
In Tribute: Prof. Dr. Joseph Vincent De Sa, Bombay, India

Prof. Dr. Joseph Vincent De Sa, whom we called Prof. Joe De Sa, was born on August 21, 1915, in Bombay, India, where he also died on November 3, 1989 (15 years ago). To us within the international community of neurootologists and to all his friends, students, and contemporaneous ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialists in India, he was a very great communicator in the fields of both otology and neurootology. Fifteen years after his passing, we still recognize that we have lost an unforgettable clinical investigator, ear surgeon, lecturer, teacher, and—especially—great man of modern medicine at home and abroad.

I first met Dr. De Sa in Madrid in 1973, where he participated in an international otolaryngological congress with an important branch into neurootology. When he approached me, he showed himself to be an inquisitive man very much concerned about all his giddy and dizzy patients. He regularly had to meet them in his clinic at De Sa's Hospital in Chowpatty, Bombay, India.

Then we sat together, and he reported in his very friendly, talkative, and attractive manner that he had specialized in medicine in India. During World War II (between 1943 and 1946), he had gone to the United States for a postgraduate training course at Johns Hopkins Hospital in the otolaryngology department under Dr. J.C. Crowe and Dr. Stacey R. Guild. He was grateful for his learning period there. He also underwent postgraduate training in bronchoesophagology at Temple University Medical School under Dr. Chevalier Jackson.

Thereafter, in December 1946, he received postgraduate qualification in ENT studies at D.L.O. (London). After returning to Bombay, where his father already was practicing as a well-known medical doctor and gynecologist, De Sa served between 1947 and 1954 as an honorary surgeon at the King Edward Memorial Hospital and, after that, as an assistant honorary professor of ENT at Seth G.S. Medical College. Between 1954 and 1973, he occupied the positions of honorary ENT surgeon and chairman of the ENT department of King Edward Memorial Hospital and served as an hon-



orary professor of ENT at the Seth G.S. Medical College, positions from which he retired in 1973.

Owing to his excellent reputation, he was offered many more positions within the medical community in India, especially in Bombay. Consequently, he worked in Bombay as honorary ENT surgeon at the Petit Parsee General Hospital until 1985; as honorary ENT surgeon at the R.P.T.B. Hospital, Sewri, until 1952; as honorary ENT consultant at the Central Railway Hospital until 1970; as honorary ENT consultant at I.N.H.S. "ASEINI" Hos-

pital until 1969; as honorary ENT consultant at the Western Railway Hospital until 1970; as ENT advisor to the Armed Forces Medical Services of India until 1980; and as honorary ENT consultant at Jaslok Hospital and Research Center until 1986.

As a delegate from India, he attended several world congresses of otolaryngology: in Paris, Venice, Madrid, Mexico City, and Washington, DC. He also participated in other international congresses, such as the meeting of the Societies Iberio Americano Symposium on Neurosurgery in Otorhinolaryngology; the South East Asia Conference of Otolaryngological Societies; the first, second, and third International Symposium on Microsurgery in Otorhinolaryngology; the fifth National Latin American Symposium in Madrid; the third International Symposium on Facial Paralysis, Zurich; a workshop in otosclerosis conducted by Prof. Schuknecht at Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit; a roundtable conference on otosclerosis in Cuba; workshops in cochlear implants in Bombay; and a Spanish-American symposium on neurootology in Barcelona.

All these activities demonstrate the degree to which Prof. Joe De Sa was involved in the roaring growth of new technologies, abilities, and clinicomedical theories about the specialty of otology and in the growth of its youngest offspring, neurootology. This remarkable list of his activities in India and abroad confirms for us that he belonged to the world's best in his field. Above all, his open-mindedness gave him easy access to all that he wanted and needed to know.

As a professor of ENT at Bombay University, Dr. De Sa carried out special reconstructive surgical tech-

niques in middle-ear surgery (microsurgery). His positive and constructive thinking enabled him to expand microsurgery into the larynx and the vocal cords. Additionally, he contributed to nasal reconstructive corrections and septoplasty using the Goldman technique.

With him, we have organized several courses about neurootology at Bombay and New Delhi, with a focus on vertigo, dizziness, and giddiness in combination with hearing disturbances and tinnitus (Ménière's disease). Dr. De Sa regularly came for scientific studies to our neurootology department at the University of Würzburg. As early as 1975, we worked together on a volume of a textbook, *Clinical Study of Human Equilibrium by Electronystagmography and Allied Tests*.

Again and again, he wanted to know what was new in science and theory and what also could be new and helpful for his patients in India. Thus, Dr. De Sa was a true pioneer for both modern ENT and neurootology and made a great impact on the field in his own country. There he educated and produced many famous alumni. In 1976, together with his friends and alumni, he founded the Indian Neurootological Society.

In March 1978, Dr. De Sa was elected secretary of the international Neurootological and Equilibrimetric Society (NES). Two years later, at the Members Assembly at Bad Kissingen, he became vice president of the NES. Thereafter, in November 1981, he became the congress president of the common meeting of the NES of India and of the Eighth International Congress of the NES in Bombay. This international congress—which was attended by scientists from India and many countries, including the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia—focused on retinoocular eye movements,

clinical application of optokinetic tests, and the differential diagnosis and therapy for vertigo.

For the further growth of ENT into the field of human sensology, Dr. De Sa opened a broad gate for his Indian friends, alumni, and followers. Conversely, he tied the string of friendship in many directions around the world and especially toward our NES. Until his very last days, in November 1989, he kept close contact with his patients from India and abroad in his clinic at Chowpatty, Bombay. With his Indian view, he encouraged us to continue our methods of modern differential diagnosis and therapy for sensory-deprived patients. As a basis for further engagement in cochlear implants, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he and his wife, Nancy, started in his own clinic a school for children with hearing disabilities. This move was very important for the work of his daughter, Dr. Sandra Desa Souza, because she continued her father's interest in cochlear implants. In this field, she became a pioneer in otology for all of India.

We still mourn a great physician, a stimulating teacher, and an international authority in the field of otology and neurootology. Prof. Dr. Joseph De Sa was a true friend who carved a great mark in the cornerstone for his successors. He moved us toward modern analysis, therapy, and understanding of human neurosensory dysfunctions.

We, his friends and contemporaries, will never forget our friend, Joe De Sa, from Bombay, India. Even now, he deserves an honorable mention.

Prof. Dr. Claus-Frenz Claussen