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NICHOLAS C. BODMAN, 1913-1997

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Nicholas C. Bodman, well-known and widely loved scholar and teacher of Chinese and Sino-Tibetan linguistics, died in Northfield, Minnesota on June 29, 1997, after a lengthy struggle with Alzheimer's disease. He is survived by his wife Frances Sorrel Bodman, his daughter Anne S. Bodman, and his son Richard W. Bodman.

Signs of Nick Bodman's interest and promise in linguistics appeared early: while still a high-school student, he exchanged letters with Edward Sapir concerning Sapir's speculation that there might be a linguistic connection between the Sino-Tibetan and Athapaskan language families. During the Second World War, he worked with other US linguists in military cryptanalysis. After the war, he studied linguistics at Yale University, receiving his Ph.D. with a dissertation on initial consonants and consonant clusters in the language of the *Shiming* 释名, later published as Bodman (1954). From 1950 to 1961, he worked as a linguist for the U.S. State Department. He wrote a textbook of Amoy Hokkien (1955-58) whose accuracy, thoroughness, and careful analysis make it still useful today. He also served as director of the State Department's Chinese language school in Taiwan. From 1962 until his retirement in 1979, he was on the faculty of Cornell University, teaching both language and linguistics, and guiding many students to advanced degrees.

His research work involved primarily the history of Chinese and its dialects, and Sino-Tibetan linguistics and reconstruction, including fieldwork on Lepcha and other less well-known languages of the family. He was one of the founders of, and enthusiastic participants in, the annual International

Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics. His careful research and bold, imaginative analysis are well illustrated by his investigation of initial *s-clusters in Chinese and Tibetan (1969 and 1973 -- the latter appearing in the first volume of this journal) and by his far-reaching exploration of the nature of the relationship between Chinese and other Sino-Tibetan languages (1980). He also continued to do important dialect research, especially on dialects of the Min group. A selection of his important papers appeared in Chinese as Bodman (1995).

As a teacher, Nick infected students with his own intellectual curiosity, energy, and creativity. After getting past his sometimes gruff exterior, the student soon discovered Nick's agile, playful mind, his sense of humor and love of fun, his genuine respect for both students and colleagues, and his gracious and generous nature. As Confucius became concerned when he did not dream of the Duke of Zhou, I, as one of Nick's students (though no Confucius) will begin to worry if Nick's spirit ever ceases to visit me.

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