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Thomas E. Starzl, Pittsburgh

On September 28, 1987, Hans Popper was honored at a convocation at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine of the City University of New York. Many of his friends and colleagues came, and I was asked to give the convocation address. It was a very difficult task for me, since I had so much sentimentality about the subject. I knew, as did everyone there including Hans, that he was dying. He spoke wistfully of a previous distinction that he had received at the same university almost two decades before. He reflected that he had spoken then about how he was in the twilight of his career; he added "now the sunset has arrived." Hans died on May 6, 1988, 7 months later. My remarks about Hans were as follows.

At a convocation in his own university, what can an outsider like me say to Hans Popper who already has received virtually every academic distinction? Hans Popper founded and revolutionized multiple specialties in both medicine and pathology. His pupils learned from him and extended his knowledge and wisdom to every corner of the globe.

Where could this convocation be? There could be many possibilities. In Vienna, where the little boy lived who grew to be a giant and in whose original university the Hans Popper Experimental Pathology Laboratory was dedicated 10 years ago? In Chicago, where Hans moved 49 years ago, one step ahead of a scourge that changed forever the face of his beloved homeland? In his 19 years in Illinois, Hans started over, cared for his family, learned a new language, became professor of pathology at two major universities, and directed the prestigious Hektoen Research Institute. His creativity and productivity were simply prodigious. He became the founder of modern-day hepatology.

Wherever Hans Popper worked, flowers grew, and so it was with Mount Sinai in the New York era: chief of Mount Sinai Pathology, chairman of the Department of Pathology, founding dean, president, and finally the Gustav Levy distinguished service professorship.

I talked to Hans 3 weeks ago while he was in Pittsburgh at an international transplantation conference. In a quiet and solemn conversation, he expressed disappointment at not achieving fully some objectives for Mount Sinai that were dear to his heart. I realized later that these objectives were administrative and, therefore, not even important compared to what Hans had so brilliantly and continuously accomplished in his 30 years in New York City.

Who would deny that institutions are more important than individuals? People come and people go, but in institutions that have a heritage, children of these individuals, their grandchildren, and great grandchildren can fulfill the dreams of future generations. On the other hand, who would deny that the building blocks of institutions are the individuals who spend their lives there? Hans Popper's intellectual legacy to Mount Sinai has been enormous. He brought to it *greatness* of mind and of spirit. Time will not dim the lights turned on here by him or erase the Popper tradition and influence in pathology and medicine.

Once in a while, someone comes along whose position with a university can no longer be described, because his contributions and influence have become universal. Such men and women become more important than all of their jobs, appointments, and job descriptions put together. Then, merely by the act of *being*, they honor the institutions that justly honor them. Cushing of Harvard, Moynihan of Leeds, Blalock of Hopkins. Today, we are honoring Popper of Sinai. A convocation for Hans Popper could be at no other place than at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine of the City University of New York.

My dear Hans, you came to us at a time of tragedy from the crucible of Europe. In this land, you dazzled us with your courage, power, grace, and wit. Our respect for you came early, as you must have known. However, we are here to tell you now, timidly even at this late time, that love from your students, your colleagues, and those who truly knew you was never far behind. Expression of that respect and love is the one true message that I want to deliver today not only to you but also to that charitable and wise woman, Lina, who shared you with us over the years. When I see what you two have done with your lives, I wish I could understand the process. Then, we might be able to make it happen again for others.