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Disse of the Space of Disse



Joseph Hugo Vincent Disse (1852–1912), whose surname is given the German pronunciation *Diss*-uh, was born in the town of Brakel an der Weser in the German province of Westphalia, the son of a district physician. He studied medicine at Würzburg, Göttingen, Munich, and Erlangen (a peripatetic curriculum not unusual in those days). Award of his MD degree in 1875 was followed by 4 years of postgraduate work in anatomy at Strasbourg. Thereupon he accepted appointment as professor of anatomy at the University of Tokyo, Japan. In 1887, he returned to his homeland where he joined the faculty of the Anatomical Institute at Georg-August University in Göttingen. In 1890, he published his monumental paper on the lymphatic tracts of the mammalian liver in which he clearly described the narrow space separating the fenestrated sinusoidal membrane from the plasma membrane of the adjacent hepatocytes, a space that still bears his name. Later he served as professor of anatomy at Marburg. Near the end of his career he retired to Bavaria where he died of military tuberculosis.

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