

# SELECTED RECOLLECTIONS FROM MY LIFE<sup>1</sup>

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My introduction to molluscs was through my husband, Ernst Marcus. Ernst was born in 1893 in Berlin. His family lived near the Berlin Zoo. During his school years, he passed almost all his free time watching the animals there. Ernst studied zoology at the University of Berlin until the beginning of World War I in 1914. He then joined the Cavalry where he received the First Class Iron Cross, an honor in Germany. After the war, in 1919, he received his Ph.D. with a thesis on the Coleoptera. After college, Ernst went to study at the Berlin Museum where he was assigned the phylum Bryozoa. He was Privatdozent (lecturer) in 1923 and Research Assistant of the Institute of Zoology by November 1923. He received the title of Professor in 1929.

I was born in Berlin in 1901. I am both the daughter and granddaughter of university professors of physiology. At ten years of age I obtained the microscope my father acquired in 1885. My first experience was to examine a dish of lake water and investigate its fauna: *Daphnia* and the like. After the ten-years-Lyzeum (primary and secondary school), 1908 to 1917, I took two courses in laboratory techniques and got a job at a university hospital in Bonn. While there, I was sent to Ernst Leitz-Wetzlar to learn microphotography. At the hospital I met Professor Wilhelm Schmidt (Bonn), and during my free Saturday afternoons I made many microphotographs for his book on polarisation. During my next vacation I enrolled in his course in living marine invertebrates. There I met a pharmacologist, Dr. Handovsky from Gottingen. Having worked for two years at the hospital in Bonn, 1920-21, I went to work with him during 1922.

Following my employment at the hospital, my father sent me to the Zoological Institute of the University of Berlin where I took two semesters of invertebrate zoology. During the second semester I met Ernst Marcus. We became engaged very soon and were married in March 1924. Being descended from the artist Daniel Chodowiecki, I was very good

at scientific drawing. Consequently, I did all the illustrations for Ernst's publications. Ernst was multi-talented. He published on systematics, anatomy, embryology, physiology, zoogeography, and evolution. During the early years, from 1919 onward, he studied the Bryozoa. Later in 1927 he also studied the Tardigrada, freshwater Bryozoa, Malacopoda, mechanics of development of vertebrates, Protozoa, Hydrozoa, Pycnogonida, Oligochaeta, Nemertina, Turbellaria, Archiannelida, Opisthobranchia, and a few prosobranch groups. Before we were married, Ernst authored the first 20 papers of our list of about 220 publications. From 1925 on, I sometimes appeared as the sole author and later as co-author. Since 1970, I have published some 30 papers alone, all on Opisthobranchia.

When Hitler gained power in 1933, the Jews were dismissed from their jobs except for those that Hindenburg protected because of their status, being heroes awarded the First Class Iron Cross. After Hindenburg's death, even the heroes were dismissed. We were spared as Ernst had received a Professorship at the New University of São Paulo, Brazil, in 1936. Although unaware at the time, this good fortune was due to the help of an English organization, headed by Lord Beveridge, to help the dismissed Jews. We did not learn of his sponsorship until 25 years later when Lord Beveridge asked Ernst how he was getting along.

In 1963 Ernst retired at 70 years old. Five years later he passed away. Since then I have been living along, going to the Zoology Department of the University of São Paulo regularly. In 1976, I received an honorary doctoral degree from the University. In 1985, I was told that the University of Aix-Marseille was preparing the same honorarium for me, but until now I have not received it.

## ON SCIENTIFIC NAMES

Ernst and I are responsible for describing many new species and new genera. When naming new species, we tried to avoid using descriptive words describing morphological characters, i.e. *tridecemlineatus*. The Rules of Scientific Nomenclature allow for nonsense words and so sometimes we used any word that sounded good or that we liked. We had a long list of names found on occasions. *Dondice* was a

<sup>1</sup>The following autobiographical sketch was written and presented by Eveline du Bois-Reymond Marcus on the occasion of the Biology of Opisthobranchs Symposium held in her honor at the July 1986 American Malacological Union meeting in Monterey, California, U.S.A. The edited manuscript, essentially derived from her written opening remarks for the Symposium, sets the historical tone for this important series of opisthobranch papers. —Editor



name of a firm in São Paulo, Brazil. After we had published it, they changed their name to Dondicci. We would not have chosen that one. *Hallaxa apefae* was named for Alice Pruvot Fol, A.P.F. *Anisodoris prea* got the name of the Brazilian guineapig. *Plocamopherus gulo* was named after the greedy wolverine *Gulo*. *Miese* was taken from Miese, a German name for cat. *Eubbranchus coniclus* was derived from the name of rabbits. *Catriona maua* again was named after a cat. *Piseinotecus* is an entire sentence in Portuguese. Our friend, Diva, stated it while coming down the stairs one day. She had stepped upon our dog, Teco, and while we were looking for a new generic name, had told us Pisei (in Portuguese) = I stepped; no = onto; Tecus = the dog's name. In the meantime, this genus has turned out to be the type of a new family. Piseinotecidae appears in the literature today. There are many, more or less funny, names we have given species but I think these examples are sufficient.

## LOOKING BACK

On Saturdays and Sundays Ernst and I always took a long walk for pleasure and for exercise. I do so still, going to the post office to pick up my mail. On weekdays my neighbor takes me to the Department at seven in the morning and brings me back for lunch, which his wife prepares. They both do everything possible for me. They treat me as if I was their mother.

Since 1968 I have made a two to four month trip to the United States and Europe at least every two years to see colleagues. I have also made trips to South Africa and Israel.

I am happy to say I do not have any health problems, but I do feel that my memory is failing. I am afraid that soon I will have to begin a paper as the Danish Opisthobranchologist Rudolf Bergh did in 1908: This is, in my 84th year, my last publication.



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