BERNARD BLOCH

Bernard Bloch, President of the Linguistic Society of America in 1953, Editor of *Language* after 1939, and Professor of Linguistics at Yale University, was born 18 June 1907 in New York City and died in New Haven, Connecticut, 26 November 1965.

The greater part of his life was devoted to our science, and his public life was a teaching scholar's life, one for which this journal as edited by him is the best of monuments. To speak of the shape of his public life is only the easier part of my task. To speak of what it was so firmly based upon, I must claim the privileges of a friend and give an account of the person that Bernard Bloch was. The appropriate beginning is with his father's father.[1]

Theodor Bloch came from Austrian Bohemia in 1869 to St. Louis, Missouri, a city prominent among those which were attracting people of German speech from Europe at the time. In his household, as in so many other Jewish business families, there was fostered a high regard for humanity, for the arts, and for learning. His son Albert (1882–1960), painter, art teacher, and litterateur, was in *Who's who* through more editions than the grandson Bernard; and Bernard Bloch was more than dutifully proud of that.[2] Albert Bloch studied painting in New York City, then took his wife and first son to Munich in 1909, where they remained until shortly after the first world war.[3]

[1] For this beginning I rely on a letter from Bernard Bloch's distant cousin Herman Salinger, Professor of German at Duke University, whom I met at the University of Wisconsin fifteen years after hearing of him from Bernard. Other friends and acquaintances have supplemented the public records and my memories beyond what I can acknowledge here; my own acquaintance with Bernard Bloch began with June of 1931, and without a break from the first hour I was proud of being his friend.

[2] Albert's sketch in *Who's who* characteristically omits mention of his marriage and children, for he was an intensely private man; and it includes the equally characteristic warning 'exhibits only on invitation and never competes for prizes or submits pictures for the approval of juries.' He was 'associated with' the Blauer Reiter group that included Klee and Kandinsky—he would not have said that he 'belonged to' any group—and we can guess that he had a voice in settling upon the title of the Berlin Secession, it is so consonant with his character. As in painting, so also in writing he was an extreme antiphilistine and thus inevitably an admirer of Karl Kraus. To Albert Bloch's strong and sober manner in writing and in painting, with its vigorous strains of passion and wit, another trait was joined which Bernard also inherited: his autonomy was so strong that after reaching maturity as an artist he had no need for further uncertainty but settled down to styles which remained consistent thereafter—a sort of personal academicism, a solid footing from which he could both produce and teach art and also project his critical essays and verses. His strongest word of condemnation was *Kitsch*.

[3] Bernard's brother Walter, the younger by nine years, began his career as an actor and is established as a television script writer; his professional name is Walter Black. Albert Bloch sent his wife and the two boys to St. Louis early in 1919, but remained in Europe, mostly in Paris, until 1922, returning then to a year of teaching in the Chicago Institute of Fine Arts. In 1923 he took his family to Lawrence, where he spent the rest of his active life on the faculty of the University.

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Bernard went through Volksschule and one semester of Gymnasium in Munich, and continued school in St. Louis early in 1919. His last high-school year was in Lawrence, Kansas, ending two weeks before his seventeenth birthday. At the University of Kansas he earned the A.B. as an English major in 1928.[4] In the first three undergraduate years he carried a German sequence ending with two graduate-level courses in dramatic literature: *Faust* and modern realistic drama. He had had two years of high-school Latin; now he added two semesters of it in the University; then, after a one-year gap, four of Greek, the last in Plato. In his last undergraduate year he had French and Old and Middle English.[5]

In the summer of 1928 at Harvard he studied the history of Latin under Joshua Whatmough, and thus heard a good deal about Keltic. The next year was his last at the University of Kansas. He earned the M.A. in Comparative Literature,[6] but included Gothic and the history of the English language.

In his own listing of courses taken so far, from which I have omitted only

[4] He had been on the Honor Roll continuously and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa early. Thereafter he wore its key almost constantly, even after watch chains were long out of style. When I twitted him once on that, he gave me to understand—rather curtly, for I had not let him choose his own time for revealing it—that he did it because his father valued that key so highly that leaving it off in public (especially when at a great distance from his father) would have felt unfilial to Bernard. Neither of them was a practitioner of religion, but both had strong private pieties; both despised superstition, but these pieties were radically different: they were autonomous.

[5] Also, in his father's courses, one semester of freehand drawing and three of the history of painting. Bernard was not active in painting, partly because of diffidence about competing with his father as a colorist, partly (and characteristically) because the techniques leave hardly any middle ground between mastery and muddling. Line drawing was different. For the rest of his life he remained able to produce without erasure a swift line portrait worth keeping; his doodling was an artist's doodling; he made caricatures on tempting occasions, and when a companion was in a cheerful mood, he liked to horrify him with profiles of human faces lacking some essential feature: no eyes, no nose, or no mouth, but otherwise idealized and never based on the portrait of a friend or worthy acquaintance.

[6] His M.A. thesis title was 'The Old Irish saga-romance of Deirdre,' and its preface (kindly copied for me by Frances Ingemann) is worth quoting for more than one reason:

> It was my original intention, when I began the work on this study, to include not only the old Irish versions of the saga-romance of Deirdre, but all available modern adaptations in English by the writers of the Celtic Revival; indeed, these adaptations were to be the chief subject-matter, the remarks on the source-material simply an introduction to the main body of the paper. Very soon, however, I found that this preliminary matter must inevitably grow beyond the bounds I had thought to set it; and eventually, realizing that my original field of investigation was much too large for the intensive method of study into which I had allowed myself to drift, I put aside all my notes on the Modern Versions for possible later use, and in this paper confined myself to the old saga ...
>
> My unfamiliarity with the field of Celtic scholarship, especially during the early stages of the work, deprived me of the service of many valuable books which would have made this paper more complete and more accurate, but which came to my notice too late ...
>
> The purpose of this elementary study is not to add another volume to the vast but still-growing library of Celtic philology, but only to furnish a background, slight though it may be, for those who read the dramas, prose-tales and poems of modern Irish writers: to supply these readers with some knowledge of the old romance, for the sake of its own great beauty and for the sake of the beauty it has called forth in our own day, that they

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minor German courses, there is no mention of the bread-and-butter courses for either the English A.B. or that M.A., nor of any formal preparation for his appointment for 1929–30 as Gaelic Fellow at Northwestern University, eventually also (1930–1) as Gaelic and University Fellow.[7] In his first Northwestern year he had Old English (Beowulf) and the Old Irish course of A. C. L. Brown; in his second year with Brown he had Middle Irish and a final course in Middle and Modern Irish. Also in that second year, almost as an afterthought, a course in linguistic science with Werner F. Leopold; so that now, after his father, he had two mentors: Brown remained for him the symbol of an eccentric taste for Celtic studies, but Leopold was his first teacher and sponsor in linguistics.[8] His consequent appointment as fieldworker on the Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada, to begin with New England in September of 1931, took Bernard Bloch away from primarily literary work forever, though for several years he thought of the separation as only temporary. The two Northwestern

may read more perfectly the meaning of these modern poets, and see 'beyond the shaken reeds of the mind the depth-held star of the old passion of beauty, the old longing, the old enchantment.'

[7] He thought of his own interest in languages as literary rather than technically linguistic: for him their intricacies were modes of thought and means of expression, especially expression of passion and of beauty. The old Irish language was reputed to be ferociously difficult; all the greater, he felt, would be the rewards for his efforts, and he felt able to conquer any difficulties the language might offer. At the same time, paradoxically, he called himself a drifter, and one ambitious only to become a flaneur. He knew his own talents as he knew his face in a mirror, perceiving that his sensitivity for and knowledge of literature were outstanding, and that he was already writing both prose and verse with a facility that was astonishing when one realized that the product was uniformly of high quality: his strong points were clarity and frankness of both thought and feeling, and his weakness was that he could not write obscurely or bring himself to use a word that missed the exact message. He knew, finally, that there was a good deal of arrogance in this self-estimation, but felt that if he made sufficiently arrogant demands upon himself the social consequences would be justified.

[8] Phonetics was prominent in Leopold's treatment; Bernard set to work to edit and systematize what he was learning, and encapsulated the result in a tabulation which filled in the deficiencies of the IPA and added hitherto disregarded details. Because he showed it to me in June of 1931, and we discussed it, I can report at least these three ultimate effects: (1) he insinuated much of it into the Atlas alphabet developed that summer; (2) it contributed strongly to the 1940 *Tables* he published with George L. Trager; (3) he led me to reconsider apical and predorsal (his 'laminal') [s] and thus provided a crucial source for my paper 'The medieval sibilants' twenty years later. It was characteristic of Bernard Bloch to remember Leopold's helping him specifically with that tabulation when Leopold himself has forgotten it: 'Bloch showed up in my phonetics course,' Leopold has written to me; 'I remember him definitely, sitting opposite me across a long seminar table, looking haggard and semi-starved like a typical graduate student. I soon discovered that he knew a good deal about phonetics—why and how I do not know—and had a remarkably good sense for things phonetic. That Christmas I sat next to Miles Hanley at some group meeting of the MLA or LSA and mentioned to him that I had a very good candidate for field work on the Linguistic Atlas, which was then in its preparatory stages. Hanley took me up, and this led to Bloch's appointment on the Atlas staff and at Brown U. For many years Bloch often acknowledged to me that I had given him a start in his linguistic career, meekly and gratefully—until I finally told him to relegate that fact to history and not talk about it any more.'

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years were, however, in no sense a loss to him; that was when he began to mature as he could not at home.[9]

At the Linguistic Institute of 1931, at the College of the City of New York, we half-dozen prospective Atlas fieldworkers were prepared, under the direction of Hans Kurath and his Associate Director Miles L. Hanley, in workshops, discussions, and attendance at the lecture course given (in French) by the eminent Swiss scholar Jakob Jud, Editor of the *AIS*, the Italian and Swiss-Italian dialect atlas then going through the press.[10] Bloch enrolled in the Celtic comparative grammar course given by Joseph Dunn; see *Lg.* 27.459 (1951). We both attended the Prokosch course in Comparative Germanic. There were regular luncheons at a huge table where several languages were used in conversation because of the foreign visitors; there were the public lectures as there always have been at a Linguistic Institute, including what I suppose must have been the last one ever given by Hermann Collitz; there were social and technical

[9] In those Northwestern years he invested a great deal in a campaign to make himself a normally social person. He had never learned to drive a car or to dance, strange as that obviously is for a Kansas background; his extreme nearsightedness and shyness had kept him out of boyhood group sports and thus closed to him the usual path to general sociability. Now he set about training himself socially, starting out, of course, by way of his knowledge and talents in language, art, and music. On the Northwestern campus he met William Keith (Bill) Lenihan, M.A. (Trinity College, Dublin), who was also there on a fellowship, and they became boon companions: Lenihan was almost a Buck Mulligan to Bernard's Stephen Dedalus, and together they plunged into the evening life of the artists, musicians, and literary people who were developing Chicago's Near North Side into a counterpart of Greenwich Village only twenty minutes away from the Northwestern campus. Orange Blossoms made with bathtub gin were an essential ingredient, word games and poker were alternative amusements; there was dissipation in it (no wonder he looked 'haggard and semi-starved' to Leopold), but Bernard's powerful fastidiousness kept him out of the occasional debauchery: he would depart with one companion, very likely a girl, perhaps to a concert or a long walk. (Three years later than that, I sought out Lenihan and found him far gone in drink and exhaustion from his volunteer work in the Chicago slums: in two or three years more he was dead, a victim of his compassions.) From those two years Bernard took away what he could use, if not entirely what the others may have said he needed. Certainly he felt no need for what most of them were looking for, and especially he did not need escape. He gained experiences, and memories, and a precious sheaf of writing: more triolets, more ballades and sonnets, and that remarkable prose poem 'Orpheus and Eurydice,' which he later used to read aloud to a favored few. Lenihan had taught him how to read Synge's *Deirdre* aloud; and thereafter, whether Bernard was reading that aloud or his own prose poem, there was in his voice more than an echo of Bill Lenihan's voice, that sonorous and passionate voice which convinced one that educated Irish English was the best possible way to pronounce our language.

[10] When Jakob Jud had returned to his home he soon received a letter from Bernard Bloch, expressing appreciation and including a technical remark intended to elicit a more than pro-forma reply. The answer came after a delay which Jud explained by saying that his proofreading work, normally a half-time occupation, had been accumulating for three months and that he had cleaned it up before answering the letter: 'Drei Wochen hartnäckigen Durchstosses hat es gekostet, aber jetzt ist es fertig.' In showing me the letter, Bernard asked whether I was particularly struck by one line in it; and when I quoted that one, he said, 'That's the line I mean. Drei Wochen hartnäckigen Durchstosses—what a man!' He must have returned to it in conversation with me three or more times that winter, and in later years used to refer to it every half dozen years or so.

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conversations at all hours, and all the rest of it. It was a far smaller Linguistic Institute than those of today, but none the worse for that.

When it was over, the nearly complete Atlas fieldworker group, roughly half a dozen, went mountain climbing along the range that leads over to Mt. Washington, and there Bernard astonished us all with his fortitude: he had brought along only new boots to wear, and yet he tramped and sang and recited poetry with the others, though suffering tortures which incapacitated him for several days after the excursion.

For the academic year 1931–2 Bloch was a half-time instructor in English at Mount Holyoke College as well as a nearly full-time fieldworker.[11] While most other fieldworkers scattered, he spent a second year in Vermont while Julia Bloch taught English in the high school of his base town.[12] In 1933 they moved to Providence, Rhode Island, where Hans Kurath had begun his long stay at Brown University as Professor of Germanics and Editor of the *Linguistic Atlas of New England*. Bernard was enrolled as a graduate student in English, and got his Ph.D. in English and General Linguistics in 1935. On going to Providence, Bernard wrote to me that he was doing it with some distaste, for he disliked

[11] My beat was just across the river, and we met frequently. He had known Julia McDonnell (M.A. in English, quietly maintaining the household for her widowed father and younger sister and brother, and most at home on the Mount Holyoke campus where she had studied) only a couple of weeks when he drove with her to my lodgings one evening in October and said he wanted me to come out and meet someone and spend the evening with them. I was captivated, as anyone who knew her would expect; Julia told me much later that for some months she thought Bernard was no more attached to her than I was, and that she took neither attachment at all seriously. In fact he had made up his mind very early, and within days told me that he would have to conceal his intent through a very long campaign. He recognized in this scholarly, warm, and witty Irish Catholic lady a family piety as strong as his own—but she was fond of Deirdre too. I was at their wedding just before I returned to Wisconsin from my year of fieldwork.

Bernard Bloch and Julia Evelyn McDonnell were married 3 September 1932; their son Walter was born 15 July 1942; she died 22 October 1960 of a malady which they knew to be fatal some ten years before they let any friend or acquaintance suspect it. Among many casual observers their marriage was reputed to be stormy and even strained; that notion is categorically false. Julia's unwavering devotion was clear at a second glance; but Bernard's absolute enthrallment was hidden from all but the very keenest observers by that smokescreen of flippancy which he kept ready for all but professional concerns and which he here employed continuously. It was only when he had become convinced that they were eventually to be parted by her death that he began to let down his guard a little. He could not (and therefore she could not) disclose the secret by name to anyone whatever, and this was his way of appealing for the good wishes of their closest friends without admitting that he had communicated anything.

The Julia Bloch Memorial Scholarship Fund which friends within the Society promptly instituted has now been renamed the Bernard and Julia Bloch Memorial Fund. This means far more than any but their closest friends within the Linguistic Society can know.

[12] That was the year when our correspondence was voluminous: a letter each way every week or two, running from three to thirty-odd pages each. For one professional result, see *Lg.* 36.256–62 (1960); but for me the essential thing is that those letters kept me afloat, so that eventually other people could consider me worth saving for a professional career. What he was doing for me was the sine qua non, and he suspected as much; I was his friend, and he made this his commitment, writing about everything under the sun—life and music and literature and etymologies until it was enough.

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turning his back, perhaps permanently, on literary work; but fate had taken a hand in the game. Jobs were scarce, and he would be able to earn something teaching English or German at Brown University. Also, some funds were in prospect with which editorial assistance to Kurath could be paid for; as it turned out, there was work for both the Blochs, and recognition for the work as well as pay: see the Bibliography for 1939. Meanwhile, he was Instructor in English in 1937–8, and Instructor in German for a semester in 1939, then Assistant Professor of English until 1942, and Assistant Professor of Modern Languages until he resigned to become a full-time faculty member at Yale in 1943.

In 1936 Bernard and Julia Bloch went to the International Congress of Linguists in Copenhagen.[13] In 1937 and 1940 he was a staff member of the Linguistic Institutes, at first especially to teach what he had learned in Atlas work. His skill as a teacher was becoming widely known. He was welcomed as a colleague by such men as Sturtevant, Edgerton, and Bloomfield. He was meeting contemporaries in linguistics such as Twaddell, Haugen, and others named next below; and from the middle of the 1930's onward it was settled that Bernard Bloch would never look for a career outside linguistics.

By 1934, when the meeting of the Linguistic Society was held in Philadelphia, he had met George L. Trager, who gradually became, in the course of half a dozen years, his principal correspondent on linguistic matters and finally his collaborator on several publications. By 1938 Trager had concluded that the Bloomfield treatment of English 'long vowels and diphthongs' as clusters of vowel with semivowel must be extended to make a complete sweep of them all by adding a third semivowel, identified phonemically with [h], to the two that Bloomfield wrote [j] and [w]; and Bloch adopted that view in the course of their discussions. Trager had also been working on accentual systems, and now the two worked over the question of whether English was to be credited with three stresses or not; finally they arrived at four. Below I shall speak of 'juncture' in connection with Hockett; here the important point is that Trager combined

[13] At the banquet of the Ninth Congress held in Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 1962, he was invited to speak ex tempore about the 1936 Congress, and surprised many by the deep emotion with which he spoke of its great significance for him, especially the social contacts with European linguists whom he named. The banquet audience had mostly thought of him as always grey-haired; now they were hearing what an intellectual honeymoon was like, and few of them could know what the constant presence of Julia Bloch in the picture meant to it, now that she had been dead for two years.

Bernard Bloch retained all his life a vivid sense of what it meant to be a young beginner in our science. For example, David DeCamp was at the University of California at Berkeley in the summer of 1951 when Bloch was there for the Linguistic Institute, and was nibbling at the problem of a dialect survey for California. He happened to have a New England field-record in his hands when they met in a corridor, and impulsively he handed it to Bernard, who opened it in the middle and saw again, for the first time in more than a decade, his own calligraphic phonetic script of twenty years earlier. Unable to speak at first ('Taken aback,' DeCamp says), he finally said, 'Voices from the dead!' and fell silent again. Then he said, 'As you are now, so was I then,' and presently added, 'Some of us are having some drinks at half past four,' and told DeCamp where. 'Why don't you join us?'—'If I were asked to say when I became a linguist,' DeCamp says now, 'I would answer that it was then and there, in that corridor.'

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the internal open juncture which we now write /+/ with the four stresses to form his 'superfixes', using them as his minimum device of English syntax, and combined the terminal junctures with the pitches to form his maximum device, the 'intonations'.

Early in the war it appeared that a handbook was needed to serve the linguists engaged in language analysis and textbook writing, and Bloch and Trager were in effect commissioned to write the *Outline of linguistic analysis*. They were in agreement about everything but the syntax chapter. Bloomfield was sure that the book would not serve its purpose with a radically modern syntax chapter; and after fruitless efforts to get a sufficiently conventional syntax chapter written by the two collaborators or by either one of them alone, Bloomfield wrote that chapter himself. He was able to persuade Bloch to omit adding the third name to the title page, but Trager remained unreconciled, and the repeated reprintings of the *Outline*, even today, have been without his approval.

In the 1937 Linguistic Institute he was apparently influenced most strongly by the Sapir course in field methods and the other participants in it. The official attendance list is now irrecoverable, but it would not have named the non-credit participants anyhow; from the memories of three of the group, we have this partial list: Bernard Bloch, John B. Carroll, J Milton Cowan, Zellig S. Harris, Fred W. Householder, Jr., Norman A. McQuown, and Kenneth L. Pike; Henry Lee Smith, Jr., was in the group at first, and at the end Morris Swadesh arrived and probably visited it. An editorial footnote of Bloch's, *Lg.* 42.90 (1966)—perhaps the last he ever wrote—testifies to some of the Sapir impact on him. The association with Harris for rather more than a decade after that is documented in the published papers of both. The relationship with Cowan began then too, and in a way that is worth mentioning.

Cowan, in his social manner almost the opposite of Bloch, rather disliked him for half the summer. Then at a party Bloch happened to find out that Cowan's doctoral dissertation (University of Iowa, 1935) dealt with the perception of pause in English; and promptly the two set about re-analysing Cowan's data, a campaign which was not dropped with the end of the summer. This was in the early part of the period when such things were discussed vigorously for several years, though the term 'juncture' was not yet in use for the phonological phenomena: Charles F. Hockett introduced it into that discussion in the meetings held nearly monthly at Columbia University, by east-coast linguists in the winter of 1937–8, and he tells me that McQuown and Whorf were also there. Some of what Hockett made of all this can be seen in his 'System of descriptive phonology' four years later; some of what Bloch and Trager made of it at the same later epoch can be seen in 'The syllabic phonemes of English', *Lg.* 17.223–46 (1941). It is not clear exactly what impetus was given to that sort of discussion by what Bloch and Cowan did after the start made in 1937, but it seems unlikely that there was none. Their joint paper was read at the 1938 annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in New York City, and I remember speaking of it with Hockett over drinks in a hotel room later, probably with Bloch and Cowan present too. That paper was finished up for publication shortly thereafter, but it did not appear until 1948: see the Bibliography.

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At that 1938 meeting, George M. Bolling, Editor of *Language* from its beginning, and the other elder statesmen of the Society decided that the time was opportune for a change of editor. They wanted the youngest competent Editor that could be found, since they were sure that the office ought to change hands as infrequently as possible. Bolling was of course re-elected for 1939; but a firm consensus was soon reached, helped by a warm testimonial from Hans Kurath (Bolling's colleague at Ohio State University until 1931), and Bernard Bloch was elected Editor at the end of 1939. Kurath had promised to stand by him while he was learning the game, but very soon found that there was nothing substantial for him to do, so swift and sure was Bloch's grasp. And Bolling remained the only contributor to *Language* who was privileged to use Greek type to the end, long after transliteration was required of all others.

Bernard Bloch had been more or less in the middle of linguistics in America for several years; now it promptly became evident that that was where he belonged. He was the editor of the principal journal, but the office does not create the man. He was also working to edit his own thinking about language and especially about phonology; those he consulted with, whether at the top of the professional seniority scale like Bloomfield and Sturtevant or far down on it like Hockett, were impressed by the talent, honesty, and generous commitment in his effort, and became certain that he was to be trusted for the long pull. From the huge files of Bloch's editorial office (which will presently be accessible in the Archives of Yale University), all this could be documented at any length, but only a fractional documentation is appropriate here, and for this I have selected from the correspondence with one younger linguist who was neither too close to Bloch nor too far away. Readers will have to imagine the nice gradations between this case and the others: Bloch's manner, when he sat down to write a letter or postcard, was adjusted with uncanny skill to the circumstances, but the aim was single, nothing less than the best that could be done while keeping in mind that the effects would, for good or ill, last for decades or even centuries, and that his correspondent was a PERSON.

On 15 September 1941, still addressing C. F. Hockett as 'Charles' rather than the normal 'Chas' of a little later, he wrote about 'A system of descriptive phonology' which he had decided to put at the beginning of the 1942 volume:

> Your letter about multiple complementary distribution arrived this afternoon; I find that it clears up the question quite satisfactorily. It should certainly be included in the article, though; and accordingly I have written out a statement, based on your letter, as a new footnote [as follows:]
>
> Another problem, that of multiple complementary distribution, was raised by W. F. Twaddell, On Defining the Phoneme 30–2 and Lang. 13.54–6; but the problem is not a real one. If a phone *a* in a certain position is in complementary distribution with two other phones *b* and *c*, either it can be unambiguously assigned to one of these two phonemes, or else it is a member of a third phoneme different from these two.
>
> (1) [Exactly as finally printed.—Joos.]
>
> (2) To illustrate the other possibility we must invent an example, for no real case is known to the writer. In a certain language, /i/ and /e/ are found in contrasting positions, but before /n/ there is a vowel phone which is exactly half-way between /i/ and /e/ and which occurs nowhere else. The latter vowel shares the distinctive feature of front (pal-

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atal) articulation with /i/ and /e/, but does not share the feature of intermediate tongue-height with any other phone. If these statements include all the relevant facts, then the intermediate vowel, even though it occurs only before /n/ and is there in complementary distribution with two other vowels, constitutes a separate phoneme by itself.

Does this meet with your approval? Do you want to make any changes? I know that you don't like footnotes, but it seems better to put this material into a footnote than to incorporate it in the text ...

Bloch may still have had his doubts about the wisdom of the Hockett solution, but that was not the point. From his first day as Editor to his last, Bloch was unwilling to print anything that seemed obscure. Merely stylistic obscurities he always removed without consultation, grumbling about it occasionally in private ('it takes a perfectly brutal amount of labor,' he once wrote in a letter, 'but I don't mind'); obscurity in the line of argument called for more drastic treatment. In this instance he had queried Hockett about something quite specific which he did not feel sure of understanding. At least one of his rewrites was rejected by Hockett, and the rejection elicited this postcard from Bloch, which I would have printed in facsimile if it had not been smudged by the post-office cancellation. It is a typical Bloch postcard, filled solidly with typing and without blemish—no erasure, no alteration:

> Dear Chas: Your wording in §8.31 is now restored, with "*n*-minus-one-dimensional". But I still don't get it, in spite of your quite lucid but perhaps too simple explanation. Let's assume that English consonants are characterized, in all, by seven determining features. The ideal diagram then would have 7 dimensions. OK. Now, to paraphrase your "*n*-minus-one-dimensional cross section", we say: Any 6-dimensional cross section of the diagram will show all those phones which share a particular feature. But what is a 6-dimensional cross section? Isn't it true that to get a cross section showing all phones that share, say, stop articulation, you must take a one-dimensional, i.e. linear
>
> Hold on! It's just come to me, in a blinding flash. You're all right, of course; I see now what you mean. Sorry to be so dense
>
> No footnote needed, I think; it would be too long, & mostly irrelevant anyway. As for collaboration, forget it. It's your paper entirely, though I've had fun working on it; and I've inserted a deep bow to myself in fn. 1. All set now. Yours, B.

Another man might have torn up that postcard and substituted a different message; Bernard Bloch would do such a thing to enhance and protect other people's reputations, but not to protect himself. I know of at least one paper in which the long summary paragraph at its end is entirely his work: the paper needed to be finished off in that way, he considered its author to be hardly capable of doing the job, so he did it himself—in a good counterfeit of the author's own style, for he was a master parodist. He regarded this as no more than an editor's obvious duty, he once told me. Conversely, when a manuscript was in a competent style to begin with, he did as little as possible to its wording: he would not paint the lily, or meddle with a personal tone of voice. I knew these things directly, but I didn't realize how many others knew them until they

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began speaking and writing to me about them because they had heard that I was to write these pages and they wanted to make sure that Bernard Bloch as Editor got his due. I feel helpless to give it to him in adequate measure here. Those of us who were able to tell him to his face can feel lucky; the others can console themselves with the knowledge that he assumed they had as much good will as he himself had.

On 16 December 1941, Bernard Bloch wrote to Hockett, 'Brown is about to introduce a course in either Russian or Japanese, probably the latter; I expect to take it, as well as another new course in cryptanalysis.' Pearl Harbor was giving a giant push to the National School of Modern Oriental Languages and Civilizations, which before that was hardly more than a dream of Mortimer Graves at the A.C.L.S., and soon J Milton Cowan was to go to Washington for four years to direct the involvements of the A.C.L.S. and the Linguistic Society in the production of all those Basic Courses with phonograph records. Graves was superbly confident that modern linguists would produce superior language teaching materials in short order; he did not hope, he 'expected' that result; Bloch was reputed to be one of the more sophisticated of American linguists, and that was that: a fellowship was promptly provided for his study of Japanese.

There was Japanese teaching at Brown as he had foreseen; but within weeks he was more teacher than pupil in that program, meanwhile consulting with other linguists and especially with Bloomfield on frequent visits to Yale, where another Japanese program was under way. With September 1942 Bloch's status was changed to Assistant Professor of Modern Languages, and he was in charge of the teaching of Japanese at Brown University. During the ensuing year his connections with the Yale program were intensified. He became Assistant Professor of Linguistics at Yale University beginning 1 February 1943, and moved definitively to New Haven in good time for the fall semester of 1943.

At first his work at Yale was still within the Japanese program, but this burden was progressively eased by the staff he was developing; later in the war he became more and more a normal faculty member, a transition which was strongly supported by Bloomfield, Edgerton, and Sturtevant, to name only the obvious ones. In 1945 Bloch was made Associate Professor of Linguistics, with tenure. From 1943 to 1946 he was Language Director for Japanese in the Army Specialized Training Program and Civil Affairs Training Program at Yale University.

On 17 January 1946 he wrote to Hockett, 'I'm glad to hear that you're getting a crack at some badly needed reforms in Japan,' and went on for close to a thousand words on reformed spelling for the Japanese language, either romanized or in kana, with a simple proposal for perfecting the kana system which he supposed the Japanese would prefer. The letter sounds as if he were almost obsessed with the Japanese language. He also told me a little later that he had a feeling of guilt about the 'phonemic' transcription he had been using, a feeling that he was doing some sort of violence to the language. It was, I felt, almost as if he could hear the language whimper in its straitjacket. He needed either a justification of his phonemic theory or a replacement for it. The second is what

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he created in 1947 and published as the 1948 'Postulates'. These were developed with the Japanese data constantly in mind.

Having done that, he proceeded to do the converse job: to exhaust the Japanese data according to those hard-won principles, and to write the result as a complete description for the phonology of Japanese. It took him over a year to accomplish that. In October of 1948 he wrote to Hockett, 'I'm at work just now on SCJ IV, Japanese phonemics'; and a year later, 17 October 1949, he wrote Hockett a remarkable letter. After speaking of a Hockett manuscript which he had just received, he went on:

> Now *I* want *your* advice. If you can give it to me on the basis of this letter alone, good; if you can't, or think you can't, I'll have to ask you, as a special favor, to read the typescript which I'm worried about and let me have your opinion as referee ...
>
> I have in hand, then, a typescript intended as a contribution for *Language*, entitled "Studies in Colloquial Japanese IV. Phonemics". It is over 80 pages long—rather excessive, it seems to me, for a paper on phonemics. Usually the phonemics of a language is disposed of in a dozen pages or less; and many people, myself among them, are beginning to grow tired of phonemic articles anyhow. Assuming for the moment that the paper is a good one of its kind, I wonder whether it would be proper for me to publish it in *Language*—in particular, whether I should be exposing myself to justified criticism in taking so many pages of the journal (somewhere about 40, as I estimate it now) for an article of this kind. That is the question on which I want your advice.
>
> There are three reasons for the great length of the article as compared to other phonemic papers. (1) The author seems to have a number of new ideas on the subject of phonemic analysis, or at least some new formulations of older ideas, which are briefly presented at the beginning of the article; according to a footnote, he presented some of them at a meeting of the LSA in New York in 1948. The treatment of Japanese phonemics that follows is supposed not only to have a certain interest of its own, but also to exemplify these new ideas or formulations—and even, if my suspicions about the author's ultimate intentions are correct, to serve as a model for future analyses of other languages. (2) The author describes two different varieties of standard Japanese ... (3) Instead of asking the reader to take his word for the analysis, the author presents the entire phonetic evidence in considerable detail, with many examples, and discusses all questionable points in the classification—though I am glad to say he does not argue them out in public. (To be sure, the reader must still take his word for the phonetic data, a point that the author appears to have overlooked.)
>
> To give you some notion of the way in which the article is organized, short of making you read through it, I append a précis ...
>
> That's it. The article appears to contain everything but the kitchen stove (perhaps because the author remembers Bloomfield's dictum, "Don't take the guests into the kitchen"), but my net impression of it—so far as I have one that is not obscured by having had the article on my mind for so many months—is that it hangs together coherently and that each section is clear. Do you think, now, that you can advise me on the basis of what I've said? ...

Hockett could not fail to discern the nature of Bloch's involvement, and of course warmly urged him to publish the article intact. The quoted letter seems to be the only one from Bloch to Hockett in that tone of feigned detachment. (There were others to W. Freeman Twaddell, especially the parallel letter on the same occasion; these two friends, in fact, frequently exchanged letters elaborately contrived for analogous purposes, reaching astonishing heights of levity at times: I have mislaid, alas, a pair of carbon copies written in a pseudo-English composed entirely of the English forms of Germanic morphemes used with German meanings and put together with pedantic German syntax.)

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When the Japanese phonemics article was published, Bernard was at last able to relax, and from then on he spoke of Japanese hardly more than of Gaelic.

In a manuscript article, Hockett has had occasion to speak of certain contributions made by Bloch to linguistic theory, more or less in these terms: Bloomfield's use for phonemic theory was to keep WORDS apart in the lexicon; Trager, Bloch, and Hockett wanted it for keeping the UTTERANCES of the language distinct from each other. At least two conspicuous departures from Bloomfield's patterns resulted from that: (1) the phonological forms of most words became variable; (2) each word was represented as a member of an utterance each time it was presented at all, rather than as a member of a list. Now Hockett, in a recent letter to me, deals with this elaborately, especially insisting that the importance of such a new orientation loses nothing by its having been partly superseded still later, and goes on:

> The essence of the new orientation, however, will survive, and Bernard's role in this change is clear to read in the record and is still, I think, his greatest contribution to linguistic theory.
>
> Look at his papers that bear on this. His absolute independence as a scholar is utterly clear. For a while, he and George and I thought we saw eye-to-eye on juncture. Then Bernard started having serious misgivings as to compatibility of 'juncture phonemes' with the orientation that he had helped to build; for a number of years he struggled with that, seeking the truth. Whether he found it or not is beside the point. What he set forth in his Postulates has to be dealt with, accepted or for reason rejected point by point, in order to get beyond his stand as of that moment.
>
> The coming into existence, in the late 1940's, of really reliable acoustic information ... seriously bothered both Bernard and me ... Bernard's adherence to the basic principle of considering all evidence as it became available was never broken; if he had to give up a fondly held view, he did; if later he was able to re-establish it in a way consonant with the new evidence, he did. If I have acquired, slowly and painfully, any fund of intellectual honesty, I think I owe as much of it to Bernard—not merely as editor, but as *scholar*—as I do to Bloomfield.

Now if this sketchy narrative is surveyed from just before 'Pearl Harbor' to the end of 1949, and if we add the fact that Bloch was a full-time Associate Professor at Yale, with five doctoral dissertations developed under his direction so far,[14] it is hard to credit the plain fact that he simultaneously edited ten volumes of *Language*, 3552 pages of larger format than Bolling's, besides a number of other Society publications, all with exhaustive attention. Jakob Jud would have been proud of him; his physicians were not. In 1940 his health was already precarious; he came out of the war period with a severe tic which took half a dozen years to fade out; and for all his remaining years, his work was severely hampered by vascular disorders and hypertension that became uncontrollable, especially because he had only one functioning kidney. There were hospital interludes and there were also long periods of what would have been more than normal effectiveness for another scholar; but through it all there was never any doubt about who was Editor of the Society's publications or about his measuring up to his academic responsibilities: what was chiefly lost, he felt, was the daring

[14] Ultimately there were twelve dissertations completed under Bloch's supervision, and at least five of them have been published.

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spirit of his earlier years, and through it all he supposed he was successfully concealing the severe burdens imposed by Julia's worsening condition.

To complete the listing of his academic duties, we must first list the ten Linguistic Institutes in which he taught: 1937, 1940, 1947, 1948, 1950, 1951, 1953, 1954 (Associate Director), 1961, 1962 (Associate Director). From 1950 he was Professor at Yale; from 1952 he was Director of Graduate Studies in Linguistics, and until 1959 Director of Graduate Studies in Indic and Far Eastern Languages and Literatures, and Chairman of that department 1952–63; there was no formal Department of Linguistics at Yale until 1963. For 1959–60 he was to be Visiting Professor at Edinburgh University (where he had lectured for three weeks late in 1957) but gave up that plan within two weeks of the scheduled time: for reasons of health, he said, and made it appear that only his own health was in question. For that year, then, he made weekly visits to New York as Visiting Professor of Linguistics at Columbia University. For 1961–2 he was Visiting Professor of Linguistics at the University of Washington in Seattle, and remained there through the summer for the Linguistic Institute. Finally, he spent 1964–5 as a Fellow in the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, California.

This time he did not come to the midsummer meeting of the Society, but stayed in California until September. He was bringing *Language* back to its nominal schedule again: the final number for 1965 was in fact mailed to subscribers just at the end of the year, a month after his death, bringing his total pages for the twenty-six years to more than 13,500 (not counting any other Society publications, because others did substantive work on some). He had inherited some of Bolling's work at the start; in October of 1965 he had the first 1966 number in galley proof, and the second one almost completely prepared for the printer,[15] before he went to the hospital, where he suffered a fatal succession of heart attacks at intervals after seemingly recovering from pneumonia.

The academic honors that he valued most highly were:

M.A., Yale University, 1950.

Doctor of Humane Letters, Lawrence College (Wisconsin), 1963.

Alumni Citation for Distinguished Service, University of Kansas, 1964 (the highest honor conferred by that University, which does not grant honorary degrees).

He was made a Fellow of Davenport College, Yale University, in 1958.

Bernard Bloch was a teaching scholar: he loved to teach, and he paid for the privilege with exhaustive preparation—like Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenford, whom he once mentioned to me as a model:

[15] For a systematic presentation of details, and something that might be called Bernard Bloch's Articles of Faith as Editor, see his report at the end of his twenty-fifth year, Bulletin No. 38, 22–6 (1965), to which at least this much should be added: his policy of inviting reviews both from established experts and from beginners, and his way of making the invitation a challenge for both categories, made the reviews in *Language* an individual experience and a contribution to linguistic science that must compel the highest admiration.

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Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

He learned even more in discussion and lonely pondering than from reading; and always his way of study was an editor's way. Everything in language (or for that matter literature, music, or art) that came his way was given a short sharp look—the same look whether it was a professional statement or a scrap of dialect conversation overheard—and instantly given a tentative rating: (1) genuine primary data, (2) responsible description, (3) statement to be kept on probation, (4) statement serving to illustrate how far wrong dilettantism or pseudo-scholarship can go, (5) superstition; the list could be graded more finely, but it will serve. From the better half, he edited for his own edification, not by deletion but rather toward completeness and perspicuity; and when he felt he needed some chapter of doctrine as a permanent possession, he would toil over it without stint, not haphazardly but advancing it steadily toward his goal.

In his teaching likewise he was indefatigable. What I have just called his 'editing' as preparation was efficient, yet he was conscious of the effort in it; and from that consciousness he derived a delicately considerate sympathy with his pupils which impressed them strongly. 'Bernard in the classroom was as I recall marvelous,' Warren Cowgill has written in a letter. 'He was the first teacher I had who could generally understand students' questions.' In conference too he worked his students hard, but with unfailing kindliness. At present a group of his students are engaged in collating their notes and his handouts with a view to preparing a booklet—succinct, of course, as he would have made it himself—to represent his teaching as de Saussure's pupils did half a century earlier. That is not a usual thing in this country, and there must be something very special about a professor if any American students feel that way.

One was aware of Bernard Bloch at a distance and after extended separation, and that for more reasons than I can name. There was his awesome intellectual vigor; and again, there was another trait which kept a good many of us from discerning his warm human sympathy: his sardonic wit, which often struck people as brutal when in fact he was appealing to the victim to stand aside and look at his own word or deed along with Bernard Bloch as a companion. But the trait which I have come to think of as dominant in him, indeed the mainspring of his character, was his driving need for COMMITMENT, a constitutional necessity to be both intellectually and emotionally engaged, self-harnessed to something which he could devote continuous effort to without harming it. The drive was active, in that he committed himself to his own effort; it was not a passive surrender to the effort of another person. It was dynamic, in that he valued the result as proof to himself that he had spared no appropriate effort, rather than valuing the result statically as a monument to be visited or to bear witness to

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others, or even to profit them: he seems to have had the illusion that they were profited only WHILE he was exerting himself, and from the illusion he could derive a quite inappropriate feeling of having failed them utterly. The private Bernard was a very proud and very humble man.

In speaking of Bernard Bloch's Northwestern years I named his first three mentors, and felt sure of doing it with certainty and exhaustively; the others could also be named precisely and in sequence, for that was the kind of man he was. Hans Kurath was one, and Leonard Bloomfield the most important of them all. Some few were both friend and mentor to him, and as friend also to some extent pupil; but that was an uncomfortable mixture to Bernard, and caused reactions that have been misunderstood. To a friend as such, his commitment was total, and when circumstances forced a replacement the transition was severely troublesome to him. Other men might ease such a transition by converting the friend into an enemy; as usual as that is in humanity at large, it was something that Bernard Bloch could never do. One case must be mentioned, though I do that with a natural reluctance because the other man is a valued friend of mine. When someone once wanted to learn something to the discredit of that other man, he was foolishly referred to Bernard Bloch on the theory that since the two had seemingly parted on bad terms, Bloch would be the right source. His response is reported to have been, 'I am not fit to tie X's shoelaces.' The story may be apocryphal, but then it is ben trovato: the real point is the fact that all his acquaintances would be ready to believe it.

But those commitments to single friends did not detract from the readiness of his sympathy with all candid souls, from the very small child who climbed onto his knees on meeting him formally and whose gift of a scrawled 'picture' he kept permanently, all the way to Judah Goldin, Professor of Religion at Yale University and also a Fellow of Davenport College, who became Bernard's intimate friend in his last years and was the speaker at the University Memorial for him:

> On one occasion several years ago, Professor Bernard Bloch appeared before a university committee to explain the nature and purpose of the subject taught by the Department of Linguistics. He spoke quietly, briefly, and with an obvious determination to express with maximum precision exactly what he wanted to say ... One did not have to be a student of linguistics in order to be impressed by Bernard ... No one who met Bernard could fail to notice that not merely by instinct, as it were, but by personal decision he preferred to speak quietly ... And of course he was stubborn and determined about precision—a product of his professional commitment, his scholarship, as well as his fundamental honesty of mind ... Quiet discourse, brevity, precision would be noteworthy virtues in any period or place. They are doubly so at a time and in a world which are often so tumultuous and gaudy and pretentious. It's because of this especially that Bernard's dying at an early age is a serious loss—to his family, to his immediate colleagues and his subject, obviously; but not much less so to any person who cherishes genuine scholarship, and to his friends in particular who could be refined by association with him. You were simply discouraged from indulging in humbug while you sat with him, or talked to him.
>
> Bernard Bloch was a reticent man and a native shyness perhaps discouraged him from talking much about himself ... I learned from close colleagues what were some of the major influences on him. Apparently both the personality and work of Leonard Bloomfield impressed him profoundly. From the obituary note he wrote on Bloomfield, one may see what

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Bernard himself valued. He says of Bloomfield's volume *Language* that even for a professional linguist it would make slow reading: 'Not because,' he goes on, 'it is obscurely written, but because it so carefully says in every sentence exactly what it means, because every word is essential and every definition must be taken seriously.' The sentence is both a description and a moral stand.

Such seriousness Bernard brought to his responsibilities ... Seriousness of purpose is unfortunately and often misunderstood—it is confused with pedantry, it is confused with crankishness, it is confused with pompousness, it is confused with meretricious cleverness, it is confused with stuffy self-confidence: ... seriousness is so often misunderstood, that it is refreshing to encounter an authentic representation of it, which Bernard was.

But of course seriousness did not mean narrow interest to him; it was not inimical to variety or grace of conduct. Bernard began as a teacher of literature and retained his love for it ... I am told that he and his wife read through Joyce's *Ulysses*, out loud, at least twice, and other works as well. Bernard was especially fond of Synge and the Irish dramatists. There were poems of Dylan Thomas he liked to quote:

> The force that through the green fuse drives the flower
> Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees
> Is my destroyer.
> And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose
> My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

Though his students knew him as an exacting teacher, they testify not only to his excellence in actual instruction but to the gaiety he brought to the meetings of their local society. Often he would sit quietly on the couch in the Fellows' Lounge of his College; and if you sat down beside him, you could be treated to some lovely and delicate wit. It might even sting a bit. His father had been a painter, and the colors he favored continued to attract Bernard in all paintings. Bernard loved music, and, as we all know, the last attack he had was at a concert: he never again returned to his residence.

These different aspects of Bernard were all significant parts of him, as were the pain he endured and also the acute loneliness of the last five years or so, after Mrs. Bloch's death. But I come back to the core of this man, for it is an important core, namely, the seriousness, the feeling he had that the scholar must not treat his assignment shabbily or vulgarly. This seriousness did not make one less of a human being; the very opposite—it is what humanizes us. No less than his colleagues, his good students admired him enormously. They wrote of him, 'He is however a scholar first and last—no nonsense, no romantic etymologies, no lateness on papers.' They certainly knew their man.[16]

And to make an end I quote from W. H. Auden: 'the dead we miss are easier to talk to: with those no longer tensed by problems one cannot feel shy, and anyway, ... what else is there to do but talk to the voices of conscience they have become?'

MARTIN JOOS, *University of Toronto*

The Bibliography in Bloch's own records has been brought up to date by Warren Cowgill. It does not undertake to include things not written specifically for publication; see the review by Norman A. McQuown, *Lg.* 31.169–74 (1955), and the monograph reviewed, for a notable example and for an outline of Bernard Bloch's over-all view of linguistic structure in 1953.

1934 The American vowel in *bird*. Le Maître Phonétique 3:12.1–9.
Specimen of American English (General American). Ibid. 15–6.

[16] After a closing paragraph, the eulogy ends with the eighteen lines by T. S. Eliot, from 'Little Gidding' in *Four quartets*, that run: 'What we call the beginning ... See, they return, and bring us with them.' Dr. Goldin must have especially valued the long parenthesis in the middle, 'where every word is at home ...'

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1935 Broad transcription of General American. Ibid. 3:13.7–10.
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Studies in Colloquial Japanese: II. Syntax. Lg. 22.200–48.
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1947 Syntactic formulas for Japanese. Studies in Linguistics 5.1–12.
English verb inflection. Lg. 23.399–418.
1948 A set of postulates for phonemic analysis. Lg. 24.3–46.
An experimental study of pause in English syntax (with J M. Cowan). American Speech 23.89–99.
1949 Obituary of Leonard Bloomfield. Lg. 25.87–98.
1950 Studies in colloquial Japanese: IV. Phonemics. Lg. 26.86–125.
1953 Contrast. Lg. 29.59–61.
1962 LSA Style Sheet, Bulletin No. 35, 1–5. [Not the usual sort of style sheet, but a model of expository prose dealing with a highly difficult topic; reprinted in each subsequent Bulletin.]

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