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The Frescoes in the Stazione Zoologica and Classical *Ekphrasis*

For Lilo

The raising of problematical Marées to a prominent position within the canon by (largely German) art history and criticism has – if we exclude chauvinist appropriations – since Karl von Pidoll (1890) and Julius Meier-Graefe (1909-1910) to Herbert von Einem (1967) and Bernhard Degenhart (1953) largely been achieved by demonstrating the latent modernity of the painter, as Anne S. Domm (1987b) and Maria Rosaria De Rosa (2000) have impressively shown. This, however, meant including Marées within the mainstream of postimpressionist French painting in the second half of the nineteenth century and within the prehistory of abstraction;¹ it meant above all measuring Marées against Cézanne. Consequently Marées became a painter of ‘pure pictures’, of *purovisibilismo*, an adversary of heterogenous content, a refuser of iconography and tradition.² This approach, of course, goes back to Konrad Fiedler. This is not the place to discuss again the complex relationship between the painter and his philosophizing benefactor, or to point out the problematic elements in Fiedler’s theory (Faensen 1965; Boehm 1987; 1997; Beyer 1997; Blum 1997; De Rosa 2000). I shall instead proceed from Kurt Badt’s simple proposal (1971) that the opacity of a work of art – its extralinguistic evidences – can, even in the case of ‘pure compositions’ (Ruhmer 1987a), probably only be caught more precisely by a recourse to (as Badt called them) ‘negative determinants’, that is to the contrasting conditions of biogra-

¹ ‘[...] Marées allows us to recognize in his accentuating of the form, especially the large format as opposed to every concrete content, the beginnings of a development which eventually leads to abstract painting [...]’. (Degenhart 1955, 139)

² ‘Marées – and this is the revolutionary aspect of his work – has radically broken with the reign of thematic content; content defeated by form. Thus, in his work the autonomy of pictorial form has become real (for the first time historically) which the theorists of German idealism – Kant, Schiller, Goethe – had already demanded one century earlier.’ (Lankheit 1952b, 16)

phy, history, pictorial tradition and iconography, which only – by their contrast – enable us to recognize the specific artistic achievements and transformations.³ But we should – following Badt's caution – avoid the trap of seeing this contrasting framework as the causal origin of the work of art. Individual artistic achievement becomes more astonishing the more we learn about its contingent roots.

Biographical encapsulations within the work of Cézanne – specifically in the thematic series of the *Bathers* – have been followed up by Mary Louise Krumrine (1989) in her important Basle exhibition where she didn't hesitate to identify the painter as an – occasionally androgynous – participant in the pictures' groups. Gerd Blum's recently published dissertation changes our view of Marées by a similar procedure (Blum 2005; see also Blum, in this volume). In my view, however, it is less interesting to reveal the trivial underpinnings of art than to reconstruct the sometimes incredible tensions between biography and artistic realization.

The relevance of traditional iconography within the work of Hans von Marées has not been sufficiently explored yet. But even a cursory glance at his work shows how deliberately the painter, in biographical key situations or moments of conflict, reaches out for tradition (Scheffler 1998, 413-418). The dramatic break-up with Fiedler, from which he never quite healed, finds – as Marées wrote himself – its pictorial remedy in a *Dragonslayer* (Fig. XXV). In the victor over the dragon Marées portrays himself. The letter to Fiedler of July 3rd, 1880, leaves no doubt about that (Marées 1920, 186-189). Here Marées refuses to be forced by others – meaning Fiedler – into the *rôle* of tragical artist. This letter, a document of defiant *joie de vivre*, shows the ubiquity of classical exempla. Marées transforms the separation into an image of the Christian knight. It isn't any different when Marées paints in Rome, as the last of his works, a *Ganymede* (Fig. XVI) who is being abducted by the Father of Gods into heaven. While Marées in his composition follows the *Ganymede* by Girolamo da Carpi in Dresden even in small details (which has already been pointed out – Ruhmer 1987b), the thematic and biographical analogy linking his picture of deliverance with Raphael's *Transfiguration* in the Pinacoteca Vaticana is surprising. Both pictures were found unfinished on the Roman easels of their painters who died unexpectedly early. Marées admired Raphael, espe-

³ See the critical objections raised by Otto Karl Werckmeister (1973). For the aesthetic tradition (Zimmermann, Justi) see the excellent work by Pinotti (2001).

cially his *St. Cecilia* in Bologna, as shown in a letter from May 25th, 1877 (Marées 1920, 127).

It is more difficult than in such obvious cases to gauge the relevance of tradition when we come to those pictures which Marées painted, as it seems, without any particular theme. The degree of universality in *Stages of Life* or in the various *Oranges* pictures is so high (Börsch-Supan 1968, 1-9) that, at first, it seems an idle proposition to look for any reworkings of Marées' own biography or traditional iconography. And nowhere does such an undertaking appear more problematical than among the frescoes of the Stazione Zoologica. 'Every theme that might be resolved into a literary narrative has been avoided', as Herbert von Einem declared (1967, 9).⁴

Before I attempt a few hypotheses, which run contrary to this consensus, I want to point out a methodological lacuna in classical iconography which has only recently been more thoroughly recognized. By this I want to make clear right at the beginning what I want to *avoid*. Ideally iconography attaches to a given subject, a more or less precisely defined meaning that is documented in literature. Thus it proceeds as classical allegory does, it adds, so to speak, to compendia such as Ripa's *Iconologia* or Cartari's *Images of the Gods of the Ancients*.⁵ This procedure usually doesn't possess any sensorium for meta-iconographical relationships. The textual passages which certain subjects in art refer to may in their turn refer to certain forms of aesthetical experience or may establish certain specific strategies of aesthetical effect. Texts referred to by paintings are not necessarily containers of a narrative; these texts may themselves refer to specific visual experiences.

The establishing of a relationship between pictures and texts by the iconographer can therefore only be a first step; afterwards we must look for possible pictorial reflections of aesthetical experience implied by the text. This extended iconographical procedure – not to be confused with meta-pictorial interpretations (Stoichita 1997) or dualistic models (painting as a hint at the 'invisible') – promises, of course, particularly fruitful possibilities of interpretation where the texts referred to by any given picture will themselves take pictures or imagery as their major theme.

This seems to be precisely the case with the frescoes in the Zoological Station (Degenhart 1958; Grote 1958; Lenz 1987c; Nowald 1988; Ritter

⁴ 'Quite simple scenes draw the idle pleasure of the Naples' maritime and rural life into the room.' (Kloss 1925, 379)

⁵ See the fundamental texts in the volume edited by Ekkehard Kaemmerling (³1984).

Santini 1988, 47 sqq.; Groeben 2000; De Rosa 2001, Chapter 3). As we will see, the texts referred to by these frescoes, themselves describe paintings that seem to anticipate the artistic goals of Marées – the celebration of the visual, the absence of narrative dynamics; enlivenment; presence, durability; calmness; universality; ‘profound’ colors etc. Let us briefly recapitulate the origins of the paintings which Theodor Heuss (1940; 1992) narrated in minute detail. The twenty-nine-year-old Privatdozent Anton Dohrn from Jena came to Naples in March 1870, in order to build there a research station for marine biology. He convinced the city to let him have a plot of land within the Villa Reale free of cost. Two years later, in March 1872, the construction began. Dohrn pursued scientific aims with his station, but these were part of larger cultural and social goals. The enterprise was to be financed, not primarily by the (German or Prussian) state, but through the renting out of ‘working desks’ to local institutions and abroad. The general accessibility of the aquarium made the public – Neapolitans and tourists – part of the scientific concept, as users and sponsors at the same time. Internationality, independence from the state, individual research and the public character of the institution were to be the pillars of the Stazione – a strikingly modern idea, until our own times.⁶

From the beginning Dohrn planned a large, centrally situated music room open to the sea via a veranda – a necessary element of his utopia uniting science and art, intellectual toil and leisure, individual research and companionship. Even during the founding phase which absorbed all his energies Dohrn himself wasn’t to be deprived of his leisure time:

I hardly do anything. I only live to eat, drink, swim, go out in the boat, play at bocce with the rest of the ‘café society’ in the osteria in Queen Giovanna’s old palace, where last time we ate oysters [...] talking quite a bit with Marées. (Letter to his fiancée of June 1873, quoted after Groeben 2000, 14)

Marées met Dohrn in January 1873 in Dresden; four months later he arrived in Naples together with Adolf Hildebrand. The idea to furnish the music room with frescoes and sculptures expressing its function came from Marées. And it is Marées who worked enthusiastically for the realization of this plan – he had to convince both his client Dohrn and his financier Fiedler of the merits of this project (which would not have yielded him any

⁶ On the foundation of German research institutes in Italy at the end of the 19th century, see the volume edited by Seidel and Hansmann (1999).

money), he followed his own initiative. (An artistic phenomenon which has't been explored sufficiently; at the same time a topic of praise since classical times, in Pliny, for instance; Shearman 1998, 22.) What made Marées so enthusiastic about Dohrn's station were its cultural and social aims, its 'republican constitution', and the idea of a family of scholars. It is notable that the room was ornamented by a pictorial program which contained highly personal elements (portraits of friendship), but almost no allusions to specific zoological research, while Hildebrand's busts of Charles Darwin (Fig. 34) and Karl Ernst von Baer (Fig. 35) pointedly refer to positions of biological theory which are mutually opposed. The choice of von Baer documents an enormous breadth of vision when compared to recent trends in biology, namely on autopoiesis of organisms (see [Baer] 2002; Weber 2003).

The furnishing of this salon should be analyzed in the larger context of the architectural and artistic embellishments of scientific institutions in the nineteenth century and considered within the history and sociology of science. Here, Anton Dohrn is personally interesting. The *Privatdozent* did not plan to limit himself to specialized studies in marine biology in Naples, he wanted to engage in an universal 'study of life process' (*Lebensforschung*). He wanted to observe the natural selection of species (after Darwin) *in actu* and thus to grasp the dynamics underlying biology, the powers of life. A theory of selection and a teleological way of thinking (Kant, Goethe) to him were not mutually exclusive (Lenoir 1982; Cornell 1986; Weber and Varela 2002). And to Dohrn, a Goethean, that inner balance between science and art (which Darwin, according to his own testimony, had sacrificed on the altar of science – Darwin 1958) was of paramount importance. That is the reason for the early engagement of Charles Grant, Hildebrand's English teacher, who was to help in counter-ing the weight of the institutional chores, to keep awake 'the natural sources of the life of my mind and my emotions' (Heuss 1940, 126). Shortly after the artists' arrival Dohrn stated his expectations. Through its 'room on the side towards the sea' 'the station is getting to be more and more romantic, and certainly it is a rare union of the arts and sciences'. Aptly, Marées originally planned 'two painted colossal statues of art and science' (to Fiedler on July 20th, 1873; Marées 1920, 74).

The frescoes were completed within four months – documents of the furious labour narrated impressively by Marées in his letters from spring and fall 1873. The pressure of time – which Marées had never experienced before in this way – forced the painter to work extremely economically. While Hildebrand (completely inexperienced with regard to fresco paint-

ing) helped with the ornamental friezes and while each morning the *intornaco* of the *giornata* was prepared, Marées executed huge oil sketches after models and in the afternoon he painted – irreversibly – on the fresh layer of plaster.⁷ The theme of the pictures is stated in several letters. Irene Koppel is told about large wall paintings ‘which are meant to express, in a continuous fashion, the charm of life on the sea and on the shore’. Marées stresses the direct ‘mimetic’ context: ‘From our room, where we work, we always look out to the lovely Gulf’ (July 3rd, 1873; Marées 1920, 67). Two days later he laconically tells Mrs Tauber about ‘pictures which are all connected’ (Marées 1920, 69). The most detailed description is offered to Fiedler, as one might expect. A letter of July 20th, 1873, says:

The whole subject has been taken from life. The sea with grottoes, islands, rocky shore and architecture; with fishermen spreading their nets or pushing a ship into the sea, in the ship itself the portraits of Dohrn, Kleinenberg, Grant, Hildebrand and me stesso, a seaside tavern and, so as to get onto dry land for a change, on the window wall a life-size orangegrove with figures. All the figures are life-sized. Besides this two painted colossal statues of Art and Science. (Marées 1920, 74)

Finally the two stuccoed fireplaces and the interior fountain by Hildebrand are mentioned. Marées ends laconically: ‘A large part of the figures nude. So much for the general idea.’

We know Marées’ reluctance to talk to Fiedler (who, although the presumed tragical painter urged him to come, didn’t think a timely visit to the Naples frescoes necessary) about the themes of his pictures – a reasonable reluctance, considering Fiedler’s image theory. Often the paintings are not even named and Marées simply mentions, for instance, ‘three pictures from your place’. He doesn’t enlarge on titles such as ‘the Oranges picture’ or ‘my Hesperides picture’, and these are precisely the appellations Fiedler also uses in his return letters. ‘Today, I have already put a life-size giovinetta into an orangegrove’: Marées wouldn’t have dared to express himself vis-à-vis to Fiedler as innocently as he does here (September 19th, 1873) to Melanie Tauber – whose traits he would have liked to give to his *giovinetta*, only the photograph he had of her wouldn’t do.

Are the frescoes really ‘just’ those ‘pictures of a state’ (*Zustandsbilder*) which Marées describes in his letters to Fiedler? If Marées, writing to

⁷ See, for the technique and the process of painting, Giusti (1999, 30-34).

Melanie Tauber in May 1877, calls himself Ulysses and a priest of Athena, if immediately before the break he writes to Fiedler on June 12th, 1880: 'In short, I am convinced that the spirit of Appelles has descended on me' (Marées 1920, 181) – then important hints are given to us. They point towards the continuing power of classical models to invite identification. Classical antiquity also appears with reference to certain places, for instance when Marées calls Rome a city of Bacchus. As for Naples, both artists immediately after their arrival visit the Pompeian paintings (Kuhn-Wengenmayr in this volume; Bessenich 1967; Kuhn 1987).

Four years later Marées dreamily writes to Melanie Tauber (who often is called 'Pallas Athene' in these letters) from Rome (June 1877):

[...] I'll therefore use Ischia as watering-place and villeggiatura. And maybe I shall find a bay on these Homeric shores where we can build our future villa. The splashing of sea waves is strictly necessary for a refreshing stay in the country. (Domm 1987a, 163)

At the end of July, or the beginning of August 1877, he writes to her from the island and becomes more specific:

[...] the blissful coasts of this sea. / Here, from my window, I see the spot where the Roman elite built its country houses, and the fact that it is different today just proves that nowadays one doesn't know how to live. (Marées 1920, 139)

Here we have a crucial cue – a possible local reference of the Naples frescoes comes into view. Naples with its Bay was, as one knew, famous in classical times for its large number of spectacularly built villas close to the shore. Pliny the Younger (Plinius ³1976, Letters II, 17 and IX, 7; De La Ruffinière Du Prey 1994), for instance, describes how from the sleeping room of his villa at Baiae – and similarly at Como – it was possible to throw a fishing line directly into the water. Most of these villas had magnificent picture galleries, as we can learn from Vitruvius among others. Quite often, these were cryptoporticuses, with one of their walls open to the sea. One of them became famous, as the Greek sophist Philostratus the Elder (1960; 1968) devoted to its pictures the most voluminous series of descriptions extant from antiquity (Schönberger 1995; Webb 1992; Bryson 1994). Philostratus himself tells us that his gallery was situated in or near Naples. This circumstance was taken up gratefully by the most widely used guide-books of the nineteenth century. Stanislao D'Aloe's two-volume book on

Naples emphatically points out to its readers, among the 'vicende storiche', the gallery of Philostratus, 'un portico ornato splendidamente di marmo [...] una scelta di tavole de' più famosi pittori' (D'Aloe 1845, I, 61). And Giuseppe Galanti's guide to Naples, from the same year, emphasizes the fact that even during the late Roman decadence Naples was still famous for its art treasures, among them the 'portico delle pitture descritto da Filostrato' (Galanti 1845, 10).

This treasure-house of classical painting can hardly have been unknown to Dohrn and to his learned partner in discussion, Grant. The fervent Goetheans whom Theodor Heuss conjures up for us simply *had* to know the detailed report their idol had given on Philostratus – a text which originally appeared in 1818 in *Über Kunst und Altertum*. Goethe's tract on *Philostratus' Paintings* doesn't assign a topographical place to the gallery, but it assumes its real existence in ancient times (opposing the prevalent opinion among contemporary French philologists), pointing to 'Herculean' and 'Pompeian' paintings as witnesses (Goethe 1954, XIII, 792-841). Goethe, who wrote about the 'wonderfully pleasurable life in these pictures',⁸ made the *Eikones* popular with his text, which is largely a paraphrase. In 1832, the second translation of Philostratus into German appeared (by A.F. Lindau). And in 1842/1843, Moritz von Schwind designed a fresco cycle after Philostratus for one of the rooms of today's Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe, a project which, however, did not encounter the Grand Duke's favour (Schönberger 1995, 70; Michel 1973). With his red-figured black-grounded frescoes Schwind realized a hope of Goethe's who had seen in the *Eikones* a worthy subject for one of the competitions organized by the Weimarer Kunstfreunde, but a subject the time of which had not yet come.⁹

It was the position of the Zoological Station by the sea and the opening of the music room towards the water which had to call up memories of classical galleries – and among them of the most famous one, the gallery of Philostratus. Marées – a circumstance which has remained unnoticed so far – painted a classical cryptoporticus in the fresco on the eastern side (Fig. 36), in the background of the *Fishermen embarking*. The ornament friezes, done by Hildebrand, use Pompeian patterns of decoration. Bernhard Degenhart (1958, 14 and 48), therefore, emphasizes the local reference in

⁸ A quotation from 1819, after Schönberger's introduction (1995, 69).

⁹ On Goethe's importance for the aesthetics of Fiedler and Marées see Lichtenstern (in this volume).

Marées' Naples frescoes to the antique wall paintings in Pompeii, the immediate neighbourhood of which has a meaning which is not accidental but deeply symbolical, and which does not find any closer affinity in German monumental painting than with the work of Marées.

A conscious reference of the station's architecture to local art history is also visible in Anton Dohrn's plan for the front façade which – as Christiane Groeben (2000, 12) has shown – points back to the late baroque façade of S. Maria della Sapienza in Naples.

The order and architectural display of Philostratus' gallery was discussed controversially until Karl Lehmann-Hartleben (1941) published his influential article on the thematical display of the paintings. Before that, their sequence appeared 'confused' (Goethe) and a simply associative reading of the *Eikones* seemed most plausible. I think that in Naples Marées combined some of Philostratus' descriptions in an associative fashion (as Schwind before him), but two ekphrases are of the greatest importance: *Erotes* (I, 6) and *Islands* (*Nesoi*, II, 17). It is hardly surprising that Marées was chiefly interested in quiet, idyllic scenes and not in narratives or paintings full of movement. He worked down through their literary layers – which are, after all, only rudimentary – and revealed typical experiences, in which the narrative content can renew itself (Imdahl 1963; Blum 1996). This singular capability of an aesthetic renewal, though, is not the subject of my lecture.

Right at the beginning, Philostratus' description of *Erotes* contains a direct call to the reader designed to make the scene come alive: 'Look, gods of love are gathering apples!' The scene is formed by rows of trees which 'run straight' with tender grass below them. From the leaves and grass golden and red-cheeked apples are shining. 'From the high branches golden apples are hanging', Goethe translates (1954, 807). Some gods are dancing, others are running around, others sleeping. The central theme – love – is accentuated by the appearance of a hare below the apple trees. Hares are animals of Aphrodite, 'for this lewdly fertile race is the goddess' delight' (Goethe). The goddess of love herself cannot be seen anywhere, but we see nymphs, proud mothers of beautiful *erotes*. Water is guided through narrow channels to water the trees. The picture's theme is fertility itself, it contains a hope voiced by Goethe: 'may the grove always flower and bear fruit!'

Marées took from Philostratus' idyll the central elements: the grove (of orange or apple trees), the tender grass, the playing and sleeping children, the hares (Fig. 37); even the motif of plants being watered appears in the form of the old man gardening. Instead of the proud maternal nymphs of

the *Erotes*, he may have gone back to the thematically related description of *Singers of Hymns* (II, 1): There we hear of tender girls in light clothing (chiton and belt) who, smiling in the myrtle grove, sing of Aphrodite's statue. If, in one of the numerous sketches made by Marées for the *Orangegrove* (Fig. 38), a triton shell – identified by Christiane Groeben (2000, 50) – appears on the ground, seemingly without any good reason, the close relationship with Philostratus' *Erotes* is once again evidenced. In the ekphrasis *Aphrodite* the shell is an attribute of the love goddess, who, risen from the foam, reached the shore on a shell. (Remember Marées' phrase 'so as to get onto dry land for a change...')

Regarding the opposite fresco with the rowers – which, so to speak, mirrors the sea visible via the veranda – and the fresco with the fishermen, Philostratus' ekphrasis *Islands* has, it seems to me, supplied motifs. Philostratus chooses here – this also is a *Zustandsbild* – a special method of making pictures come alive (*enargeia*). He asks the ten-year-old to whom he offers his explanations at the beginning: 'Is it all right with you, my boy, if we talk about these islands as if we were in a ship – as if we were sailing around them in spring, when the zephyr breathes his gentle airs and the sea becomes calmer?' The sea now is neither troubled nor completely motionless but gently alive for easy, serene travel. We can enter into the picture. 'See! Already we have started rowing!' The child answers enthusiastically: 'To be sure, let us go!' Gradually the islands become visible from the boat; they are all small, some arise sharply from the sea with mountain flowers and bees on them, some are more level and offer fertile ground to farmers and fishers (which can be seen there). Some have been separated by the sea, but still show by their shapes that they have been united in former times.

Marées 'reworks' this *ekphrasis* with astonishing fidelity to the text; he doesn't forget the (half hidden) ten-year-old boy (Fig. 41) and 'unites' the islands by the architectural structuring of the wall. But, he adds a rowing boat to Philostratus' painting, which in the text only served as a metaphor, as a vehicle for entering the picture. This boat may have been taken from other descriptions. One is by Philostratus the Younger – whose own descriptions of pictures were appended to his grandfather's *Eikones*. In his *Return of the Argonauts* a boat appears, in which the rowers stand at the bow. Behind them we see Jason with his beautiful prey, the golden fleece, and Medea, but the woman thinks of her misdeeds. Goethe (1954, 817) paraphrases Philostratus: 'Her eyes, looking down, are full of tears.' The bulging muscles of the rowers which appear in the description quote another *ekphrasis* by the elder Philostratus: *Bosporus* (I, 13). This describes the work of the fishermen who, brown skinned, leave with mutual encour-

agements for the tuna hunt. A guardian looks into the sea to guess at the number of fish. Philostratus' description is one of the first literary examples of colour perspective and 'perspective by distinctness', it emphasizes genuinely painterly sensations: The colours of the fish get lighter and lighter in the deep, and the forms grow more and more indistinct, 'for if the gaze steps down into the water it becomes too weak to exactly recognize things there' (Goethe 1954, 817).

In both cases (*Orangegrove* and *Rowers/Fishermen*) the theme of 'enlivenment' is central – fitting well with Dohrn's 'studies of the process of life' (*Lebensforschung*). But while the *Orangegrove* (Fig. V, VI) emphasizes biological fertility, the *Rowers* and the *Fishermen* (Fig. I, III) express through their male groups the notion of an active community. To this community the painted Anton Dohrn turns from the picture of the *Pergola* (Fig. VII). The picture he sees, the joint endeavour of putting out to the open sea, becomes a mirror of his own cultural initiative. But these pictures also interpret Philostratus in another, deeper sense. As in the ekphrases the motif of 'enlivening through description' (Schönberger) triumphs by vivid representation, just as the painted matter sets all senses aflame (one can smell the apples/oranges, etc.), thus, in their own way, Marées' pictures transcend aesthetical limitations and become the reality of painting. The painted Dohrn again sets the theme by his gaze and by the angle of his body: His gaze enters the fresco of the *Rowers* in the same way his body slants into the surface of the sea. (A movement anticipated by Grant's slanted legs under the table.) Marées gives reality to the rhetorical appeal by Philostratus, which can be found dozens of times in the ekphrases: 'Look!' Think of Marées' motto: 'To learn to see is everything.'¹⁰ And he seriously takes what Philostratus emphasizes more than fifty times: 'It is painted!'

Alive just as reality, and yet painted! Classical ekphrasis varies this motif a countless number of times. It is central also to Marées' efforts as a painter, but in his work it is realized in a way unthinkable in antiquity. Yet, in hints, as those Philostratus gives in the ekphrasis *Guest's Gifts* (*Xenia*, I, 31), Marées could discover his own intentions. Apples and still more apples become visible, in loose piles and in pyramids of ten, perfumed and shining like gold. And their redness does not seem to have been applied from the outside, it looks as if it glows from the inside.¹¹ The

¹⁰ Quoted after Pidoll (1890, 3). See Boehm 1987.

¹¹ Meier-Graefe puts it beautifully (1924, 35): 'Marées' overpaintings, for the techni-

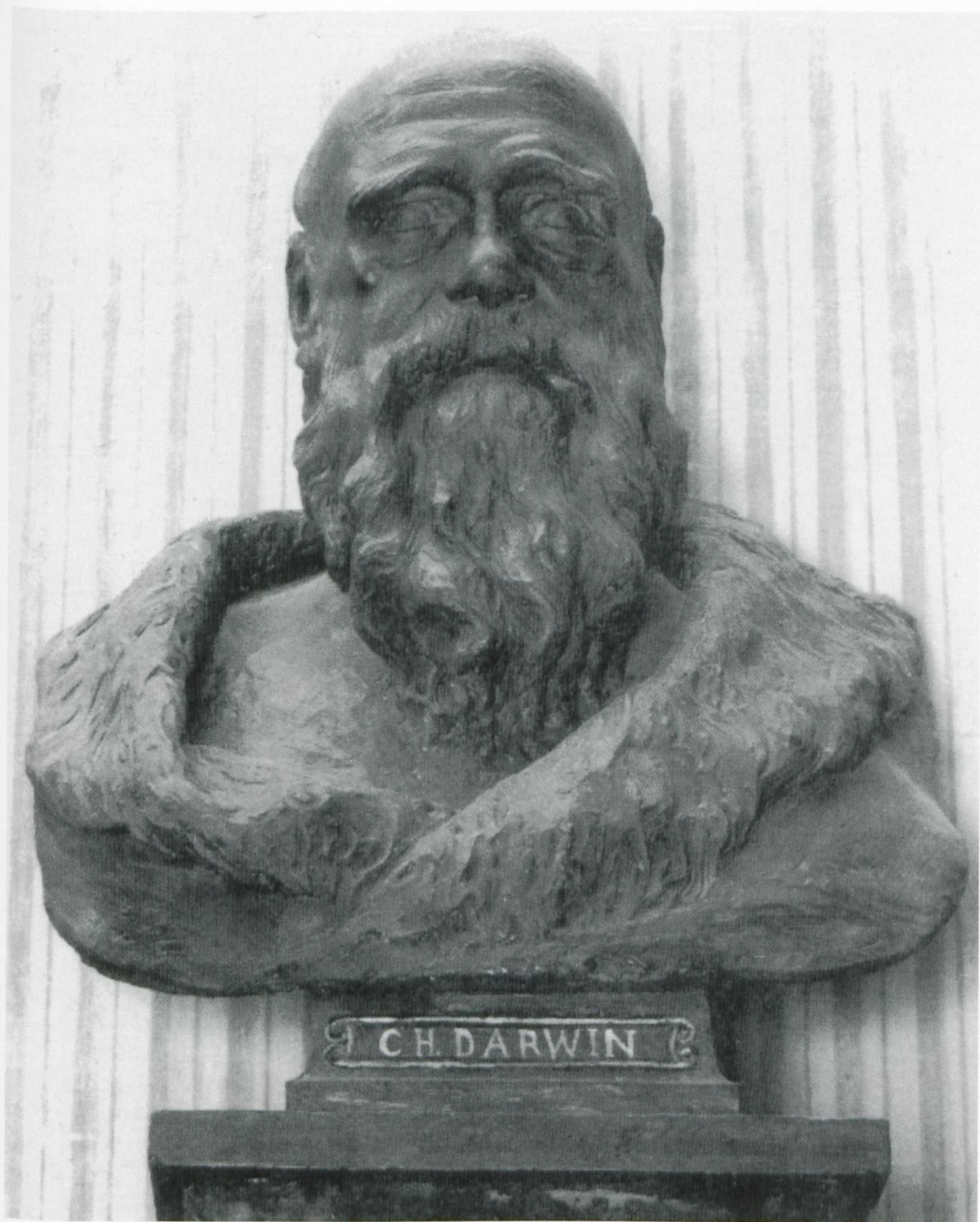
opening sentences of Philostratus' *Eikones* must have strengthened Marées in his efforts just as it encouraged many other painters since the Renaissance: He who does not hold painting in high esteem despises truth, wisdom (*sophia*) and *symmetria*, virtues that transform the painter into another god. Painting is an invention of the gods.

The fresco on the eastern side relates to those on the other walls like an overture. The expectation which reigns here will be fulfilled in the following paintings. Could it be possible that the painter refers to Philostratus in the *Pergola* as well?

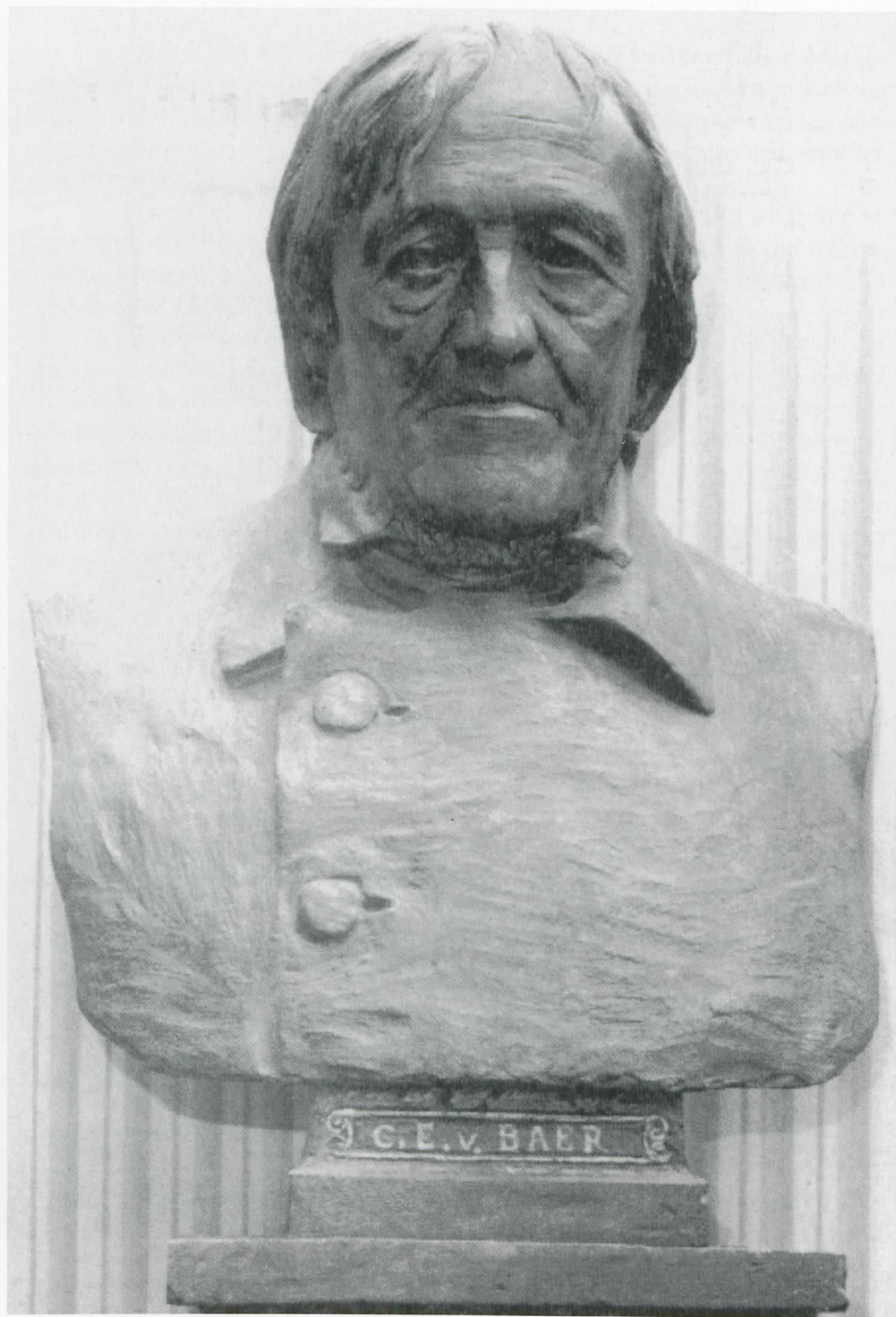
In his *ekphrasis Spiderwebs* (II, 28) Philostratus admires the art of the painter which equals Penelope's skill. We can see the atrium of a ruined house, an empty courtyard, pillars which no longer can sustain the roof. Only spiders can still live here; they like quietness (for Marées, by the way, *conditio sine qua non* of art) and to build their nets in the corners. The wages of the industrious weavers are flies. Just as the spiders do, the painter has caught three of them. They are already stuck, they seek to escape, but they cannot tear the firm texture (of the spider web, of the picture) any more – immobile parts of an immobile painting.

Philostratus' painter outdoes the spiders, for he paints them, he paints their prey and gives durability to their transient webs. Philostratus outdoes the painter, for he puts the absent picture before our eyes and makes the invisible come alive. Marées outdoes Philostratus, for he transforms, enlivens and eternizes with the help of the renowned 'grid' of his composition the description of a picture, the friends, and places himself, the painter into the center of the group. The painter, creator of this entire world of calmness and expectation, wedged into a corner, is spider and fly, hunter and prey of art at the same time.

cal analysis of which space is lacking here, make the colour singularly shining and transparent. Who can resist the sonorous tones of the blue, which shines like sapphires, of the orange appearing like muted gold. [...] For the scenes of his pictures, Marées invented a matter made from swimming colours [...] an atmosphere of fertility which one seems to breathe with the eyes.'



34. Adolf von Hildebrand, *Charles Darwin*, 1873. Bust, plaster.



35. Adolf von Hildebrand, *Karl Ernst von Baer*, 1873. Bust, plaster.



36. Hans von Marées, *Fishermen embarking: Cryptoporticus on the Coast in the Background*, 1873. Fresco.



37. Hans von Marées, *The Orangegrove: hares*, 1873. Fresco.



38. Hans von Marées, Pencil sketch for *The Orangegroove*, 1873.



41. Hans von Marées, *The Rowers: woman and boy (semi-covered) in the boat*, 1873. Fresco.



I - Hans von Marées, *Fishermen embarking*, 1873.

Fresco, 350×408 cm, Fresco Room: west wall, after restoration. On a first layer of colour to the fresh wet plaster – still visible in the more transparent and brighter parts of the sky and the clouds – the artist later added a second layer of paint, probably with casein glue, on the dried surface.



III - Hans von Marées, *The Rowers*, 1873.
Fresco, 350×498 cm, Fresco Room: north wall, centre.



V



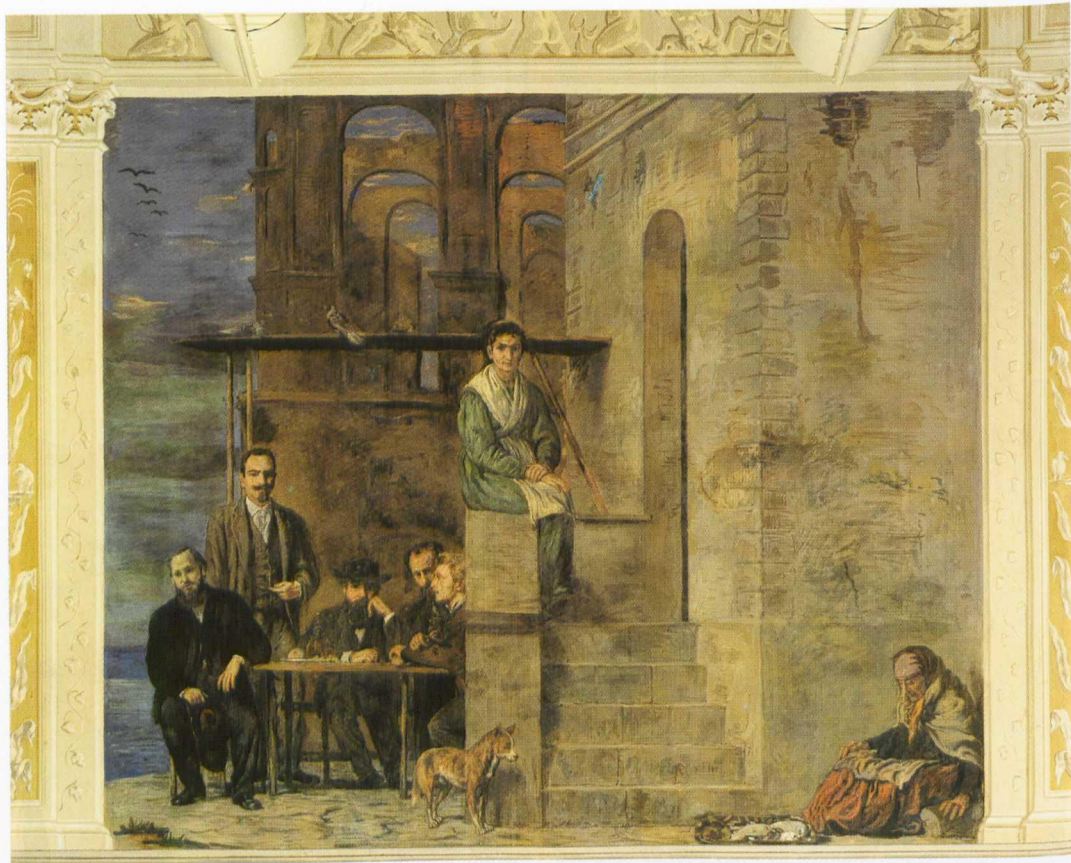
VI

V - Hans von Marées, *The Orangegrove: The Two Women*, 1873.

Fresco, 473×236 cm, Fresco Room: south wall.

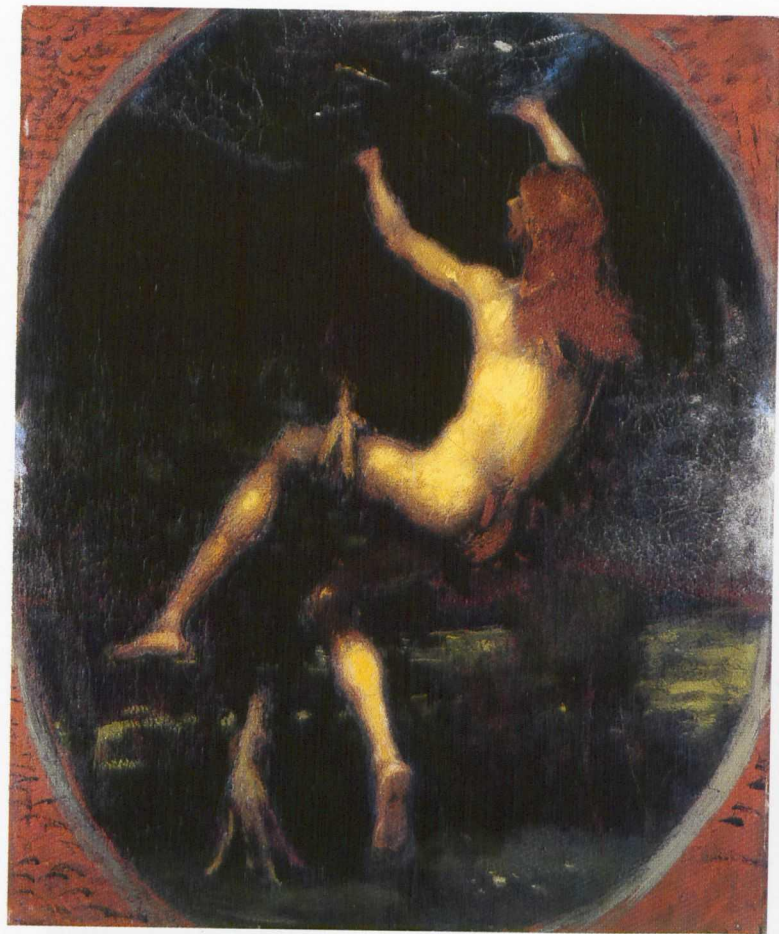
VI - Hans von Marées, *The Orangegrove: The Three Stages of Life*, 1873.

Fresco, 473×236 cm, Fresco Room: south wall.



VII - Hans von Marées, *The Pergola*, 1873.

Fresco, 350×408 cm, Fresco Room: east wall. From the left: Anton Dohrn, Nikolaus Kleinenberg, Charles Grant, Hans von Marées, Adolf von Hildebrand, the hostess, the fishmonger.



XVI - Hans von Marées, *The Rape of Ganymede*, 1887.
Oil painting on canvas, 99,6×81,2 cm.



XXV - Hans von Marées, *The Dragonslayer*, 1880.
Oil painting on wood panel, 65×45 cm.