Rudolf Vjatkin (Рудольф Всеволодович Вяткин 越特金, 1910–1995, the author of the first complete translation of Sima Qian's *Shi ji* 史記 into a Western language), was removed from his position. He was accused of an attempt to hire the Czech scholar Timotheus Pokora (1928–1985)—a brilliant sinologist and the translator of Wang Chong's 王充 (27—ca. 100) *Lun heng* 論衡—after he had lost his job in Prague as the result of the Soviet invasion. Many researchers at the Institute signed letters protesting against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. They were fortunate to avoid penalty at the hands of KGB, due to the protection of the Institute's politically influential director, Bobojon Ghafurov (Бобоҷон Ғафурович Ғафуров, 1908–1977).⁸

Among Kuczera's colleagues in the Department of China was the famous dissident Vitalij Rubín (Виталий Аронович Рубин, 1923–1981), an insightful philosopher and a pioneering specialist in the study of ancient Chinese political ideology. In 1972, he was denied permission to emigrate to Israel, and became one of the leaders of the "refusenik" (*отказники*) group which fiercely fought the Soviet authorities for their right of repatriation. He lost his job and was eventually permitted to leave in 1976, shortly after becoming one of the members of the first Moscow Helsinki Group, a leading, certainly illegal human rights organization in the Soviet Union. After emigration, he became professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem before dying in a somewhat suspicious automobile accident.

In the meantime, academic life in the Soviet Union was increasingly politicized. The fiery discussions on the "Asiatic mode of production,"

8. Under Stalin, Bobojon Ghafurov was the first secretary of the Communist Party of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic (1946–1956) (effectively, the position of the head of state), he then wisely moved himself into academic science and became the Institute's director. From 1968 on, he was a member of the Academy of Sciences. In the last year of his life, when terminally ill, he famously managed to convince the party leadership to permit him a *hajj* to Mecca (which was absolutely forbidden for all Soviet Muslims) in order to promote the relations with Saudi Arabia. People close to him recall him often saying that the only important thing he accomplished in his life was becoming a *hajji*.

which were central to Soviet Oriental Studies after 1957 and were the only way to question the Marxist dogma from within, became much more cautious. Even more disruptive was the nearly complete cessation of any ties with China after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Humanities in China almost disappeared, as did other scholarly fields. No books or periodicals were published, universities and institutes closed for endless “campaigns of criticism and self-criticism.”

Somewhat paradoxically, this discouraging situation had a positive impact on Kuczera’s research. He primarily saw himself as a translator and student of classical philosophical texts. In 1972–1973, an anthology of translations from ancient Chinese philosophy was published in two volumes,⁹ for which Kuczera translated two chapters from the *Shang shu* 尚書 (“Pan Geng” 盤庚 and “Hong Fan” 洪範), chapters 1, 2, 6, 10, 17, 18, 22, 33 of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, chapter 7, “Yang Zhu” 楊朱 from *Liezi*, and chapters 30, 31, 40, 46 of the *Guanzi* 管子. With regard to the general collapse of science and humanities during the Cultural Revolution in China, Kuczera remarked that archeology would be among the first disciplines to recover. In the middle of Cultural Revolution, *Guangming ribao* 光明日報 newspaper began publishing short accounts of archeological finds. Kuczera was among the first to pay attention to these groundbreaking developments. Later he recalled that the first publication to catch his attention was about the discovery of the “jade suits” in Mancheng 滿城, Hebei, in 1968. The tomb turned out to have belonged to prince Liu Sheng 劉勝 (d. 113 BC) and his wife Dou Wan 竇綰. He started collecting these publications and reporting them to the colleagues, in particular, at the annual meeting of the seminar “Society and State in China” (Общество и государство в Китае), organized by the Department of China of the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences, from 1970 onwards.¹⁰ Kuczera proved to have been right: archeology, indeed, started recovering even before the formal end of the Cultural Revolution. Archeological reports were published again after 1972, while publications in history resumed only in 1974. The fact that none of these reports were available in the USSR did not deter Kuczera, who mobilized a broad network of friends around the globe to acquire the new publications. Kuczera’s personal library was probably the largest collection of Chinese archaeology materials in the country. Kuczera made sure that all interested scholars and students were aware that Chinese archeology was back, a token that China was

9. *Drevnekitajskaja filosofija. Sobranije tekstov v dvukh tomakh* 2 vols. (Moscow: Mysl’, 1972, 1973).

10. This seminar is still active. Every year, a volume or two of seminar proceedings are published. This is the only sinological scholarly periodical in Russia.

surviving the Mao-era experiments and that a new chapter in Chinese intellectual history was about to be opened. In 1977 he published his first monograph, titled *Chinese Archeology 1965–1974. From the Paleolithic to the Yin Period: Discoveries and Problems*.¹¹ This was the first Russian-language monograph on Chinese archeology, and possibly the only one in any language specifically concerning Chinese archeology's achievements during the period of the Cultural Revolution.¹² In 1981 his book caught the eye of member of the Academy of Science, Alexey Okladnikov (Алексей Павлович Окладников, 1908–1981), the “patron saint” of Siberian archeology, who immediately intimated to the Institute that Kuczera should be awarded the doctoral degree (*Доктор наук, Doctor Habilitatus*). The degree was conferred the same year.

Kuczera's second book was also about archeology, *The Early and Ancient History of China: Old Stone Age*, which was published in 1996 and remains the most extensive, encyclopedic account in a Western language on the Chinese Paleolithic.¹³ The third book focused on archeology as well. It had a difficult fate. Titled *The Early and Ancient History of China: Early Neolithic of the South*, it was finished in mid-1990s and explored the recent finds of Neolithic cultures in Southern China. It argued—and persuasively proved—that Chinese civilization had at least two independent cradles, one in the Yellow River basin and another one in the Yangtze basin, with the latter remaining for a very long time being more advanced in terms of social and technological development. Today this idea is extensively discussed, but thirty years ago it was very new. The manuscript was lost by the publisher and proved impossible to retrieve—this was before the advent of the digital era in Russia. But *habent sua fata libelli*—the manuscript was found, one is inclined to say, miraculously, when the publisher was moving in 2015, two decades after it had been submitted. Despite the suggestions to go ahead with the original version and with an introduction explaining the circumstances, Kuczera rewrote the whole book so that its length doubled to 600 pages. Now he was able to make full use of the internet for identifying new archaeological finds and research. The book was finally published in the fall 2020.¹⁴ Alas, the author did not live long enough to see this happen.

11. Stanislaw Kuczera, *Kitajskaja arheologija 1965–1974: paleolit—epoha In.' Nakhodki i problemy* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977).

12. Professor Kuczera authored eleven books, including four as a co-author. Two were still in press at the time of his death. He is also the author of some 350 articles and supervisor of sixteen PhD candidates.

13. Stanislaw Kuczera, *Drevnejshaya i drevnjaja istorija Kitaja. Drevnekamennyj vek* (Moscow: Vostochnaja literatura, 1996).

14. Stanislaw Kuczera, *Drevnejshaya i drevnjaja istorija Kitaja. Rannij neolit juga strany* (Moscow: Nestor-Istoriya, 2020).

A dedicated archaeologist, Stanisław Kuczera was also profoundly interested in textual sources. During the last years of his life, he returned to the *Zhou li* 周禮 (which he had previously discussed with the dissertation committee in Beijing in 1960) and published two volumes of annotated translation¹⁵—the first Western-language translation after that by Édouard Biot (1803–1850). These two volumes cover only the first of the six parts of the book. I hope we will eventually recover the rest of the draft translations and notes left behind by the author. Kuczera adopted his own style of translation and retained, whenever possible, the original structure of Chinese phrases. Translation is accompanied by the scrupulous philological, linguistic, and historical commentary. His style is easily recognizable and was imitated by other scholars who were not necessarily aware of the origins of the translation style they were using. On the very day of Kuczera's death, the complete translation of *Xiao jing* 孝經, the first translation of this text into the Russian language, lay on his desk. It is dedicated to his parents and will be published in the near future.

Stanisław Kuczera was one of the prominent Soviet and Russian specialists in Shang oracle bone inscriptions and the Shang and Zhou bronze texts. He not only published many translations but also systematically used these sources in his studies of ancient Chinese history and culture.

Apart from being a brilliant scholar, Stanisław Kuczera was also a charming personality, the most genteel, courtly, witty, and handsome (6' 2" tall!) man in Soviet sinology. Despite having lived for more than fifty years in the USSR and then in Russia, he never applied for Russian citizenship and remained a citizen of Poland despite the many inconveniences this caused—there was time when precinct police officers visited him every month asking him “to report anything of a compromising nature about himself.” On the other hand, he had the advantage of many opportunities to travel abroad. His wife recalls, not without a drop of bitterness, that she had to wait in Warsaw while he was visiting Paris or Berlin. He brought endless (and heavy!) volumes of Chinese and Western books from these travels (purchased with dollars and francs, the precious “valyuta”¹⁶ so much coveted by every Soviet citizen!). Not only was he one of the most welcomed representatives of Soviet sinology at international congresses and workshops, he also personally knew almost all prominent Western sinologists of his days. He was a close friend of (and a hospitable host to during his visits to

15. *Ustanowlenija dinastii Chzhou (Chzhou li)*, translation, introduction, and commentary by Stanisław Kuczera, 2 vols. (Moscow: Vostochnaja literatura, 2010, 2017).

16. Rus. *валюта*—a foreign currency.

Moscow) Owen Lattimore (1900–1989), Timotheus Pokora and Michel Cartier (1934–2019), he met Herbert Franke (1914–2011) and Serge Eliseeff (1889–1975) many times, was in correspondence with Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978) and Chang Kwang-chih 張光直 (1931–2001), and knew Derk Bodde (1909–2003), Paul Demiéville (1894–1979), Clarence Martin Wilbur (1907–1997) and many, many others. For his Russian colleagues, he was a unique window into the world of Chinese studies on the other side of the Iron Curtain. For his students, he was a link to the giants of old classical sinology. He was such a giant himself, and at the same time the most caring and gentle *laoshi* in the world. We will infinitely miss him—to our last days.

Thinking about Stanisław Kuczera's final moments, I will always remember his words about the death of his teacher, Witold Jabłoński: "You know, he died a beautiful death. He came to China in 1957, in the summertime, and lived on the Beijing University campus. 22 July was the National Day of Poland's Rebirth, and he was, of course, invited to the embassy. There he ate a bit, drank a bit, the weather was hot. He was driven home to *Beida* where he sat at his desk and worked for some while—and then he died late at night. A heart attack. I think that was a beautiful death, without any suffering. Maybe he did not even feel that happening."¹⁷

顧哲先生訃文

謝德照

提要

2020年7月28日，俄羅斯和波蘭漢學界泰斗，歷史學博士，教授，俄羅斯科學院東方研究所中國部總研究員－斯坦尼斯瓦夫·羅伯特·庫澈臘 (Stanisław Robert Kuczera, Станислав Роберт Кучера, 中文名：顧哲) 逝世。他是連接俄羅斯漢學與世界漢學的重要紐帶，成為世界東方學黃金時期傳統學術發展中耀眼的明珠。

Keywords: Kuczera, Poland, Russia, Sinology, History, obituary
顧哲, 波蘭, 俄羅斯, 漢學, 歷史, 訃文

17. Kuczera Stanisław Iosifovich. *Rossijskoe kitaevvedenie—ustnaja istorija. Sbornik interuju s vedushimi rossijskimi kitaevvedami. XX–XXI vv.* Vol. 1. (Moscow: Maks Press, 2018), 187–88.