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ARTHUR M. SACKLER, M.D.

NEW YORK — Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, International Publisher of MEDICAL TRIBUNE and a major benefactor in the arts and sciences, is dead of a myocardial infarction at the age of 73.

Often described by his peers as a "Renaissance man," Dr. Sackler was a research psychiatrist with 140 published papers, an art collector of world stature, and a builder of medical schools and research institutes, art museums and galleries, both in the United States and abroad.

Indeed, the range and generosity of his public bequests may have been unmatched by any other individual in the second half of the 20th century. There are the Sackler Institute of Biomedical Sciences at New York University, which trains candidates for the combined M.D.-Ph.D. degree; the Arthur M. Sackler Sciences Center, Clark University, Worcester, Mass.; the Sackler School of Medicine at Tel Aviv University in Israel; and, most recently, the Arthur M. Sackler Center for Health Communications at Tufts University, a sophisticated facility designed to employ state-of-the-art technologies to link the medical community worldwide.

"It is a privilege, not a charity, to be able to share one's joys and pleasures with others," Dr. Sackler liked to say about his benefactions, and those who remember his youthful excitement when one of these massive projects was nearing completion can testify to that anticipated sharing of joy and pleasure - an infectious experience, it should be added.

The scientific institutes Dr. Sackler helped build were matched by what seemed at times an endless series of contributions to the arts. His legendary art collections, totaling tens of thousands of works in all media, ranged over centuries and cultures, from China and India to the Middle East, from pre-Columbian and pre-Renaissance periods through the School of Paris.

Dr. Sackler gave most of this extraordinary collection

away, endowing museums and galleries to house his princely bequests. Dr. Sackler initiated the Sackler Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which houses the Temple of Dendur and the Sackler Exhibition Hall for Japanese Art. Two years ago, Harvard opened the Arthur M. Sackler Museum as home to the university's collection of non-Western art. This gift was in addition to Dr. Sackler's major contributions to help support fine arts research at Harvard.

"I think he did more for the art museums of Harvard University than anyone in living history," said Seymour Slive, Ph.D., Gleason professor of fine arts and former curator of Harvard's famed Fogg Museum.

In 1986, Dr. Sackler attended the ground-breaking ceremonies for the Arthur M. Sackler Museum on the grounds of Peking University, China; and at the time of his death, he was completing plans for the opening next fall of what was to have been his crowning achievement in museology in this country—the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution, being built on the Washington Mall. It will house an initial collection of 1,000 pieces of Dr. Sackler's holdings of Chinese and Near Eastern art.

Dr. Sackler's far-ranging interests in the arts and sciences and communications were already foreshadowed in his student days. Born in Brooklyn, the son of parents who went broke during the Great Depression of the '30s, Dr. Sackler majored in art history and English drama as a pre-med undergraduate at New York University. Evenings, he studied painting and sculpture at Cooper Union Art Institute. Earlier, in Erasmus Hall High School, he had been an editor of the student publications, and he held similar posts in college and later at NYU medical school.

With the nearly incredible energy that was to become his hallmark, the young student worked his way through college and medical school, supporting his family at the

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same time in those depression-bleak years. Later, he put his brothers through medical school.

In the spring of 1943, he joined William Douglas McAdams, a pharmaceutical advertising agency, as medical and creative director and rose to vice-president within a few years. In 1947, he became a principal owner of the agency.

Perhaps Dr. Sackler's major business innovation came in the world of journalism, with his launching of *MEDICAL TRIBUNE*. The publication was dedicated to his concept of a medical news periodical that would help keep physicians abreast of significant developments in clinical medicine and research in an era of unprecedented medical advances—and a corresponding information explosion. Founded in 1960, *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* was the first publication of its kind in the world, and in a short time, it was followed by sister publications abroad. At present, *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* is part of an international syndicate that reaches over one million physicians and medical scientists in 20 countries and seven languages.

Throughout these busy years, Dr. Sackler maintained an independent program of medical research, and, indeed, his 140 research papers have established his reputation as a significant investigator in biological psychiatry, a field in which he was an international pioneer. In 1949, in one of his first research papers, he wrote of "the full range of psychiatric manifestations from neurasthenic syndromes to psychoses and encephalopathies—seen when carbohydrate oxidation is disrupted by thiamine and nicotinic acid deficiencies."

In another of his early papers he coined the term "metabolic psychiatry" to describe a form of cellular or metabolic anoxia as playing a key role in the disruption of neuronal function seen in "severe B-avitaminosis [when] the psychic symptomatology may express an intrinsic metabolic anoxia fundamentally related to disruption of the neuron enzyme systems involved in carbohydrate metabolism."

In 1951, he wrote that he looked forward to the "next era of psychiatric advances" which, he predicted, would help clarify the role of biological factors in the pathogenesis of psychiatric disorders, and "provide us with biologic techniques as aids in diagnosis, prognosis and therapy, and arm us with additional therapeutic agents."

He added: "Then and only then will our diagnoses be firmly based on precise etiologic forces and our control of the disease process related to precise pathogenesis mechanisms. Then and only then will psychiatry be graced by biochemical specifics. It is our conviction that, today, we stand on the threshold of a new era of the science of psychiatry."

His research career began with his residency in psychiatry at Creedmoor State Hospital on Long Island in 1944. Five years later he founded and became research director of the Creedmoor Institute of Psychobiological Studies, and that year published his first paper, the first, in fact, of a ground-breaking series on the use of histamine in the non-convulsive biochemotherapy of psychotic disorders. Three years later, he and his collaborators published another first, the application of ultrasound as a diagnostic modality in psychiatry: "Hematosonography: A New Modality for the Differentiation of the Blood of Psychotics from Non-Psychotics."

International scientific recognition came to him in 1950 at the age of 37 with his appointment as chairman of the International Committee on Research of the First International Congress of Psychiatry. That same year, he was

named editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Psychopathology*.

Dr. Sackler's interest in metabolic psychiatry broadened in the late '50s to a wider interest in the role of dietary and nutritional factors in the pathogenesis and treatment of disease. In the face of widespread skepticism, he was one of the first supporters of Dr. Linus Pauling's concepts of vitamins as immunomodulators, capable of playing a role in the prevention and therapy of such major diseases as cancer. At Dr. Sackler's direction, *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* was the first reputable medical publication to report fully on the work of Drs. Pauling, Roger Williams, and others at a time when their ideas were viewed as marginal at best and faddist at worst. By the early '80s, however, Dr. Sackler had the satisfaction of seeing these ideas enter the mainstream of medicine, with the National Cancer Institute's creation of a Cancer Control Program based on the role of nutritional factors in the prevention of malignancies, and its funding of 26 long-term research programs designed to test cancer prevention through dietary intervention.

A man of buoyant temperament, Dr. Sackler had an enormous capacity for enjoying himself and an exuberant and rare talent for making friends. His friendships ranged from members of the staff and young medical researchers and artists to world-famous figures in politics, the arts, and science. At his New York townhouse, when the doorbell rang, the visitor might be an Israeli general, an opera star, a pop artist, an African minister, or a Nobelist in peace, literature, science, or medicine. Or it might be an earnest youngster trying to interest Dr. Sackler in some new idea. He enjoyed them all. And, no matter how busy he was, he never turned down a call from a student or colleague.

Of all Dr. Sackler's protean activities, possibly his regular "One Man & Medicine" column for *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* gave him the greatest pleasure. It was a forum and platform for his overflowing ideas, responses, views, and philosophy. And it was not a one-way street. Dr. Sackler viewed his column as a dialogue with the medical and scientific community. And his readers responded. "One Man & Medicine" regularly brought in the highest volume of mail of any feature or news story in the publication.

"We talk, perhaps glibly sometimes, of a Renaissance man. There are very few—but Arthur Sackler was surely one of them," said Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, chancellor of the Baylor College of Medicine, in a comment reflecting the spirit of the many tributes that poured in following Dr. Sackler's death. "He was a scientist, a researcher, a clinician. Independently of his other interests, he had made his mark as a researcher. But beyond that, he had a tremendous interest in history and art; and he shared his great art collections with the world."

Dr. DeBakey cited the founding of *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* as another major achievement by Dr. Sackler. "It was an extraordinarily innovative idea, and not many realized initially what he was trying to do," he declared. "But Dr. Sackler was a man who pursued excellence in any field he put his mind to, and he was determined that *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* would be a journal of the very highest standards. And this he accomplished. In many ways *MEDICAL TRIBUNE* is probably the best medical publication in the English-speaking world. It is regarded as in many respects the way to keep up with what is happening in medicine."

He added: "In his pursuit of excellence, Dr. Sackler was demanding of himself, and of others, too, hoping they would meet his standards. And yet he was patient and tolerant if they did not. He will be missed very, very much."

—NATHAN HORWITZ