

# **JOHANNA EY: a critical reappraisal**

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## **Abstract**

This study draws on and interprets an extensive corpus of archived materials, in particular from the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, to offer the first wide-ranging critical analysis of the written and visual images of the life and legend of Weimar Germany's most important 'modern' art dealers - Johanna Ey (1864 - 1947), commonly known as 'Mutter Ey'. Once feted by the press as the most portrayed woman in Germany, she contributed greatly to the careers of artists such as Max Ernst, Otto Dix, Gert Wollheim, Otto Pankok and many others and was a vital figure in the 'modern' Düsseldorf art scene until she was evicted from her gallery by the Nazis in 1934. This study opens with a factual overview of Ey's biography. Chapters are then devoted to an analysis of the development, reception and prevalence of aspects of her legend: the use of the 'Mutter Ey' image in the Weimar Period; an exploration of the notion of Ey's modernity using the trope of the 'Neue Frau'; an investigation into her attitude to politics in general and the Nazis in particular, in the first detailed reading of Ey's 1936 memoirs and her correspondence from 1933-1947; and an analysis of the factors influencing the rise, fall and rise of her celebrity status and her memorialisation since her death.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, my father, my brother, my girlfriend and my supervisors Professor Bill Dodd and Professor Shearer West for all their help and support.

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## **Declaration**

This PhD builds on the primary and secondary, written and visual sources gathered in the course of the research for my MPhil ‘Johanna Ey and the *Young Rhineland*’ (Hausmann, 2007) and expands upon and re-works certain concepts developed during this process. I have endeavoured to reference with the utmost care all ideas and information used in this PhD which are not my own, and a full list of sources used and consulted is available in the bibliography. Those individuals I interviewed were given a chance to review the quotes and ideas attributed to them to ensure they felt accurately represented and where issues of copyright were thought to be a problem, permission has been sought. The format and punctuation used throughout this thesis has been informed by the *MHRA* style guide (*MHRA*, 2002).

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council for providing the bursary which supported me throughout this PhD. I am also hugely indebted to my supervisors Professor Bill Dodd of the German Department and Professor Shearer West of the History of Art Department at the University of Birmingham for their excellent support and guidance throughout the course of my postgraduate study.

I would also like to thank Dr Annette Baumeister of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* for sharing her knowledge about Johanna Ey and *Das Junge Rheinland* and allowing me access to Ey's private letters and to the vast collection of articles about the art dealer. My utmost gratitude is also reserved for Günter Goebbels of Langenfeld, Germany, a tireless scholar of Düsseldorf art and local history who supplied me with an abundance of material and was extremely generous in sharing his time and knowledge. Thanks must also go to Günther Müller-Pudlich and Sven Zweier who allowed me access to the private documents, letters, photos and art works of the artist Robert Pudlich and his wife Ma Pudlich, both of whom had contact with Ey. I would also like to thank Dr Peter Barth of *Gallery Remmert und Barth*, Düsseldorf, for his interview and for putting me in touch with Günter Goebbels and Günther Müller-Pudlich. I am also indebted to Frau Dr Drenker-Nagels of the *August Macke Museum* in Bonn for the interview and literature she gave me. Thanks must also go to the staff at the University of Birmingham libraries, the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie* library and archive, the *Universtitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf* and the *Museum Kunstpalast* for providing me with invaluable primary and secondary literature, and to Herr and Frau Traub for their help in transcribing handwritten letters by Ey. Finally, I would like to thank my mother, my father, my brother, and my girlfriend for their continued help, support and advice throughout this PhD.

## List of Abbreviations

\*: born  
†: died  
a.k.a.: also known as  
ed.: editor  
edn: edition  
eds: editors  
Fig.: figure  
Hrsg.: Herausgeber  
Jg: Jahrgang  
N.a.: not applicable  
n.au.: no author  
n.au.l.: no author legible  
n.b./n.a.: no box or accession number  
n.d.: no date  
n.n.pub.: no name of publication  
n.ph.n.: no photographer named  
n.pl.p.: no place of publication  
n.pn.: no page number  
n.pub.: no publisher  
Nr: number  
n.t.: no title  
m.u.: media unknown  
pp.: pages from and to  
pub.: published  
repr.: reprint  
S.D.A.: *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* archive  
s.u.: size unknown  
trans.: translated by  
v.c.: various contributions  
vol.: volume  
vols: volumes  
w.u.: whereabouts unknown



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# Johanna Ey: The Legend and the Life

‘Wenn alle Kunsthistoriker dieser Zeit vergessen sein werden, wird diese Frau als Mythos von Mund zu Mund weiterleben’ (actor, artist, stage designer Karl Kyser: *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 76).

The story of Weimar ‘modern’<sup>1</sup> art dealer Johanna Ey (\*1864 - †1947)<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1), widely known as ‘Mutter Ey’, offers a case study for the tumultuous changes which shaped Germany from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. She experienced the unification of Germany as a child, became a mother, wife and divorcee in the Bismarck and Wilhelmine eras, came to prominence in the Weimar Period, was persecuted under the National Socialists and lived to see Germany under Allied occupation. From her vantage point in Düsseldorf she not only witnessed the cultural shifts in society from the *Biedermeier*<sup>3</sup> to *Jugendstil*, Expressionism to the rise of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, but also played a substantial role in the moulding of the city’s artistic milieu. This thesis offers a critical re-assessment of representations of this eventful life and the legend that has been created around her person, as put forward by Ey and the artists associated with her, by the local governments of the 1920s and 1930s and by the secondary literature and media. In particular it builds on the studies of Ey by art historian Anna Klapheck (Klapheck, 1958); author Heinrich Böll (Böll,

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3 for a detailed explanation of the use of the term ‘modern’ in relation to Ey.

<sup>2</sup> See Ey’s birth certificate (Ey’s birth certificate). In the interests of academic good practice where primary and secondary material or moving images have been cited in this thesis, or information they provide used, this is referred to in the main text or footnotes in short reference form in brackets after the relevant passage or quote. Further information about these documents can be found in the bibliography at the end of the thesis under the relevant section and short form reference. The references to the illustrations mentioned in this thesis are numbered and are available in full in the ‘List of Illustrations’ preceding this study and also accompany the illustrations in Volume 2 of this thesis.

<sup>3</sup> All German words used in this thesis, which are not part of a quote, have been italicised. This includes the names of art groups, museums and educational institutions. Where German words are not italicised but have single inverted commas surrounding them, this indicates that they are taken from a quote - in these cases the source reference is located at the end of the sentence or in an accompanying footnote. Where German quotation marks are present in the texts cited in this thesis, they have been replaced with English quotation marks.

1960); gallery owner Peter Barth (Barth, 1984); the then acting head of the *Düsseldorf Stadtmuseum* Annette Baumeister (Baumeister, 1999); art historians Hans Körner and Manja Wilkens (Körner/Wilkens, 2000); historian and collector Günter Goebbels (Goebbels, 2000) and the catalogue *Am Anfang: Das Junge Rheinland. Zur Kunst und Zeitgeschichte einer Region 1918-1945* edited by the then curator of the *Kunsthalle Düsseldorf* Ulrich Krempel (*Am Anfang*, 1985).<sup>4</sup>

When examining the major themes which are raised in connection with Ey, in these and other important posthumous literary sources, a contradictory impression emerges. In many studies she is presented as a maternal figure, a nurturer and protector of artists she knew in Düsseldorf,<sup>5</sup> yet Körner and Wilkens (Körner/Wilkens, 2000) present her as a ‘modern’ woman in contrast to this ‘traditional’ maternal stereotype. She is depicted with a flawless character in Böll’s account (Böll, 1960), whilst Frank Nicolaus (occupation unknown) suggests she had a darker side with descriptions of explosions of anger and bouts of heavy drinking (Nicolaus, 1983, p. 68). Repeatedly she is presented as someone who disliked women in her sphere of influence (Klapheck, 1958, p. 12, Nicolaus, 1983, p. 68 and Barth, 1984, p. 16) and yet journalist Hulda Pankok, the wife of artist Otto Pankok, suggests this was an attitude which changed with time (Pankok, 1947). According to Klapheck Ey had little idea about finances (Klapheck, 1958, p. 10), whilst Goebbels shows her investing money earned with certain artists to support others she believed had talent (Goebbels, 2000, p. 7). Art historian Wend Fischer’s view of Ey as someone who relied on instinct (Fischer, 1951, p. 53) also contrasts with the calculating impression suggested by art historian Shulamith Behr when she argues Ey adopted confrontational tactics to generate interest in her gallery (Behr, 1995, p. 102). Furthermore, the script editor, theatre and art critic Walter Kordt asserts that Ey developed her ability to judge artistic quality through contact with artists and listening to their discussions (Kordt, March, 1968, p. 53).

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<sup>4</sup> At the time of writing the book entitled *Ich Johanna Ey*, accompanying the exhibition of the same name in the *Düsseldorf Stadtmuseum*, 31/01/2009-10/05/2009 (*Ich, Johanna Ey, Programm*, 2009 and *Ich, Johanna Ey, Ausstellungsführer*, 2009) had not been published.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance the frequent use of this maternal image in author and journalist Josef F. Lodenstein’s account ‘Mutter Ey’ (Lodenstein, 1952). This is published in revised forms under the titles ‘Mutter Ey’ in *Jan Wellem* (Lodenstein, 1959) and ‘Mutter Ey: Zu ihrem 100. Geburtstag’ in *Das Tor* (Lodenstein, 1964).

In light of these many contrasting presentations, an extensive critical re-assessment seems called for of the life and work of Johanna Ey and, crucially, of the ways in which her life and work have been represented in a series of images and discursive frameworks constructed by Ey herself and by those who have presented her in words and images during and after her lifetime. Several of the German monographs mentioned above have taken a step closer towards this aim. Klapheck has drawn attention to the centrality of the ‘Mutter Ey’ myth (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8). Barth warns implicitly against taking Ey’s autobiographical writings at face value in his description of the split within the artists’ group *Das Junge Rheinland*, in which Ey’s short résumé from her 1930 autobiography (Ey, 1930), which omits her role in the group’s downfall, is juxtaposed with the chairman of the group, the artist Arthur Kaufmann’s account (Kaufmann, 1970)<sup>6</sup> of a group divided between those who enjoyed her support and those who did not (Barth, 1984, pp. 44-46). Baumeister explicitly warns of the selectivity with which Ey’s 1936 memoirs were written: ‘Die Erinnerungen geben die Ausschnitte aus dem Leben Frau Eys wieder, die ihrer Meinung nach von allgemeinem Interesse sind’ and comments on the potential reasons for the absence of certain individuals Ey knew from this text (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51f), and Körner and Wilkens (2000) use a detailed iconography of the image of the Spanish woman to analyse sources which relate to Ey wearing Spanish attire. All of the above studies have importantly contributed to our understanding of the complexity of the images of Ey with which we are presented today. What remains to be done, however, is to evaluate these insights in the context of a wide-ranging critical investigation into the constructs created by Ey and others.

With these considerations clearly in mind, this thesis will assess and re-evaluate the major themes constituting the legend of Ey constructed by herself and other parties. This re-assessment of Ey’s life and its (self-)presentation in the private and public domain, draws on an extensive corpus, largely derived from the archive of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* and normally not accessible to the general public, encompassing Ey’s available correspondence, newspaper and magazine articles from the Weimar, Nazi and post-war period, three autobiographical texts which up until

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<sup>6</sup> This was published as part of the catalogue *Avantgarde Gestern*, 1970, n.pn.

now have not been identified as such,<sup>7</sup> two shorter autobiographies,<sup>8</sup> her typed memoirs (Ey, 1936)<sup>9</sup> and portraits and photos of Ey. Underpinning the analysis is the knowledge that these sources are historical constructs shaped by the agenda of the author, editor and publisher and his or her intended audience and the social, political and cultural framework in which the document, art work or moving image was created. Ey's autobiographical texts for instance, all of which were intended for publication, provide a selective view of Ey influenced by how she wished to be remembered for posterity, the opinions and sensibilities of friends and relatives, the political, social and financial agenda of editors and publishers and the prevailing societal conditions under which Ey was writing and her audience lived or were to live. The latter instance is apparent in her 1936 memoirs, which, I argue here for the first time, were written within the constraints of an 'inner emigrant' existence, for a future

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<sup>7</sup> The first is 'Die Mama der Rheinland-Maler' from 1925 (Helene, 1925, n.pn.). The second is dated 28 February 1929, presumably in the *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten*, 'Sie erzählt aus ihrem Leben! Mutter Ey wird 65 Jahre' (DN (?), 1929, n.pn). The third is in the *Rheinische Illustrierte* "'Mutter Ey" in Düsseldorf' (*Rheinische Illustrierte*, 03/04/1929, n.pn.).

<sup>8</sup> See Ey, 1929 and Ey, 1930.

<sup>9</sup> Ey supposedly intended these memoirs for publication in 1936 according to Baumeister (Baumeister, 1999, p. 7). As is argued in Chapter 4 however, it is highly unlikely Ey truly wanted to publish her memoirs during the Nazi period given that their content includes favourable references to artists regarded as 'degenerate' and mentions those who had emigrated or lost their positions because of the Nazis. Ey's memoirs were first published by Baumeister in 1999 (pp. 55-201) albeit in an edited form. For example in regard to the section in Ey's 1936 memoirs that deals with her first trip to Majorca in 1927, Baumeister states that Krempel discovered that Ey's diaries from her first Majorcan visit were in the possession of artist and poet Jacobo Sureda's children and subsequently published them in *Am Anfang*, 1985 (1999, p. 8. See 'Johanna Ey', 1927: *Am Anfang*, 1985, pp. 84-94). She explains that the section in Ey's 1936 memoirs which details this trip must therefore be what Ey could recall from memory, since Ey had left her diary of the first Majorca trip with the Suredas after her second trip in 1933. As a consequence Baumeister decided to replace the 1936 account of Ey's 1927 Spanish trip with Ey's 1927 account and has changed what Ey intended to publish. Furthermore articles from the press in the *Kunst-Auktion, Berlin*, the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, the *Koblenzer General-Anzeiger* and an article entitled 'Das Ey wird international' (Ey, 1936, pp. 69-71) cited in the typescript of Ey's memoirs available in the S.D.A. are not included in Baumeister's version. In the interest of authenticity this thesis therefore uses the typescript from the S.D.A. unless otherwise stated. Ey dictated her memoirs to Hedwig Mommertz (occupation unknown) during the Nazi period. See Letter, 15/10/1946 from Ey to Mommertz: 'Sie liebe Frau Mommertz haben als Hedwig Decker auf der Stockkampstraße meinen Lebenslauf auf der Maschine geschrieben'. See also a letter from Karl Leyendecker (occupation unknown), whom Ey approached in an attempt to publish her memoirs after the Second World War, to Anna Klapheck: 'Während des letztes Krieges fühlte sich Johanna Ey getrieben, die Geschichte ihres Lebens und Wirkens aufzuschreiben, das heißt, sie diktierte über diesen Stoff jemandem achtzig Seiten frisch von der Leber weg in die Maschine, ein Original mit drei oder vier Durchschlägen' (Letter, 25/02/1958). The typescript available in the S.D.A., although longer than the 80 pages Leyendecker refers to, appears to be a photocopy of Ey's original typescript and not a version corrected by Leyendecker (Leyendecker writes of making the manuscript 'druckreif' in Letter, 25/02/1958). This assertion is based on the fact that Günter Goebbels in a note in the S.D.A. file prefacing this typescript writes: 'Mir lag [...] das Manuscript, das Herr Leyendecker besaß vor. Die Seiten waren mit diesem identisch aber ohne die handschriftlichen Eintragungen und ohne die Briefe. Da es ein schlechter Durchschlag war, wurden die Kopien die ich hatte natürlich noch schlechter, daher hatte ich später diese Seiten entsorgt' (Preface to the typed manuscript of Ey 1936).



post-Nazi audience and with the knowledge that her text could be discovered by the current regime. Ey's correspondence, although not intended for publication, also provides a selective presentation of Ey in accordance with the wishes of the writer, the nature of the correspondent and, for those letters written in the Third Reich, the awareness that these could fall into Nazi hands.

The approach taken in this thesis seeks to distinguish between factual information and interpretation and to review interpretations critically, including Ey's shaping of her own image by selection, emphasis and omission. This process involves providing other perspectives on events Ey describes in her autobiographical texts or letters, where they exist and provide significant insight into something that Ey has excluded, altered or portrayed differently. Moreover where Ey's own version of events in various autobiographical accounts differs, these sources are compared and contrasted. Often however, as is apparent in the following factual overview of her life in this chapter, no sources other than Ey's accounts are available and the reader is urged to view the information she provides with caution. To summarise, the intention of this thesis is not to present the definitive version of Ey, something which is in principle unachievable, but to describe and analyse the salient elements of her legend and to assess these images and narratives in terms of their cultural and historical contexts, and in relation to the real, historical Ey, in so far as this can be discerned, in order to provide an informed and differentiated view of her life and its memorialisation.

This investigation unfolds as follows: Chapter 2 begins by examining one of the most prevalent clichés associated with Ey - the maternal image. This starts with a general description of how mothers were perceived in Germany during the Weimar and Nazi Period then examines the development and connotations of the 'Mutter Ey' image from her time as a coffee shop owner before the First World War up until the present day. Thereafter the notion that the use of this image belittled Ey's achievements as an art dealer is contradicted by the prevalence of press reports in the Weimar period which mention her achievements in the art world alongside use of this imagery. The assumption that Ey disliked this image is also contrasted with accounts which suggest otherwise and the prevalence and nature of the 'Mutter Ey' term and imagery amongst 'her' artists, in the media, by the Düsseldorf authorities and other individuals is assessed. It is shown that whilst this stereotype was very popular in the media it was

hardly used in official correspondence and was one of several ways ‘her’ artists addressed her.

Chapter 3 examines the notion of the ‘Neue Frau’, a trope of the 1920’s and 1930’s, in relation to Ey and asks whether she can be viewed as a ‘Neue Frau’. This analysis begins with a general definition of the term ‘modern’, followed by one specific to the German context. Thereafter the ‘Neue Frau’ is identified as part of the ‘modern’ narrative of the Weimar period and the common images associated with this stereotype are presented. These ‘characteristics’ are then used to explore images of Ey’s ‘modernity’ and ‘sexuality’ present in an article by Heymann (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.) and in portraits of her by ‘her’ artists. I conclude that Ey can be viewed as ‘modern’ in regard to her occupation, but her age, body shape, large family and apparent lack of promiscuity do not correlate with the stereotype of the ‘Neue Frau’. The perception put forward by certain commentators that Ey disliked women is found to be in need of correction and it is argued that whilst Ey undoubtedly helped advance women’s rights by becoming an art dealer, she did so indirectly, and this was not a reason for her entry into the world of art dealing.

Chapter 4 provides an investigation into Ey’s attitude to the politics of the Weimar and Nazi period. This chapter opens with a summary of womens’ political involvement in the Weimar era, against which Ey’s political stance is examined and her statement that she was only interested in ‘modern’ art is contrasted with images that suggest left-wing political sympathies. Subsequently her situation during the Third Reich is discussed against the background of the ‘inner emigrant’ existence, and in this context her 1936 memoirs are subjected to the first close reading, demonstrating that they need to be understood in these terms. Here it is argued that these memoirs were intended *für die Schublade*, as a record of her life for a post-Nazi audience, since publication during the Third Reich would have been impossible. The analysis clearly identifies Ey’s oppositional stance in this text, and importantly throws light on the racial, political and ideological affiliations of many of those Ey mentions. It also explains her inclusion of formulations which suggest conformity and the omission of certain controversial figures as acts of ‘damage limitation’ should her memoirs have been discovered by the Nazis.

Chapter 5 continues the investigation into Ey's reaction to the Third Reich, through the first critical analysis of her available correspondence from this period. Here the impression of a dire financial situation and loneliness caused by the closure of her gallery emerges, and it is argued that this led Ey to flee into fantasy, memories of a better past, and possible thoughts of emigration and to seek distraction in alcohol and light entertainment. The oppositional stance encountered in her 1936 memoirs is again suggested here in Ey's positive comments about 'degenerate' art and literature, the continued contact with 'degenerate' artists and possession and acquisition of their works, the criticism of the actions of the authorities - although not explicitly of the Nazis - and her warm welcome from persecuted groups and the authorities on her return to Düsseldorf after the Second World War.

Chapter 6 examines the agents and stages involved in the creation of Ey's celebrity. Here it is argued that in the Weimar period Ey, her artists, the media, the Düsseldorf authorities and famous individuals were involved in a web of mutual promotion to elevate her from local to national and even international celebrity. This status, abruptly curtailed when the Nazis closed Ey's gallery, only tentatively re-emerged in an early post-war period which preferred to look to the future rather than past, before gaining momentum in the wake of Klapheck's publication (Klapheck, 1958). This chapter charts this process in the first extensive review of the diverse memorial culture surrounding Ey, which details the attempts by the authorities in Düsseldorf and Wickrath to lay 'claim' to her legend, and the initiatives of galleries, museums and private individuals in this memorialisation process up until the present day.

Chapter 7 summarises the main findings of the thesis outlined above. It acknowledges Ey's role in the creation of her own myth, reiterates that Ey defies categorisation in general terms and makes the case for a differentiated approach to her life and legend in which she is viewed as a synthesis of competing and at times contradictory images. Finally, her continuing wide-ranging appeal and the recent resurgence of interest in her on a local and to a certain extent national and international level is described, whilst it is also observed that her contribution continues to be overshadowed by the artists whose reputations she helped create.

Before this investigation can begin however it is essential to provide a detailed factual overview of her biography and place her in the context of her time in order to provide the framework for the exploration of these images in the following chapters and to introduce the reader to the conditions under which Ey wrote her autobiographical texts and private letters. Compared to the privileged backgrounds of many of her art dealer colleagues, Johanna Ey (born Josefa Johanna Stocken)<sup>10</sup> was not afforded an easy start in life. Brought up as a catholic<sup>11</sup> in the village of Wickrath near Mönchengladbach, as the youngest of five or six children<sup>12</sup> in a poor family dominated by an alcoholic and violent father (Ey, 1936, p. 1/ p. 4), Ey left school at fourteen to work as a housekeeper for two years<sup>13</sup> and received no further education or formal art training. In 1882 she moved to Düsseldorf where she met the brewer Robert Ey in 1883. She became pregnant by him and went to Brussels in 1884 to stay with relatives where she gave birth to her daughter Maria Klara in 1885. In contrast to the motherly image with which she is so often associated, Ey entrusted her child to the care of her older sister Barbara (a.k.a. Christina) Borries and returned to Germany in 1886 or 1887. Here, she married Robert Ey in Duisburg on 1 May 1888 and bore five more children<sup>14</sup> during spells here and in Frimmersheim, Königshoven and Kerpen, before finally moving to Düsseldorf on 6 October 1899 (Fig. 2).<sup>15</sup>

Her life changed irrevocably when her husband left her in 1904 and moved to Berlin (Baumeister, 1999, p. 10), eventually divorcing her in 1910. In the wake of this ‘sehr traurige Ehe’ (Ey, 1930, p. 76) during which Ey notes, ‘von meinen 12 Kindern blieben mir 4, 2 Söhne und 2 Töchter’ (Ey, 1936, p. 5),<sup>16</sup> she was forced to fend for

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<sup>10</sup> Ey is referred to as ‘Josefa Johanna Ey’ in *Entwurf II*, dated July 1959 - a legal document regarding compensation for Ey’s family for the closure of her gallery by the Nazis (*Entwurf II*, p. 2). To my knowledge this detail regarding her forename is not mentioned in any other source.

<sup>11</sup> On a copy of Ey’s marriage certificate it is noted that she is a catholic (Ey’s marriage certificate). To my knowledge this is not mentioned in any other source.

<sup>12</sup> Ey states that she was the youngest of 6 children in Ey, 1930, p. 76, however in Ey, 1936, p. 1, she writes: ‘wir waren Kinder zu 5’.

<sup>13</sup> Ey: ‘Mit 14 Jahren kam ich zu fremden Leuten und musste mir selbst mein Brot verdienen. Meine Arbeit war geteilt in Küchen- u. Zimmerarbeit und bei den Kindern, sodass ich in den 2 Jahren, wo ich dort war, sehr viel lernte’ (Ey, 1936, p. 1).

<sup>14</sup> Josefa Helena Johanna Maria (\*18 March 1889 Duisburg); Emil Paul (\*10 July 1891 Duisburg); Hermann Robert (\*1893 Frimmersheim); Anna Elisabeth (\*16 February 1897 Königshoven); Rudolf Alois Gerhard (\*10 August 1899 - †January 1901). Information from Baumeister, 1999, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> The Ey family initially lived in Nordstrasse 94 before moving to Ratinger Strasse 45 in August 1900. They then moved to Kaiserswerther Strasse 31 in July 1903 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 9). All the information from 1882 up until 1899 is from Baumeister, 1999, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Though it appears that her son Rudolf Alois Gerhard died in childhood (Baumeister, 1999, p. 9) when Ey writes ‘es blieben mir 4’ in regard to her 12 children it is not clear what happened to the other

herself and her remaining children and moved to Ratinger Strasse 32 (Fig. 3) on 9 November 1904. Here she worked as a sales assistant in Carl Theisen's bakery shop until 1907 when she set up her own shop selling baked goods in Ratinger Strasse 45 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 10) (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5). This venture evolved into a coffee shop (Fig. 6) and the proximity to the art academy and the *Stadttheater*, coupled with her inexpensive prices, ensured that the majority of her custom came from artists and theatre employees. Her clientele ranged from the poverty-stricken, whom she allowed to take up credit, to academy Professors such as Willy Spatz (Ey, 1930, p. 76), Leo Küppers and Wilhelm Heberholz (Barth, 1984, p. 16). The onset of the First World War however forced the closure of her shop as many of her customers were now on active military service, and instead she worked at a military clothing depot recycling the uniforms of killed and injured soldiers and received financial support from her children (Baumeister, 1999, p. 10).

Although Ey suggests that she had already sold pictures by artists she knew alongside her coffee shop business,<sup>17</sup> her transition to a fully-fledged art dealer came in 1916 (Osborn, 1931, p. 4) or at the very latest in 1917 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 11) when she sold an art collection she had amassed for 500 Marks to an exhibition that was to be auctioned for the benefit of those injured in the war (Ey, 1930, p. 78).<sup>18</sup> Though she states she had often joked about becoming an art dealer, this incident appears to have shown her the real potential to earn money from art dealing: 'Doch ich wußte nicht was [sic] weiter machen [sic] und so kam ich auf den Gedanken, was früher scherzweise im Kaffee ausgesprochen wurde, Bilder zu verkaufen, also Kunsthändlerin zu werden' (Ey, 1930, p. 78). Since the majority of the artists were at war and she had few other connections, she was only able to realise this plan when she spoke of her intention to *Revierpolizisten* Heinrich Westerfeld who made contact

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7. Her expression in this instance could mean that they died in childhood or could refer to miscarriages. However it could also refer to her giving up these children for adoption. Indeed it is possible that the child she entrusted to her sister, who may or may not have died, but who did not reside with her, is included in this total. There is very little information about this aspect of her life which could shed light on her situation.

<sup>17</sup> Ey appears to be referring to the pre-First World War period when she writes: 'In der selben Zeit begann ich für meine Maler Bilder zu verkaufen' (*Rheinische Illustrierte*, 03/04/1929, n.pn.).

<sup>18</sup> It is plausible that Ey was given some of these works as payment for outstanding bills owed by the artists who frequented her coffee shop. Certainly this is suggested by Lodenstein, who maintains that Ey sold works to those who were interested and that this practice was only curtailed by the onset of the First World War (Lodenstein, 1952, p. 20). Ey however, does not elaborate on how she came to own this first collection in autobiographical sources.

with the picture restorer Joseph Spinnrath on her behalf. The latter offered her works by some of the leading artists of the *Düsseldorfer* ‘alte[...] Schule’<sup>19</sup> to sell (Ey, 1930, p. 78), and it was with this ‘traditional’ art promoted by the academies that Ey began her career. Initially she sold pictures from a shop on Hindenburgwall 1a (Baumeister, 1999, p. 11) before moving during the War to a larger gallery on Hindenburgwall 11 (Klapheck, 1958, p. 19).<sup>20</sup>

When the First World War ended, many of the surviving artists returned home seeking change after experiencing the horrors of war. Indeed it was in this spirit that artists Adolf Uzarski and Arthur Kaufmann and the poet Herbert Eulenberg wrote *Aufruf an die jungen rheinischen Künstler* in 1918. This text implored the artists of the Rhineland to join together to form a group that did not promote one particular artistic direction but welcomed any style irrespective of the age of the artist as long as it displayed ‘Stärke und Frische des künstlerischen Strebens.’ Their intention was to promote the artists active in the Rhineland area and establish them amongst the prevailing German art groups, by means of travelling exhibitions (Uzarski/Kaufmann/Eulenberg, 1918). *Das Junge Rheinland*, founded on 24 February 1919, was the result of these endeavours, and their first exhibition was staged from 22 June to 20 July 1919 in the *Düsseldorf Kunsthalle* (Barth, 1984, p. 19).<sup>21</sup>

Despite its proximity to her gallery Ey appears to have made no attempt to attend this exhibition personally: ‘Ich laß [sic] nur immer in den Zeitungen das Für und Wider, das Schimpfen der Presse von der einen Zeitung, das Anerkennen von der anderen Seite und hatte wenig Interesse’ (Ey, 1930, p. 79).<sup>22</sup> However by the time of their second exhibition in the *Kronprinzenpalais* in Berlin in 1919 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 12) Ey, who was in the capital for her son’s wedding, was curious enough to attend and commented favourably on works by ‘modern’ artists: ‘Ich muss schon sagen,

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<sup>19</sup> Ey cites: ‘[Franz von] Defregger - [either Andreas or Oswald] Achenbach - [Wilhelm] Schreuer - Kampf [full name unknown] - [Andreas] Dirks - [Eduard von Gebhardt] Gebhardts - [Johann Christian] Kröner - [August Eduard Nicolaus [Claus]] Klaus Meyer’ amongst these artists in Ey, 1930, p. 78. She adds ‘[Fritz] von Wille’ to this list in Ey, 1929, p. 21 and ‘[Eugen Gustav] Dücker’ in Ey, 1936, p. 19. Their forenames are from Baumeister’s ‘Personenregister’ (Baumeister, 1999, pp. 227-238).

<sup>20</sup> It is not stated exactly when this occurred.

<sup>21</sup> According to Ey *Das Junge Rheinland* had over 280 members (Ey, 1936, p. 20). No membership list has been found.

<sup>22</sup> In the interest of authenticity in the quotes attributed to Ey in this thesis her orthography has been retained even when her punctuation and spelling do not conform to standard conventions.

mich interessierten die “Chr. [Christian] Ro[h]lfs-Aquarelle[”] und “[Heinrich] Nauen” mehr als “[Hans] Thoma” und andere.<sup>23</sup> Sie waren für mich interessanter warum, kann man<sup>24</sup> nicht sagen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 21).

Baumeister argues that Ey’s interest for ‘modern’ art came not from seeing works in exhibitions such as this but through contact with the artists themselves. This theory is based upon Ey’s omission of the works by artists Paul Cézanne, Lyonel Feininger, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Édouard Manet, Franz Marc, Claude Monet and Emil Nolde who were also on display in the *Kronprinzenpalais* in her appraisal of this exhibition (Baumeister, 1999, p. 12). It is however impossible to tell on the evidence available whether the arrival of artists Otto Pankok and Gert Wollheim in Düsseldorf<sup>25</sup> elicited this interest or whether the aforementioned exhibition had already awoken this curiosity. What is beyond doubt is that the acquaintance with Wollheim and Pankok offered her a direct connection to the ‘modern’ art scene and played a pivotal role in her becoming a dealer in this type of art. This friendship blossomed after Pankok (Fig. 7), who had frequented her coffee shop before the First World War (Ey, 1930, p. 79), visited her in the first half of 1920 accompanied by Wollheim. At Ey’s behest they showed her examples of their artwork, which she described as ‘etwas Interessantes, nichts Alltägliches’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80) and she offered to put them on display in one of the windows of her gallery.<sup>26</sup> Ey writes: ‘Ich dachte [...], vielleicht gewöhnt sich das Publikum auch hier an moderne Kunst. Ich wollte etwas Lebendiges, Neues, Interessantes bieten- , dachte garnicht [sic] an die Folgen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 22).

When the artists took up her offer it caused a furore: ‘In [der] Zeit von 10 Minuten konnte Niemand am Fenster vorbei, Trotoir [sic] versperrt. Ich hörte nur Lachen, Schimpfen, eine Menschenmenge, als ob jemand ermordet worden wäre’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80). Yet rather than removing the pictures to avoid further controversy, Ey decided:

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<sup>23</sup> In the typescript of Ey’s 1936 memoirs ‘mehr als Thoma und andere’ is crossed out by hand and appears to have been replaced with a handwritten ‘sehr’ (Ey, 1936, p. 21).

<sup>24</sup> In the typescript of Ey’s 1936 memoirs ‘man’ is followed by a handwritten ‘ich’. The intention here could have been to replace ‘man’ with ‘ich’, although ‘man’ does not appear to have been crossed out (Ey, 1936, p. 21).

<sup>25</sup> Baumeister notes that at the very latest Wollheim joined Pankok in Düsseldorf in March 1920 (1999, p. 12)

<sup>26</sup> The pictures by Wollheim and Pankok that Ey put on display were a portrait of Pankok by Wollheim and a large drawing of Wollheim playing the violin by Pankok (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

‘jetzt gerade stelle ich von den Modernen aus’ and said to Pankok and Wollheim that ‘von jetzt an könnten Sie das eine Fenster für sich immer zum Ausstellen behalten’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).<sup>27</sup> Consequently she renamed her gallery *Neue Kunst Frau Ey* (Fig. 8) and it became a focal point for those artists (Fig. 9) who sought change in the art establishment embodied in the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie* and the bourgeois Düsseldorf artists’ organisation known as the *Malkasten*. The artists’ group *Das Ey*, founded by Wollheim and Pankok in June 1920 (at the very latest),<sup>28</sup> was based in her premises, exhibited works there and produced three editions of a magazine of the same name (Baumeister, 1999, p. 13) (Fig. 10). Moreover many members of *Das Junge Rheinland*, amongst them artists Mathias Barz, Trude Brück, Fritz Feigler, Johann Baptist Hermann Hundt, Peter Ludwigs, Karl Schwesig and Adalbert Trillhaase became frequent visitors (Barth, 1984, p. 25) and artists such as Max Ernst<sup>29</sup> and Otto Dix<sup>30</sup> made contact with her gallery (Fig. 11).

The focus on Ey’s art dealership and her connection with *Das Junge Rheinland* was to become even more acute shortly after 14 July 1921 when the group moved their headquarters to her premises. This action was precipitated by a serious disagreement at the general assembly of the *Verein zur Veranstaltung von Kunstausstellungen*

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<sup>27</sup> For a time Ey still sold works by the *Düsseldorfer Malerschule* inside her gallery but soon gave this up and made her transition to a ‘modern’ art dealer complete (Barth, 1984, p. 25). This was however with the exception of works by Gebhardt, which she continued to sell as a means of generating income. Ey: ‘Ab und zu ich kann wohl sagen ganz gut verkaufte ich noch Gebhardt Bilder, die einzige Erwerbsquelle, ich war eine von den wenigen Vertrauenspersonen, die echte d.h. keine gefälschte Gebhardts verkauften’ (Ey, 1930, p. 81). Goebbels has drawn my attention to the fact that Ey collected not only western art but also possessed a Japanese woodcut. Ey gave this woodcut with a dedication to the wife of the ‘früheren Rechtsanwaltes der Stadt Düsseldorf Walther Hensel, der von 1946-64 Oberstadtdirektor in Düsseldorf war’ as a Christmas present in 1929. It was exhibited in *Künstler aus dem Kreis um Johanna Ey in Haus Lörick*, Düsseldorf in 1993. Information from Goebbels, 2007, n.pn.

<sup>28</sup> Artist Hans Rilke and journalist and artist Gerth Schreiner were also members (Baumeister, 1999, p. 13).

<sup>29</sup> Max Ernst was ‘bewirtet und aufgenommen’ by the ‘Ey circle’ in early 1920 after hearing a lecture given by Wollheim in Ey’s gallery according to Wollheim in a letter presumably to art historian Lothar Fischer (Letter, 12/03/1968, p. 31).

<sup>30</sup> How Dix came to make contact with ‘Ey’s circle’ is a matter of debate. Ey suggests she invited him: ‘Von einer Reise nach München zurückkehrend, sagten Pankok und Wollheim, wir haben herrliche Zeichnungen und Bilder von einem [sic] Künstler [Dix] in Dresden gesehen [...] Beide schrieben an Dix um Zusendung einige Zeichnungen [...] es kamen herrliche Akte zum Vorschein ich stellte gleich aus und verkaufte auch. Dix freute sich sehr, ich bat Dix er möchte mir sein Foto schicken und da er mir auch gefiel [...] lud ich ihn ein uns 14 Tage zu besuchen’ (Ey, 1930, p. 81). However in her 1936 memoirs she writes that artist Conrad Felixmüller visited her gallery and the implication is that he made both her and the artists in ‘her circle’ aware of Dix. Pankok is then said to have written a letter to Dix and asked him to send examples of his drawings and invited him to come to Düsseldorf (Ey, 1936, p. 24). This he did in October 1921 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 15). Barth states that the first contact between the two parties occurred in July 1920 (1984, p. 25).



(Baumeister, 1999, p. 14) caused by ‘conservative’ artists’ attempts to deny the group the right to exhibit at the *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* (Barth, 1984, p. 32). Superseding *Das Ey* group, *Das Junge Rheinland* held new individual exhibitions for their members every fourteen days in Ey’s gallery, produced a monthly magazine entitled *Das Junge Rheinland* (Barth, 1984, p. 32) (Fig. 12) and from this base organised exhibitions of local, national and international importance, the highlight of which was the *1. Internationale Kunstausstellung Düsseldorf 1922* (Fig. 13).<sup>31</sup>

Although Ey appears to have played a minimal role in the organisation of this international exhibition<sup>32</sup> and to have had little influence over the artists displayed as part of the *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions held on her premises (Baumeister, 2008, p. 16),<sup>33</sup> she was nonetheless instrumental in the events which led to the group’s eventual disintegration. Given the numerous clashes of personalities since the founding of *Das Junge Rheinland* it is debatable whether she caused the split or simply hastened the inevitable. However her long-standing favouritism of Wollheim and others certainly helped to undermine the fragile peace within the group. Already in mid-1922 Pankok felt compelled to leave *Das Junge Rheinland* because of her behaviour and because he felt his works were not being handled with due care and attention (Baumeister, 1999, p. 19).

Tensions then escalated when Uzarski discovered Ey had told visitors to her gallery: ‘Sehn Sie sich doch nicht das Zeug von Uzarski an, ich will Ihnen mal zeigen was richtige Kunst ist’ (Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.) and promptly directed them to a back

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<sup>31</sup> *1. Internationale Kunstausstellung Düsseldorf 1922* was held in the department store Tietz in Düsseldorf from May to June 1922 and exhibited artists from 18 countries (Barth, 1984, p. 39).

<sup>32</sup> Art historian Alfred Salmony writes in *Das Kunstblatt* in reference to the *1. Internationale Kunstausstellung Düsseldorf 1922*: ‘Was die Leiter, die Maler Kaufmann, Uzarski und Wollheim rein organisatorisch geleistet haben, ist erstaunlich und verdient aufrichtige Bewunderung’ (Salmony, 1922, p. 353f). That Ey is not mentioned could suggest she was not instrumental in the organisation of this exhibition.

<sup>33</sup> Baumeister: ‘In der Autobiographie von 1930 schrieb Frau Ey: “Über Wollheims Bild gab es eine Diskussion, Ausstellung im Fenster oder nicht; es wurde für Ausstellen im Fenster beschlossen.” Leider verrät Frau Ey nicht, welcher Kreis diese Frage diskutierte, die Formulierung deutet jedoch an, dass sie selbst an der Diskussion nicht massgeblich beteiligt war. Die Ausstellung wurde vom “Jungen Rheinland” ausgerichtet, und wahrscheinlich besprach der Vorstand der Vereinigung, d.h. [sculptor] Bernhard Sopher, [...artists] Uzarski, Ludwig ten Hompel, [...] Kaufmann, Hedwig Petermann, [sculptor] Josef Enseling und Wilhelm Ernst, zusammen mit Wollheim die Frage der Präsentation’ (1999, p. 18).

room filled mainly with works by Wollheim.<sup>34</sup> When Uzarski's grievance was aired by the chairman of the group, Kaufmann, at the next *Junge Rheinland* general meeting heated arguments ensued and many artists left *Das Junge Rheinland* and formed the *Rheingruppe*.<sup>35</sup> This signalled the demise of *Das Junge Rheinland* and its last exhibition was held in Berlin in April-May 1925, after which Wollheim left Düsseldorf to move to the capital (Barth, 1984, p. 46).<sup>36</sup>

Following Wollheim's departure, Pankok's in 1924 (Barth, 1984, p. 103) and Dix's in 1925 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 21), the 'dynamite'<sup>37</sup> which had fuelled an era of rebellion was extinguished and as Ey herself puts it: 'Die besten Pferde waren aus dem Stalle "Ey" und hatten ihr Rennen gemacht' (Ey, 1930, p. 84). Moreover many of the goals of the 'modern' movement in Düsseldorf had been achieved. The *Düsseldorfer Akademie* for instance had appointed some of the leading exponents of the 'modern' art movement to its teaching staff<sup>38</sup> and the attitude to the *Malkasten* had changed significantly with a number of younger artists now members or trying to become members (Baumeister, 1999, p. 25f). Thus the atmosphere in Ey's gallery and in the Düsseldorf art scene as a whole became more subdued, and Ey came to feel more accepted: 'Ich war unterdessen auch arriviert und gehörte zu den Prominenten' (Ey, 'Handschriftliche Memoiren', n.d., n.pn.: Klapheck, 1958, p. 39).<sup>39</sup> Her premises

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<sup>34</sup> It could be attested this was motivated not only by favouritism for Wollheim but also for financial gain. Ey owned the works in the back room of her gallery and stood to earn the full profit on any sale, whilst those in the front of her gallery, to which Uzarski's belonged, were sold on a commission basis (Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.).

<sup>35</sup> Kaufmann names artists 'Werner Heuser [...] Uzarski, [Heinrich] Hoerle, Gerd Arntz, Sopher, [Ernst] Gottschalk, Carl Cürten, Arno Breker' and himself amongst the *Rheingruppe* members (Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.). Barth adds artists Jankel Adler, Theo Champion, Curt Lahs, Heinz May and sculptor Jupp Rübsam to this list (Barth, 1984, p. 46).

<sup>36</sup> Goebbels, 2000, recounts in detail what happened to Ey and the Düsseldorf art scene following the *Junge Rheinland* split, noting the exhibitions which took place in her gallery, in Düsseldorf and further afield, throughout the years leading up to and beyond the Nazis gaining power. See also *Das Junge Rheinland*, 1996, pp. 158-171 for a very useful table showing an extensive list of artists that exhibited in *Junge Rheinland*, *Rheinische Szession* and *Rheingruppe* exhibitions from 1919-1932.

<sup>37</sup> Pankok recollecting the early period in Ey's gallery states: 'Wir empfanden uns als Dynamit und wollten ganz Düsseldorf in die Luft sprengen' (Klapheck, 1958, p. 28).

<sup>38</sup> Nauen for instance became a professor at the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* as early as 1921 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 335) and Heinrich Campendonk and Paul Klee followed suit in 1926 and 1931 respectively (Barth, 1984, p. 46/ p. 62).

<sup>39</sup> Klapheck writes that Ey's children allowed her access to 'ein bisher ungedrucktes Manuskript autobiographischer Aufzeichnungen ihrer Mutter' during her research (1958, p. 7) and this is where this quote is taken from. See Ey, 1936, p. 29 for the same quote. Barth too refers to a 'Handschrift von Johanna Ey' in regard to 'Nachlaß Ey Wien' (*Nachlass Ey Wien*, n.d: Barth, 1984, p. 67/ p. 69) when offering details of events from Ey's life in the post war period. However this may not refer to the same text. Baumeister writes that the handwritten version of Ey's 1936 'Erinnerungen', which could refer to

were still viewed as a place to socialise and sell pictures but no artists' group resided there. Instead a 'second generation' of the 'Ey circle' - a mixture of artists from the 'first circle' such as Hundt and a younger group of artists such as Robert Pudlich (Fig. 14), Carl Lauterbach, Julo Levin and Franz Monjau (Baumeister, 1999, p. 33)<sup>40</sup> - used her premises as a meeting place.

From 1927 onwards Ey began to feel the effects of a downturn in the world economy and found it increasingly difficult to sell works of art (Klapheck, 1958, p. 42). On her return to Düsseldorf after visiting her close friend artist and poet Jacobo Sureda<sup>41</sup> in Majorca in 1927 (Fig. 15) she could no longer afford to pay the rent for her gallery or meet the repayments on a bank loan from the *Sparkasse* totalling 6,000 RM (Baumeister, 1999, p. 26) and faced eviction (Barth, 1984, p. 54). This predicament spurred a number of artists to draft a letter to Düsseldorf's *Oberbürgermeister* Robert Lehr, extolling her virtues as a supporter of young artists and asking him to take up her suggestion of settling her debt by taking pictures from her collection (Letter, 26/09/1929). Lehr responded positively to this request and the Düsseldorf authorities paid 1800 RM in order to release pictures taken as a guarantee of payment by her landlord and settle the monies owed (Baumeister, 1999, p. 26f).<sup>42</sup> In exchange Dr Karl Koetschau, head of the *Kunstmuseum* in Düsseldorf, chose six works from Ey's stock for the museum's graphics collection (*Receipt*, 14/10/1929).

The debt to her landlords was therefore provisionally paid, but a condition of the agreement between the two parties was that she was to leave their premises by 1 September 1930 and give them four more pictures worth 3800 RM as a guarantee of payment of rent until her eviction (Letter, 30/01/1930). With her gallery closure a

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what Klapheck and Barth mention, no longer exist. She notes that only the typed manuscript of her 1936 is available and that the "Schlussworte" sind bislang noch nicht aufgetaucht' (1999, p. 7).

<sup>40</sup> The founding of *Die Rheinische Sezession* in 1928, which included many members of this 'second Ey circle', was representative of this more conciliatory tone. It was intended to surmount the differences between *Das Junge Rheinland* (re-founded in 1927) and the *Rheingruppe* and became the dominant artists' group (Barth, 1984, p. 49/ p. 51).

<sup>41</sup> Jacobo Sureda (\*1901 Valldemosa - †1935 [tuberculosis] Palma de Mallorca. Information from Pilar Sureda de Duran (Sureda's daughter), *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 340. See this source for a detailed biography). Ey and 'her circle' were enthralled by Sureda when he visited her gallery in 1926 and she was one among many of 'her circle' who visited him in Spain (Barth, 1984, p. 46/ p. 48). Ey was accompanied on her 1927 trip by artist Jean Paul Schmitz, artist Ulrich Leman, pianist Willi Werth and Wollheim (Baumeister, 1999, p. 23). In Letter, 28/02/1937 to 'Krause', Ey writes: 'Wie denke ich so oft an den guten Jacobo. Ich kann ihn nicht vergessen, er war einer von meinen liebsten Freunden.'

<sup>42</sup> Furthermore from 15 October 1929 Ey received 50 RM from the *Künstlernohtilfe* fund towards her future rent (Baumeister, 1999, p. 28).

certainty, Ey wrote to the Düsseldorf authorities and requested that they allow her to move into the former Postamt 8 on the corner of Hindenburgwall/Friedrichplatz<sup>43</sup> at a concessionary rate with the intention of opening another coffee shop and art dealership (Letter, 22/10/1929). The authorities, worried about the refurbishment costs of these premises, did not want to give her the establishment (Letter, 18/02/1930//21/02/1930). Instead they offered her a place in a state-run old people's home, and when she refused offered her alternative premises which were not to her satisfaction (Baumeister, 1999, p. 28). However after Ey in a letter to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr (Letter, 14/05/1930), and journalist Fritz Heymann in an article in the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung* (Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.), described her contribution to the Düsseldorf art scene, the local authorities realised how badly it would reflect on them if she were evicted (Letter, 30/05/1930) and subsequently agreed to her initial request. They did not ask her for rent directly, realising it was unlikely she would be able to make the payments. Instead the *Wohlfahrtsverwaltung* paid on her behalf (Letter, 01/09/1930)<sup>44</sup> and Ey's new premises were opened on 26 October 1930 (Letter, 22/10/1930) (Fig. 16).

Despite the issue of her rent now being settled, the problem of the interest she owed on her *Sparkasse* loan remained. Indeed Ey is said to have been motivated by the fear that more pictures might be taken from her collection by the *Sparkasse* to organise a travelling exhibition which included works that the building society had chosen in case of non-repayment (Gertrud Ey: Baumeister, 1999, p. 35). Correspondence between the Düsseldorf authorities and the *Sparkasse* however suggests that the official reason Ey gave for this touring exhibition was that it would lead to the sale of works which she could then use to settle her debts.<sup>45</sup> The *Sammlung Ey Düsseldorf* was the result of these efforts and was displayed in Cologne and Königsberg in 1931 and in Mannheim and Wiesbaden in 1932, and according to newspaper articles from the time was well received.<sup>46</sup> In 1932 however further problems arose when Lehr

<sup>43</sup> This area is known today as Heinrich-Heine-Allee/Grabbeplatz (Barth, 1984, p. 54).

<sup>44</sup> See also *Auszug*, 24/09/1930. Letter, 09/09/1930 shows who the Düsseldorf authorities intended to ask for help and donations for the renovation of Postamt 8. *Abschrift*, 13/10/1930//30/10/1930 offers details of the nature of the contract between Ey and the authorities.

<sup>45</sup> See Letter, 30/03/1931, Letter, 17/04/1931 and Letter, 27/04/1931.

<sup>46</sup> See: an article by Hermann Ginzel (occupation unknown) (Ginzel, 25/06/1931, n.pn.); *Kölnische Zeitung*, 25/06/1931, n.pn.; *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 04/07/1931, n.pn.; *Westdeutsche Woche*, 12/07/1931, n.pn.; *Ostmarkrundfunk Illustrierte*, n.d., n.pn.; *Königsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.; 'Sammlung Ey', *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 04/01/1932, n.pn.; 'Der Mannheimer

reneged on his agreement to offer Ey premises rent-free. Lehr appears to have had doubts as early as 1930 'Frau Ey als Wirtin oder als Kunsthändlerin mit Geldern aus Steuermitteln zu unterstützen' (Baumeister, 1999, p. 31) and chose 1 June 1932 to stop her 150 RM rent subsidy (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). This action is said to have been motivated by the dire financial situation the city was in, the need to make cuts and be seen to treat everyone equally and the fact that both of Ey's sons worked (*Der Mittag*, 12/01/1933, n.pn.). However given the Jewish and communist artists she dealt in and her cult status during the Weimar period, it seems quite likely that political considerations played a part in this move by Lehr.

The repercussions of this decision were that the *Grundstücksverwaltung* asked Ey to leave by the latter half of August 1932 at the latest. She stayed however and due to her non-payment of the 150 RM per month had her contract revoked from 16 October 1930. On 21 October Lehr started legal proceedings to evict her (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). Ey lost the case on 3 January 1933 and was ordered to leave Postamt 8 and pay 5 RM per day from the period 22 October 1932 until the date she was supposed to move out (*Der Mittag*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.). Her eviction was however temporarily delayed by the National Socialists' rise to power on 30 January 1933 after which Lehr was replaced by Dr Hans Wagenführ (Ey, 1936, p. 101) and the Nazis appear to have considered how best to deal with such a well-known figure. During this period Ey made a second trip to Majorca (March 1933) to pay her last visit to the terminally ill Sureda and on her return found flyers on her windows urging people to boycott her gallery (Barth, 1984, p. 60). It was however not until 6 April 1934 (Ey, 1936, p. 103) that the Düsseldorf authorities finally forced her to leave her premises. Although the official reason given was that someone had been found to rent her

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Kunstverein', n.d., n.pn.; 'Die Ausstellung Ey', 1932 (?), n.pn.; *Neues Mannheimer*, 16/09/1932, n.pn.; 'Die Künstlermama von Düsseldorf', n.d., n.pn. and *Neue Mannheimer Zeitung*, 17-18/09/1932, n.pn. See also Ey's 1936 memoirs which reproduces articles relating to *Sammlung Ey* which have not been located in their original form: *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, June (?) 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 68f; *Kunst-Auktion Berlin*, 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 69; *Berliner Börsen*, 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 69f; *Koblenzer General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 70 and 'Das Ey wird international', 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 71. Ey's 1936 memoirs also cite articles which are available in their original form and refer to this travelling exhibition: *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, pp. 74-76; *Königsberger Tageblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, pp. 76-78; *Ostpreußische Zeitung*, 04(?) / 01/1932: Ey, 1936, p. 78f; Hannover newspaper, 1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 79f; 'Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden', n.d., n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 80 and *Wiesbadener Zeitung*, 27/12/1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 81. In Baumeister's version of Ey's 1936 memoirs an article from the *Volksstimme Mannheim* is included which is absent from the typescript of Ey's memoirs (*Volksstimme Mannheim*, 26/09/1932, n.pn.: Baumeister, 1999, p. 149f).

premises (Letter, 16/02/1934) the political and racial backgrounds of the artists she dealt in and her status during the Weimar period, mean it is highly likely her eviction was politically motivated.<sup>47</sup>

Even after Ey had been evicted from her gallery and had moved to Stockkamp Strasse 40, taking her art collection with her, the local authorities continued to pursue her to recoup rent arrears and legal costs totalling RM 3,602.78 (Ey, 1936, p. 60f).<sup>48</sup> As a result Ey wrote to Wagenführ and suggested that they wipe this debt or take pictures to settle the money owed (Ey, 1936, p. 105). The authorities chose the latter course of action and took pictures from her as a guarantee of payment (Ey, 1936, p. 106).<sup>49</sup> The *Sparkasse* too removed pictures from Ey's collection sometime after December 1932 to 'cover'<sup>50</sup> the debts she owed on her loan.<sup>51</sup> The majority of what the authorities and the *Sparkasse* did not take was then destroyed on the night of 11-12 June 1943 during a bombing raid by British planes (Letter, 25(?)/07/1943).<sup>52</sup> Her flat and her collection

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<sup>47</sup> The actions of Lehr and the Nazis in regard to Ey's eviction are explored in more detail in Chapter 4 and 6 of this thesis.

<sup>48</sup> Ey implies that the Nazi authorities demanded rent arrears from 1928 up until her leaving her premises (Letter, 28/11/1945) and this is repeated by Barth (1984, p. 60). However if one considers that the 150 Marks paid by the *Wohlfahrtsverwaltung* was the cost of her rent, then the 3602 RM she is said to have owed is approximately equivalent to 24 months' rent. This is therefore closer to the demands of Lehr who requested that Ey pay rent from 1932 onwards and suggests that Ey and Barth are mistaken.

<sup>49</sup> For more information on this process see: Letter, 23/05/1934; Letter, 02/06/1934; *Abschrift*, 24/07/1934 and *Abschrift, Nachweisung*, n.d. Ey also states that 'Dr [Hans] Hupp' (head of the Düsseldorf *Kunstmuseum*) and 'Direktor Cooks' (Fred Kocks, artist and head of the *Kunsthalle* Düsseldorf, acting head and curator of the Düsseldorf *Kunstmuseum*. Baumeister, 1999, p. 231f) took pictures from her collection (Ey, 1936, p. 106), but cites only 6 of the 10 pictures mentioned in the aforementioned sources. Nonetheless she places the value of these works alone at approximately '4000 Mark'. In reference to the pictures taken for rent arrears, her descriptions of the value of what was taken vary. She refers simply to 9 pictures taken by the authorities in Letter, 14/12/1945 and Letter, 30/01/1946, but estimates their value at 'einige tausend Mark' in Letter, 28/11/1945 and 'ungefähr 10.000 Mark' in Letter, 05/12/1945.

<sup>50</sup> In Letter, 05/12/1945 Ey states that these pictures were taken as 'Pfand', i.e. as security for her loan. This is however not mentioned in other letters from her which refer to the *Sparkasse* taking these pictures: Letter, 28/11/1945; Letter, 04/12/1945; Letter, 14/12/1945 and Letter, 30/01/1946.

<sup>51</sup> Ey states that the *Sparkasse* took pictures which she valued at 22,000 Marks for her loan of 4,000 Marks (Letter 28/11/1945). In a letter to actor, artist and stage designer Karl Kyser she implies that these were '9 der größten und schönsten Bilder' (Letter, 30/01/1946). The value of 22,000 Marks is placed on these pictures by Ey in Letter, 28/11/1945 and Letter, 14/12/1945. She also states that some of the pictures taken by the *Sparkasse* were sold in Switzerland (Letter, 05/12/1945 and Letter, 14/12/1945). Her valuation in these letters is however significantly less than the 30,000 Mark estimate she makes in Letter, 05/12/1945 and the 40,000 Mark mentioned in Letter, 30/01/1946. Although no exact date is mentioned in Ey's letters as to when these pictures were taken she indicates that this was during her travelling exhibitions' final stop in Wiesbaden (Letter, 28/11/1945; Letter, 04/12/1945; Letter, 05/12/1945 and Letter, 14/12/1945). This took place in late December 1932 according to 'Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden', n.d., n.pn. and *Wiesbadener Zeitung*, 27/12/1932, n.pn.

<sup>52</sup> The pictures from Ey's *Sammlung Ey* that had reached Hamburg and were intended for display at the international exposition in Chicago in 1933 were confiscated by the Nazis and brought to a storage depot in Düsseldorf where they were destroyed in 1943 during a bombing raid (Barth, 1984, p. 59/ p.

of art were lost<sup>53</sup> with the exception of a case of graphic art, about twenty pictures which her son Hermann had taken to Kottenheim in the Eifel for safe-keeping only two days beforehand<sup>54</sup> and a small number of works which were looked after by private individuals on her behalf.<sup>55</sup> Ey, now homeless, was taken by her daughter Maria to her granddaughter Irene's house in Reinbek near Hamburg (Letter, 25(?) / 07 / 1943) and lived there until the end of hostilities.

After the war, Ey read an article about the pictures that had been stolen by the Nazis from Hamburg museums and wrote to the editor explaining what had happened to her collection (Barth, 1984, p. 65 / p. 67). A newspaper article about her subsequently appeared and a Hamburg radio station interviewed her,<sup>56</sup> following which she was approached by two businessmen, Ernst Neumann and a Mr Hinsen (forename unknown), who wanted to open a gallery with her in Düsseldorf. Ey agreed to this proposal and returned to the city on 21 March 1946,<sup>57</sup> where she made a failed

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61). Though the destruction of these works is not in doubt, the notion that they were confiscated by the authorities does not fit with Ey's account of events in Letter 28/11/1945. Here she states in apparent reference to her *Sammlung Ey* collection, that after the authorities and the *Sparkasse* had taken the art works they wanted 'holte ich einige [pictures] bei Beyer-Meyer dem Verpackungslokal ab und schaffte einige Bilder 3 Tage ehe alles bei mir verbrannte nach der Eifel'. The ability to pick up pictures at will does not suggest that they were confiscated by the Nazis, but that they were instead in 'normal' storage.<sup>53</sup> Ey: 'Ich hatte bei Strauch drei große Bilder zum Rahmen, auch weg' (Letter, 25(?) / 07 / 1943). No information about 'Strauch' could be found.

<sup>54</sup> Barth, 1984, p. 65, provides this information. Ey suggests it was three days before in Letter, 28/11/1945.

<sup>55</sup> For instance on 8 December 1941 Ey sent several large pictures including *Rendezvous der Freunde* by Max Ernst to medical doctors Mr and Mrs Dr Bau in Hamburg (no forenames available) (Goebbels, 2000, p. 20). See Chapter 5 for more biographical information about the Baus. In Letter, 28/11/1945 Ey mentions that *Rendezvous der Freunde* survived although no mention is made of the other works.

<sup>56</sup> This interview occurred on 25 December 1945 and was broadcast by the *Hamburger Rundfunk*. With the help of Goebbels I tried to locate this recording and emailed the archive at NDR (*Norddeutscher Rundfunk*) to whom the *Hamburger Rundfunk* belonged. I asked them to look in their archives however no recording could be located. According to the archivist at NDR it is highly likely this interview was recorded over due to the shortage of recording tape at the time. I was initially alerted to this recording by the mention of it in Barth, 1984, p. 67.

<sup>57</sup> Letter, 23/03/1946 from Ey to Leyendecker states: 'Ich bin seit vorgestern hier'. Postcard, 05/07/1946 from Ey to artist Hans Busch reveals where she initially lived on her return: 'Heute schreibe ich Dir nur kurz, daß ich plötzlich in Reinbek abgehaun bin und in Düsseldorf habe ich statt 14 Tage über 3 Monate bei einer bekannten Familie in einem Zimmer gewohnt, bis ich die Geduld verlor und der Stadt meine Meinung sagte.' Her address is given as 'Bölkestr. 9' in Letter, 05/04/1946 from the Düsseldorf Press office to Ey during this three month period. Further details are also offered in Letter, end of February 1946 from Ey to Leyendecker: 'Bei Bekannten in Unterrath kann ich ein Zimmer zum Mitbewohnen haben; ich warte nun auf die Möglichkeit dort zu kommen.' That she lived in Unterrath during this period is also suggested in Letter, 01/04/1946, from the *Freier Verlag GmbH* to Ey which gives this area as her address. Her address is then given in Letter, Hensel, 04/03/1947 from *Oberstadtdirektor* Dr Walther Hensel to Ey, and other letters on the same day, as 'Düsseldorf, Flingerstrasse 10/12.' This address does not appear to change up until her death. It seems likely this accommodation was provided by Neumann and Hinsen as part of their deal with Ey to open a gallery with her. Ey writes: 'Hinsen und Neumann [...] frugen, ob ich nicht gerne nach Düsseldorf möchte, um

attempt to get the memoirs she had compiled during the Nazi era published. In the Flinger Strasse 2-6 the pictures that had been taken to the Eifel were then exhibited in a gallery space combined with a *Künstler-Gaststätte*, provided by her business associates, entitled *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum Mutter Ey GmbH Düsseldorf*. It opened on 8 July 1947 but was to prove an ill-fated venture which closed by 1950 (Barth, 1984, p. 69). Johanna Ey did not live to see its demise. She died on 27 August 1947 and was laid to rest in an *Ehrengrab* in Düsseldorf's *Nordfriedhof*.<sup>58</sup> The headstone provided by the Düsseldorf authorities in this instance reads 'Mutter Ey', posthumously maintaining the momentum behind the aspect of her legend synonymous with her as a nurturer and mother figure to her 'artists'. The next chapter investigates the evolution, content and reception of this maternal stereotype and examines its use by the press, the authorities, 'her' artists and Ey herself.

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mit ihnen eine gemeinsame Firma zur Ausstellung von modernen Bildern und Kunstgegenständen zu eröffnen, ich bekäme 10% vom Reingewinn, außerdem freie Wohnung - 2 Zimmer und Küche - und 200 Mark monatlich zum Leben' (*Nachlass Ey Wien*, n.d.: Barth, 1984, p. 67).

<sup>58</sup> The S.D.A. includes Ey's death notice informing the recipient of her death in 1947 and her burial on 30/08/1947 in Düsseldorf's *Nordfriedhof* (*Todesnachricht*, 1947).



## The Image of ‘Mutter Ey’ in the Weimar Period

As the name ‘Mutter Ey’ on Ey’s headstone demonstrates the maternal image has come to dominate the public face of Johanna Ey and this chapter explores its use during the Weimar period. I begin this investigation by placing this image in a context so far absent from the literature surrounding Ey by considering what associations the maternal image had in the Weimar and Nazi period. The origins of the ‘Mutter Ey’ stereotype and its use up until the present day are then examined and the connotations present in these portrayals in the Weimar period explored. Following this Klapheck (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8) and Baumeister’s (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51) assertion that the ‘Mutter Ey’ stereotype reduced Ey to a role which has overshadowed her wider achievements as an art dealer is corrected in the presentation of its use by artists, the authorities and the media in the Weimar period which show that this maternal image was often deployed alongside mention of her achievements in the art world.

Moreover I demonstrate that the assumption Ey disliked this term has been given too much weight by commentators in light of ‘her’ artists’ usage, its inclusion in the introduction to the *Sammlung Ey* catalogue by art historian Max Osborn (Osborn, 1931), its mention in her 1929, 1930 and 1936 autobiographical texts and her desire to include this term on her gravestone - examples which suggest Ey may have seen the value of using this ‘trademark’ for the purposes of self-promotion. The notion that the ‘Mutter Ey’ image was prevalent - implied by Klapheck (1958, p. 8) and Baumeister (1999, p. 51) - is then subjected to scrutiny. The findings suggest that the Düsseldorf officials, institutions in Germany and abroad, as well as individuals who were not connected to ‘her’ artists’ ‘circle’ rarely used this name, whilst the media used this term frequently at the end of the 1920s and early 1930s. Furthermore the use of the name ‘Mutter Ey’ by ‘her’ artists is attributed to individual preference rather than to a particular ‘generation’ of the ‘Ey circle’ as Klapheck implies (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8f).

Finally, portraits of Ey show that artworks with maternal connotations were just one facet of a wide variety of representations of her.

Let us begin this investigation by examining the maternal image in the 1920's, 30's and 40's. It is apparent that this carried a wealth of connotations in Germany which touched on political, economic and cultural issues and was used by both women and men in private and official capacities to reinforce and challenge traditional stereotypes and government policies. Art historian Marsha Meskimmon provides a useful analysis of these tropes in *We Weren't Modern Enough* (Meskimmon, 1999) when she attests that the maternal image was presented as an opposing moral pole to the image of the 'decadent' prostitute (p. 30), which in the 'male, heterosexual economy of meaning' symbolised 'sexual freedom, the condition of commodity capitalism, the terrifying urban masses, the harbinger of social decline and the natural result of female emancipation' (p. 30f). Indeed she states that the images of the 'mother' in works of certain male artists of the period were 'de-sexed' in comparison to those of female street-workers where the prostitute's sex was 'emphasised to the point of disgust' (p. 30) maintaining that such images responded to a 'general moral panic concerning the new public roles which women were playing' by contrasting 'the debauched woman of the street with the long suffering woman in the home' to create a 'powerful sense, however false, that exact boundaries exist[ed] to define women's status' (p. 31). These delineations, she asserts, were propagated by certain bourgeois women's groups, such as the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* who emphasised the 'otherness' of prostitutes (p. 26) and failed to acknowledge that many prostitutes were also mothers (p. 31) and that working class women occasionally turned to prostitution at times of financial difficulty.

Certainly the image of the 'mother' was a controversial political icon during the Weimar period (p. 75). Against the backdrop of a low birth rate and the fears this held for the health of the nation (p. 76) Meskimmon argues convincingly that this image became intertwined with the debates surrounding 'maternity, women's work, abortion, contraception and state population policy' (p. 75) and was linked to wider issues of eugenics, racial hygiene and the control of the 'overabundant, undesirable mass' which characterised the Wilhelmine and Weimar eras and which would later manifest itself in Nazi sterilisation and extermination policies (p. 78). She also

maintains that the visual arts helped popularise these scientific theories and ideologies which ““defined” race, class and “woman-as-mother”” (p. 77). However, she is too sweeping in her description of the unity involved in male artists’ depictions of mothers during this period, regardless of media, political or institutional affiliation (p. 77) when she states that the ‘mother’ was presented as a symbol of ‘stability, morality, self-sacrifice, charity and a form of essential feminine nature’ (p. 77). The portraits of ‘Mutter Ey’ with sexual connotations in the next chapter show that this was not always the case.

Meskimmon is nevertheless right to point out that to a degree both ‘conservatives’ and ‘radicals’ acknowledged the differences between women based on economic factors and the role of financial stability in encouraging women to have families, and to comment that this was reflected in family welfare reforms and calls for ‘socialised medicine, child-care facilities and abortion rights for poor women’ (p. 86). She suggests however that the image of the ‘poor mother’ and ‘working mother’ raised in this context often obscured the ‘complicated interplay between economics and maternity’ (p. 86) and argues persuasively that whilst the ‘poor mother’ with the image of ‘a strong, nurturing maternal figure reduced through circumstances to desperation’ had a long tradition of being used to ‘mobilise working class feeling and develop sympathetic bonds with the middle classes’ (p. 86f), the ‘working mother’ was viewed as a capitalist problem by the left and the cause of juvenile delinquency by the right (p. 87). Meskimmon maintains however that whilst bourgeois women’s groups often embraced policies which favoured women becoming ‘non-working mothers rather than remain childless or become workers using public child-care facilities’ (p. 87), women artists challenged these conventional images of motherhood by producing a wide variety of maternal images which engaged with the relationship between maternity and gender, generation, economics, class and ethnicity (p. 87). This observation raises an important point about certain women artists’ critical use of this image, particularly evident in artist Käthe Kollwitz’s portrayals of mothers which dealt with the themes of ‘war, capitalist exploitation, economic crises’ and abortion (p. 93).

The subject of abortion tackled in Kollwitz’s work can be seen as a reaction in part to the introduction of the infamous Paragraph 218 in 1919 which criminalised the

termination of pregnancies and the sale of contraceptive devices (p. 79). In Meskimmon's view this law was representative of the majority<sup>59</sup> of male political and medical opinion that motherhood should be actively encouraged, but simultaneously also provided a rallying call to women to engage in the debate about reproductive rights and put forward their differing opinions (p. 106). In this context the symbol of the 'good mother' is said to have been deployed frequently by pro-abortion supporters to present the sympathetic image of a woman forced to consider such methods because of the difficulties caused by legislation in obtaining advice and contraceptives and the subsequent need to end a pregnancy to support an existing family (p. 109f). This helped gain public support and led to a slight revision of the law in 1926 and was followed by another wave of pro-choice activism in 1931 due to pressure on women to limit their families during the economic depression (p. 79). These gains, Meskimmon writes, were however soon reversed when the Nazis came to power and the maternal image was used to link 'women's pride in motherhood with Germanic racial traditions, anti-feminism and pseudo-scientific genetic theories' (p. 81).

National Socialist policy in this regard included providing financial incentives for young couples to marry and have large families with the aim of restoring 'the father as the public head of the household and breadwinner and the mother as the private heart of the domestic sphere' (p. 79). Furthermore sterilisation and abortion were utilised as a weapon against 'undesirable' mothers, groups which included 'non-Aryans', those with mental illness or considered to be 'sub-normal' in intellect or 'morality' and those considered a threat to the state (p. 80). Nazi population specialists preferred the sterilisation of woman over men, since they believed that 'degenerate *mothers* were the cause of degeneracy in children' (p. 102, original emphasis). Thus it is apparent that men dominated 'discussions of female sexuality and reproductive rights in the name of social health and good of the nation' (p. 84) in both the Weimar and Nazi period, and Meskimmon is right to suggest that although in the Weimar period women's attitude to maternity endorsed 'a multiplicity of models' (p. 86) these 'individualistic approaches [...] put on the agenda by the far left and women's groups could not displace the dominant tendency to situate women and their reproductive roles in relation to the state' (p. 116).

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<sup>59</sup> This is with the exception of the KPD who supported women's rights to termination (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 95).

With these connotations of the maternal image in the Weimar and Nazi period in mind, I now want to offer a brief overview of the construction of the ‘Mutter Ey’ stereotype before exploring its general associations and providing an assessment of its use in the Weimar Period. The earliest written instance of the maternal image in the corpus to hand is in a newspaper article by author and editor Ludwig Beil on 8 May 1920 in the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung* which signifies the importance of the press in the creation and dissemination of this stereotype. In an account of a lecture by Wollheim in Ey’s gallery Beil states:

Kennt ihr Frau Ey? Sie ist eine mütterliche Freundin bohème Jugend. Wer malt und nichts hat und jung ist, der ist ihr lieb. Der kann in ihr Hinterstübchen kommen, am Hindenburgwall [...], dort kriegt er nachmittags immer Kaffee bis zum Herzklopfen. Und wenn ein strahlender Tag für Mutter Ey ist, das heißt, wenn ihre liebsten tumultarischen und hoffnungsvollsten Schützlinge bei ihr sich alles auf einmal treffen, dann gibts sogar Kognak. Dann sitzt sie da, rund und glücklich, ihre blanken Äuglein glänzen blank wie auf der Knopfgabel geputzt. “Ach, Kinder” pflegt sie zu sagen “dreißig Jahre jünger, was könnt ich euch da alles sein!” Sie ist gut die Frau Ey, wir können sie brauchen (Beil, 08/05/1920, n.pn.).

Aside from the role of the media it is also apparent that Ey herself played a part in the propagation of this image. Her status as a middle-aged woman who had given birth to many children, who was old enough to be the mother of many of the ‘modern’ artists whose works she sold and who before the First World War had provided artists with food and drink which they could pay for on credit, undoubtedly acted as the basis for this maternal, nurturing stereotype. Yet she can also be seen to promote this image herself, for instance in a letter to Schwesig (Letter, 30/07/1921) in 1921 she addresses him as ‘Mein lieber Bubi!’ a description usually reserved for children and signs her name as ‘Mutter Ey’ to close the correspondence. In her 1936 memoirs she also includes many articles which refer to this image and depicts herself acting in a maternal way to Dix: ‘Bei näherem Zusehen fand ich, dass die Sitzfläche seiner Hose etwas durchsichtig war, bei eventuellem Bücken gleich geplatzt wäre. Ich heilte auch diesen Schaden’ (Ey, 1936, p. 25).

‘Her’ artists however also played a considerable part, both directly and indirectly, in the proliferation of these connotations, through art works with motherly overtones and through their use of this term.<sup>60</sup> Indeed the growth of her celebrity, which stemmed from the press interest generated by the sheer abundance of these and other portraits, her burgeoning reputation as an art dealer and acceptance into the establishment, as well as the acclaim of the artists with whom she was associated, was of vital importance in the proliferation of this image and its transition from the personal to the public domain. This ascent to local, national and to a certain extent international<sup>61</sup> celebrity status was further aided by her *Sammlung Ey* touring exhibition in 1931, whose catalogue introduction by Osborn also emphasised this maternal stereotype in its title ‘Mutter Ey’ (Osborn, 1931, p. 3) and content. This exhibition’s various venues in Germany led to an increased number of reports in the media, many of which incorporated and reaffirmed these maternal attributes in the public imagination, for example by citing Osborn’s text. Furthermore the Düsseldorf authorities of the Weimar period contributed to the promotion of this stereotype, when in a letter printed in the press, *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr congratulated her on her sixty fifth birthday and addressed her as ‘Liebe Mutter Ey’ (Letter, 03/03/1929 (?): Lehr, 03/03/1929 (?), n.pn. and Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929).<sup>62</sup>

When the Nazis came to power however, Ey was initially shunned and her gallery closed. Consequently the frequency of articles relating to Ey in the Nazi period decreased with the result that the ‘Mutter Ey’ image became less prevalent in the media. Indeed although the Nazis later tried to harness her maternal connotations and her remaining celebrity to serve their own policies by presenting her with a golden *Mutter Kreuz* (Letter, 02/01/1941), it was not until the fall of the Third Reich that the number of media references again became more frequent and with it the use of the ‘Mutter Ey’ designation. Her business partners’ decision to name their gallery

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<sup>60</sup> For example Dr Jcks (pseudonym for Walter Kordt) writes: ‘Frau Johanna Ey, die “Mutter Ey”, wie sie von den Malern genannt wird’ (Dr Jcks, 1930, n.pn).

<sup>61</sup> See for instance articles ‘En Konstens’, n.d., p. 181 and ‘Mutter Ey - Tyskländs’, n.d., n.pn., which appear to be from Swedish publications. ‘Jan Wellem’ (likely to be a pseudonym) also writes in a newspaper report of ‘Hefte aus Schweden, Moskau, Belgien, Spanien und Amerika, in denen Mutter Ey nicht gefeiert, sondern gewürdigt wird als die Wegbahnerin der modernen Kunst’ (Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>62</sup> Luise Straus-Ernst was the first wife of Max Ernst and was an art critic and art historian.

*Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum Mutter Ey GmbH Düsseldorf* can be seen as indicative of how this stereotype had come to represent her public image. After Ey's death in 1947 the Düsseldorf authorities continued to promote this image by inscribing this nickname, rather than her real name on her grave of honour (Fig. 17) and by using it as a street name dedicated to the art dealer in Düsseldorf (Fig. 18). Moreover a wealth of initiatives including newspaper articles, secondary literature and exhibitions, theatre pieces, radio and television programmes have maintained the momentum behind this image and ensured that it has remained synonymous with Ey up until the present day - as Chapter 6 of the current study shows.

Although this résumé of the origins of the 'Mutter Ey' image has demonstrated that various parties had a hand in its creation, it is possible to identify several common features in the descriptions from the Weimar period which refer to Ey as 'Mutter Ey' or as having maternal connotations and these are listed below to provide the reference points for the following investigation. The available corpus suggests that this stereotype was often used to encourage the public to view Ey positively as a unique, caring, surrogate 'mother' figure to 'her' artists and the Düsseldorf art scene.<sup>63</sup> Indeed she is often described as a 'Malermutter' or 'Künstlermutter' and 'good-hearted' mother Ey.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore the associations of the mother image in the Weimar period, described by Meskimmon as including 'stability, morality, self-sacrifice and charity' (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 77) often feature in these descriptions.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> In regard to Ey being portrayed as an 'original' an anonymous author writes: 'Kennen Sie die Ey - die Ey von Düsseldorf? [...] Vielleicht hat sie Ihnen in ihrer originellen Art einmal geholfen, die gerade darum so originell ist, weil sie so ungekünstelt und schlicht ist' (Hannover newspaper, 1932, n.pn.). Moreover Heymann writes: 'Johanna Ey, die Künstlermutter, die originelle Frau' (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). An example of imagery presenting Ey as a caring maternal figure to the Düsseldorf artists and art scene is offered by Dr Jcks a.k.a. Walter Kordt: 'Dort hat sich unter der sorgenden und liebenden Obhut der Mutter Ey der wesentliche Teil der jungen Düsseldorfer Kunst jahrelang gesammelt' (Dr Jcks, 1930, n.pn.) and Heinrich Wilhelm Keim, art historian and teacher for stage design at the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie*: 'die in den Kreisen der jüngeren Kunst und der jüngeren Künstler als Pflegemutter bekannte und beliebte "Mutter Ey"' (Keim, 20/10/1923).

<sup>64</sup> See for example Anon, 1930b, n.pn. for mention of Ey as a 'Malermutter' and Luise Straus-Ernst, 1930, n.pn. for mention of Ey as a 'Künstlermutter'. Wilhelm Schmidtsdorf (occupation unknown) presents the image of Ey as a 'good hearted' mother when he writes: "'das Ey" [Ey] - verfügte ja nicht nur über eine unerschöpfliche Speisekammer, das Ey verfügte auch über ein unerschöpflich gutes Herz' (Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn.).

<sup>65</sup> Dr P. K. (no further information could be found) puts forward Ey as a figure of stability: 'Hier in diesem netten Häuschen wohnt Mutter Ey, wie sie allüberall genannt wird, die Frau mit dem großen Herzen und dem kleinen Geldbeutel. Hier ist der Sammel und Ruhepol der jungen Künstlergeneration; hier hat manch junges Talent, von der Umwelt mißverstanden und geächtet, einen sicheren Port gefunden, und unter der weisen Führung dieser gutherzigen Frau Ey sich bannig durchs Leben schlagen können' (DT, 02/03/1929, n.pn.). *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr implies Ey had good morals: 'So darf

In regard to its usage in the Weimar Period Klapheck is therefore right to assert that the ‘Mutter Ey’ image carries connotations of: ‘Betulichkeit und Behagen nach Duldsamkeit, Opfer und Verzicht’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8). References to Ey’s working class background are also commonplace in these texts, both indirectly in descriptions which mention her life before she became an art dealer<sup>66</sup> and directly: ‘Wer ist diese “Mutter Ey”? Sie ist eine echte Proletarierfrau’ (*Königsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.).<sup>67</sup> Indeed the use of the *Mutter* prefix in German has strong connotations with the working class. In these instances her ‘story’ can be seen to partake in the long-standing narrative of the ‘strong, nurturing maternal figure reduced through circumstances to desperation’ used to ‘mobilise working class feeling and develop sympathetic bonds with the middle classes’ (Meskimmon, p. 86f).

Though the aforementioned connotations of the ‘Mutter Ey’ image can be viewed positively, some commentators argue that these attributes have been given too much emphasis at the expense of her wider achievements as an art dealer. Klapheck maintains for instance that: ‘Johanna Ey war gewiss ein mütterlicher Mensch und nahm alle ans Herz, die Hilfe bei ihr suchten. Und doch trifft der Name “Mutter Ey”, unter dem sie fortlebt, nur ein Teil ihres Wesens und wird ihrer erstaunlichen Gestalt nicht gerecht’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8). Baumeister echoes this sentiment: ‘Die frühzeitig eingesetzten und hartnäckig weiter benutzten Klischees vom “Altstadtoriginal” und der “guten Mutter Ey” beschränkten Frau Ey auf eine Rolle, die ihrem Wirken nicht gerecht wird’ (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51). Klapheck also gives the impression that Ey herself did not appreciate the repeated use of this term, when according to her Ey is said to have told newspaper reporters, ‘Nennt mich doch nicht immer “Mutter Ey”’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 40). In the analysis which follows however I

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wohl auch der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Sie “Mutter Ey” nennen und Ihnen herzlich dafür danken, daß Sie so vielen jungen Künstlern im Kampf im Leben und Kunst beigestanden und manchen nicht nur zum guten Künstler, sondern auch zum reifen Menschen erzogen haben’ (Lehr, 03/03/1929 (?)). Luise Straus-Ernst suggests Ey’s self-sacrifice when she describes her as a ‘gütige selbstlose Frau’ (Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn.) as does Karl-Hans Sternheim (occupation unknown) when he writes: ‘Und welches sind die Beziehungen all dieser Prominenten [artists] zum Ey? Sie zollen dieser einzigartigen gütigen Frau Dank für aufopferende Hilfe in schwersten Stunden’ (Sternheim, 1928, n.pn). Sternheim also suggests Ey had a charitable side in the same article: ‘Der materielle Gewinn, den der Salon erzieht, ist trotz der schlechten Kaufkraft [...] ungewöhnlich hoch, aber - und das ist ein Kriterium - er kommt nicht einer profitgierigen Händlerin, sondern immer wieder den notleidenden Talenten zugute.’

<sup>66</sup> For example: ‘harte Kindheit, traurige Ehe [...] kümmerlich schlägt sie sich nach der Scheidung mit ihren Kindern durch das Leben’ (*Königsberger Tageblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>67</sup> See also amongst others, Dr Alfred Rohde, who was director of the *Kunstsammlungen Königsberg* and describes her as: ‘diese Frau aus dem Volke’ (*Ostmarkrundfunk Illustrierte*, n.d., n.pn.).



demonstrate that in the vast majority of instances in the corpus from the Weimar period, this stereotype was used alongside acknowledgement of her achievements and status as an art dealer. Moreover I will argue that Ey was not as hostile to this image as Klapheck implies. It is also made clear that the prevalence of the term ‘Mutter Ey’ in the media of the Weimar Period is not reflected in official correspondence with institutions in Germany and abroad, and exists as one of several written and many visual images used by artists at the time.

Let us begin the analysis of the use of the ‘Mutter Ey’ image in the Weimar period by examining Baumeister’s theory that the failure of the *Junge Rheinland* to mention Ey when publicising exhibitions held on her premises ‘führte dazu, daß sich Johanna Ey dem Gedächtnis der Zeitgenossen eher als legendäre “Mutter Ey”, denn als bedeutende Kunsthändlerin und Ausstellungsmacherin einprägte.’ Baumeister suggests that certain newspapers had a part in this selective presentation when she writes: ‘in den regelmäßigen Ausstellungskritiken in der Düsseldorfer-Lokal Zeitung lautet die Ortsangabe entweder “in den Räumen des Jungen Rheinlandes” oder kürzer “im Jungen Rheinland”, während die Zeitung die übrigen Galerien namentlich kennzeichnet, z.B. Galerie Flechtheim.’ However, she also implies that members of the *Junge Rheinland* were responsible for this since she notes that their magazine referred only to ‘Hindenburgwall 11’ in regard to these exhibitions and made no mention that these were Ey’s premises (‘Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin’, 1993, p. 160).

When I interviewed Baumeister in 2005 she suggested this could have been an attempt by *Junge Rheinland* members to increase their own status and importance by marginalising Ey and her contribution. She argued this may have been part of an ongoing smear campaign against her by certain *Junge Rheinland* artists which included the cultivation of the ‘Mutter Ey’ image through the promotion of this name and concept and through pictures which showed her in a domestic setting or invoked a motherly image - the intention being to reduce Ey to someone who made coffee and looked after the artists but who had no real say in the *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions and was not to be taken seriously as a gallery owner or art dealer (Interview Baumeister, 2005). Indeed Baumeister cites Kaufmann and Uzarski as being responsible for Ey’s premises becoming known officially as the ‘Lokal des “Jungen Rheinlands”’ (‘Die

Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 161f). A letter from Robert Pudlich to Kordt dated 9 July 1931 certainly suggests that the image of Ey as a marginal figure prevailed long after the *Junge Rheinland* had left her gallery. Following a request for the loan of her 'teueren Clichées' (presumably referring to metal casts i.e. stereo or electro duplicates) Pudlich informs Kordt in this correspondence that Ey is only willing to let him borrow them against payment and is 'disgusted' that he did not contact her directly. By bypassing her and dealing with Pudlich the implication is that Kordt believed the real power lay not with Ey but with 'her' artists (Letter, 09/07/1931).

Though Baumeister's theory is an interesting one, I would argue that the absence of reference to Ey in descriptions of *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions does not necessarily have to be viewed as part of a manipulative strategy designed to reduce her standing as an art dealer and to strengthen the 'Mutter Ey' image. As Barth maintained in my interview with him in 2005, it is probable that *Das Junge Rheinland* paid Ey rent to exhibit in her gallery (Interview Barth, 2005). It therefore seems likely that descriptions of the exhibitions held in her premises excluded Ey in order to draw a clear distinction between her gallery and art collection and the exhibitions of the *Junge Rheinland* whose works she sold on a commission basis.<sup>68</sup> Further insight into the nature of this arrangement is offered when Goebbels notes that her Hindenburgwall gallery was divided into two: the two rooms at the front were used for *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions where members could select the works they wanted to exhibit without being subject to a jury, whilst Ey's collection was presented in the rooms at the rear of her gallery (2000, p. 11). Indeed by asserting that the *Junge Rheinland* artists were able to choose the works they exhibited in these exhibitions Goebbels clarifies a point that Baumeister herself makes when she states 'es bleibt offen, in welchem Umfang Frau Ey an der Auswahl der Künstler beteiligt war' ('Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 162). It is therefore possible that Ey's negligible influence was a further reason why she was not mentioned in the descriptions of these exhibitions.

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<sup>68</sup> Kaufmann: 'Unsere Vereinbarung mit ihr [Ey] war, daß sie bei Verkäufen aus unserer Mitglieder [*Das Junge Rheinland*] wechselnden Ausstellungen ein Drittel des Preises der verkauften Werke bekommen sollte' (Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.).

The portraits 'Ey's' artists painted of her also provide a rich source of material in the argument that the use of the 'Mutter Ey' image in the Weimar period was more complex than the narrow stereotype that Klapheck and Baumeister put forward. A drawing by artist Ernst Gottschalk *Mutter Ey und (?) ihre Küken* (Fig. 19) for instance, shows Ey as a mother hen sitting on her 'chicks' which appear to include amongst others Wollheim, Schwesig and Hundt. Rather than insinuating that she was a peripheral figure overshadowed by 'her' artists, the difference in scale here - with Ey shown 'ruling the roost' and 'her' artists tucked under her wing - implies dominance on her part and suggests she was a leading figure in 'her' artists' 'circle'. The artists being depicted as her chicks also implies she had 'given birth to and raised' their careers - an idea recurrent in a sketch by artist Fritz Westendorp which depicts her as a midwife at the birth of the *Junge Rheinland* (Fig. 20).

Clearly Gottschalk's depiction portrays Ey as a protector and guardian of her 'brood', yet the unhappy expression of the artist (possibly Wollheim) under her wing and the figure at the front of the picture shown with his head and torso buried under her plumage suggests that this attention was at times smothering and oppressive. This could well hint at the problems her favouritism caused which Gottschalk himself had experienced as one of the artists who left to form *Die Rheingruppe* (Barth, 1984, p. 45) and would challenge the wholesome maternal image. The items in the background also suggest a more complex impression of her personality. The cup invokes the connotations of her caring, maternal side through associations with the coffee she used to make for 'her' artists, whilst the depiction of the bottle of wine and glass suggests a wilder aspect to Ey and 'her circle'. In short the artist plays on the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype but does not use it to diminish her status as an art dealer. Instead elements of the image are used to present a more rounded impression, implying the importance she held for 'her' artists.

When analysing newspaper articles from the Weimar period it is also apparent that the associations of the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype are frequently found alongside acknowledgement of her achievements as an art dealer. Thus the notion put forward by Klapheck and Baumeister that the use of this stereotype downplayed this aspect of her life is again shown to be in need of modification. Helene V(?)ulle (occupation unknown) in 'Die Mama der Rheinland-Maler' for instance writes in 1925: 'Von einer

seltenen Frau, die ganz mütterliche Frau und doch Mäzenin großen Stils ist, soll hier die Rede sein' (Helene, 1925, n.pn.). Moreover in 1929 the *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* notes: 'Es ist geradezu frappierend, wie die Mutter Ey mit treffender Sicherheit ganz intuitiv den Ruhm der jungen Künstler vorhersagte' (*DT*, 02/03/1929, n.pn.). This impression also emerges in an article by Wilhelm Schmidtsdorf (occupation unknown) in *Die Grüne Post* which emphasises her maternal qualities but also her competence as an art dealer: 'Die Führer der Jungen in Deutschland, Frankreich, Schweden, Italien, Rußland, Polen ... Japaner, Araber kamen nach Düsseldorf zu Mutter Ey und sie bemutterte alle: mit gutem Kaffee, guten Brötchen, guten Ratschlägen und - guten Verkäufen' (Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn.). A particularly striking example is found in an article in the *Kölner Zeitung* in 1933 referring to the 'unter dem Namen Mutter Ey in ganz Deutschland bekanntgewordenen Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey' (*Kölner Zeitung*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.).

Newspaper reports commenting on *Sammlung Ey*'s touring exhibition also frequently display a similar approach<sup>69</sup> and by the very nature of their reports acknowledge what she had achieved. Certain media contributions even go so far as to place the 'Mutter Ey' label in quotation marks in what can be understood as an attempt to make their readers aware that this was only one image of the art dealer and not the sole representation of her personality. The *Königsberger Volkszeitung* for instance writes: 'Wer ist diese "Mutter Ey"?' and notes how it is '15 Jahre her [...] seit sie eine "Rolle" zu spielen begann' (*Königsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.).<sup>70</sup> Media reports which refer to her as 'Mutter Ey' also do not always use this term consistently in their articles and refer to her in a variety of ways, including: 'Frau Johanna Ey';<sup>71</sup> 'Frau Ey';<sup>72</sup> 'Johanna Ey';<sup>73</sup> 'Ey';<sup>74</sup> 'Das Ey';<sup>75</sup> 'Asta';<sup>76</sup> and 'Asta Ey'.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>69</sup> For example: 'Frau Ey [...] ist vielen unseren jüngeren, aus dem Kriege zurückkehrenden Künstlergeneration nicht nur Mutter und Betreuerin, sondern auch künstlerische Förderin gewesen' (*Wiesbadener Zeitung*, 27/12/1932).

<sup>70</sup> See amongst others: Stanhabe (?) (occupation unknown), 1926, n.pn.: 'Den Namen "Mutter Ey" hat sie mit in ihren neuen Beruf genommen'; Sprüngli (Theo A. Sprüngli. Occupation unknown), 1930, n.pn.: '"Mutter Ey" ist nicht nur die populärste Frau Düsseldorfs - in der ganzen deutschen Kunstwelt sind ihre Verdienste um die moderne bildene Kunst bekannt'; *Berliner Illustrierte*, 1930, n.pn.: '"Mutter Ey" hat die Bedeutung vieler Maler, so die von Otto Dix, als erste erkannt und ihnen die Wege geebnet' and Dr Jcks, 1930, n.pn.: 'Frau Johanna Ey, die "Mutter Ey", wie sie von den Malern genannt wird'.

<sup>71</sup> For example Braune, 1929, n.pn. No forename or occupation could be found.

<sup>72</sup> For example *Berliner Illustrierte*, 1930, n.pn.

<sup>73</sup> For example *Ostpreußische Zeitung*, 04(?) / 01/1932, n.pn.

<sup>74</sup> For example Hannover newspaper, 1932, n.pn.

Turning to Ey's own attitude to the 'Mutter Ey' image, sources suggest that she herself did not always view the 'Mutter Ey' label as negatively as a quote attributed to her by Klapheck suggests: 'Was nützt es, daß sie [Ey] die Reporter anzischt: "Nennt mich doch nicht immer 'Mutter Ey'"' (Klapheck, 1958, p. 40). The implication instead is that this could have been a flippant remark by Ey which was not to be taken seriously or that Ey was misquoted or that the quote was invented. It is for instance notable that Klapheck's citation offers no date or source. It is however also possible that Ey's attitude to this image may have changed with time as she became more respected as an art dealer or that her reaction was dependent on who used this term and in what context. Certainly her use of this name in a letter to Schwesig (Letter, 30/07/1921: Baumeister, 1999, p. 17), her inclusion of articles in her 1936 memoirs which refer to this stereotype, her artists' use of this term in correspondence to her<sup>78</sup> and Wollheim's use of this name in a poem about Ey which she is said to have wanted on her gravestone (*An Mutter Ey*, 06/05/1921: Ey, 1936, p. 116f) suggest she was not averse to its use herself, nor by particular artists at certain times. Indeed her attitude to Wollheim's poem indicates that she was willing to enshrine this image for posterity.

Osborn's frequent reference to this stereotype in his introduction to her *Sammlung Ey* catalogue, notably in the title 'Mutter Ey' (Osborn, 1931, p. 3), and the fact that the term was used by others in the preamble to her 1929 and 1930 autobiographical texts also implies that she tolerated the use of this term and may even have seen the value of tapping into this 'trademark' for the purposes of self-promotion. Furthermore none of the available newspaper articles and letters up until her death refers to her discontent at being labelled in this way. One may also ask why she should have been averse to this stereotype. She was after all a mother, and the attributes she was awarded by the media describe her as being caring, self-sacrificial and generous in conjunction with her achievements as an art dealer. It is therefore possible she may

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<sup>75</sup> For example Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn.

<sup>76</sup> See an anonymous article: 'Mutter Ey, die Düsseldorf Malermutter, in eingeweihten Kreisen auch wegen ihrer "fabelhaften" Aehnlichkeit mit...Asta Nielsen, "Asta" genannt' (Anon, 1930b, n.pn.).

<sup>77</sup> See Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn.: 'Es war Asta Eys großer Tag.'

<sup>78</sup> For example she is described as a 'Malermutter' (*Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, June (?) 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 68f), 'Kunstmutter' (*Kunst-Auktion Berlin*, 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 69) and 'Mutter Ey' (*Koblenzer General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 70). See the section of this chapter dealing with her artists' use of the term 'Mutter Ey'.

even have shared Lauterbach's view that: 'Die Liebevolle Bezeichnung "Mutter Ey" ist ihr Ehrentitel!' (Lauterbach, 1981, p. 41).

Moving on to explore the notion put forward by Klapheck (1958, p. 8) and Baumeister (1999, p. 51) of the prevalence of the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype, an analysis of sources from the Weimar period from the Düsseldorf authorities and other official bodies and figures, as well as an investigation into the way the media and 'her' artists described and depicted Ey, suggests that the reality is more complex. On the basis of the available corpus the use of this term by the authorities and figures in Düsseldorf and abroad clearly shows that it was used only sparingly. Ey is usually addressed as 'Frau Ey'<sup>79</sup> or 'Frau Johanna Ey'<sup>80</sup> and once as 'Frau Witwe Robert Ey' (*Auszug*, 24/09/1930) in official correspondence to her or between the authorities themselves. On only two occasions is reference to 'Mutter Ey' made: in *Stadtsyndikus* Dr Walther Hensel's response to a letter by Robert Görlinger<sup>81</sup> of the *Sozialdemokratische Stadtverordneten-Fraktion* and in the previously mentioned letter of congratulation written by *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr on Ey's sixty fifth birthday (Letter, 03/03/1929 (?)).

With the exception of Görlinger who notably addresses the Düsseldorf authorities and not Ey when he writes of 'Künstlermutter Frau Ey',<sup>82</sup> 'Mutter Ey' and 'Künstlermutter',<sup>83</sup> other prominent individuals and organisations as well as friends of the art dealer who were not artists also appear to have refrained from addressing her in this way in the spoken and written word. This impression derives from letters and encounters described in Ey's 1936 memoirs which reflect on the Weimar period and which, where possible, have been checked against the original documents to prove that Ey did not manipulate them. The preference in these instances appears to be for 'Frau Ey' or derivatives or translations thereof.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> See: *Receipt*, 14/10/1929; Letter, 18/02/1930//21/02/1930; Letter, 30/05/1930; Letter, 01/09/1930; Letter, 09/09/1930; *Auszug*, 24/09/1930; *Abschrift*, 13/10/1930//30/10/1930; Letter, 30/03/1931; Letter, 17/04/1931 and Letter, 27/04/1931.

<sup>80</sup> See *Abschrift*, 13/10/1930//30/10/1930, Letter, 30/03/1931 and Letter, 27/04/1931.

<sup>81</sup> See Letter, 29/10/1929.

<sup>82</sup> See Letter, 25/10/1929.

<sup>83</sup> See Letter, 05/12/1929.

<sup>84</sup> Indeed, though the director of the *Universitäts-Bibliothek* Greifswald avoids addressing her at all (Letter, Greifswald, Oct 1931) a letter from the *Kölnischer Kunstverein* calls her 'Frau Ey' (Letter, 13/06/1931) and so too does artist Otto Nagel in correspondence regarding the *Internationale*

This is in stark contrast to the use of the ‘Mutter Ey’ stereotype in the media of the Weimar Period where this image appears to have been very popular in accordance with the assertions of Klapheck and Baumeister. In the corpus available it is first encountered in 1920, once in 1923 and once in 1924, four times in 1925, three times in 1926 and three times in 1928.<sup>85</sup> Indeed only four texts from the seventeen available between 1917 and the end of 1928 do not use these connotations.<sup>86</sup> Yet the highest frequency of media references to the maternal stereotype in the Weimar period occurs from 1929 onwards, with ten in that year, twelve in 1930, fifteen in 1931 and a peak of nineteen in 1932, decreasing to eight in 1933.<sup>87</sup> In summary, of the sixty nine

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*Ausstellung Frauen in Not* (Letter, 18/09/1931 and Letter, 22(?)09/1931). Hermann Carl Hempel the head of the *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* (Ey, 1936, p. 25), *Generalintendant der Städtischen Theater Düsseldorf* Walter Bruno Iltz (Letter, 04/03/1929), the *Oberbürgermeister* of Königsberg Dr Lohmeyer (Letter, 12/03/1932), Kurt Glaser, librarian and art historian, from the *Staatliche Museen, Staatliche Kunstbibliothek* (Letter, Glaser, 1931), Robert M. Hutchins president of the *University of Chicago* (Letter, 15/11/1932) and R. Schenk (?) (occupation unknown) from the *Städtische Kunstsammlung*, Wiesbaden (Letter, 01/06/1932) also favour this term. Moreover poet Theodor Däubler (Ey, 1936, p. 72) and a clergyman mentioned in Ey’s memoirs call her ‘Frau Ey’ (Ey, 1936, p. 14), the General Director of the *Bayrische Staatsbibliothek* Dr Georg Reismüller, librarian, addresses her as ‘Sehr verehrte Frau!’ (Letter, Reismüller, Feb 1932) and the Italian General Consul refers to her as ‘Fräulein Yohanna Ey’ (Letter, 11/05/1932). Responding to Ey’s attempts to have works from her collection exhibited at the international exposition in Chicago in 1933 N.H. Defoe from the Department of Exhibits (no further information could be found) favours the English equivalent ‘Mrs. Ey’ and ‘Mrs Johanna Ey’ (Letter, 03/01/1933, Letter, 02/02/1933 and Letter, 04/02/1933), whilst V.L. Shevlin (no further information could be found) from car manufacturer Henry Ford’s secretary’s office calls her ‘Mrs Ey’ or ‘Madam’ (Letter, 28/03/1932) and William R. Valentiner the art director of *The Detroit Institute of Arts* calls her ‘Madame Ey’ (Letter, 12/04/1932).

<sup>85</sup> 1920: Beil, 08/05/1920, n.pn. 1923: Keim, 20/10/1923, n.pn. 1924: Uzarski, 1924, p. 170/ p. 174. 1925: Keim, 1925, p. 812; Boissier, 1925, pp. 33-35 (Marcel Boissier a.k.a. Georg Waldmann, amongst others a singer and master of ceremonies: Goebels, 2009, p. 8); *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 27/06/1925, n.pn and Helene, 1925, n.pn. 1926: Flechtheim, 1926, n.pn., Stanhabe (?), 1926, n.pn. and Schreiner, 1926. 1928: Sternheim, 1928, n.pn., Lasch, 1928, p. 450 (Bernd Lasch, art historian) and Wedderkop, 1928, p. 181 (author H. v. Wedderkop, forename could not be determined).

<sup>86</sup> In the excerpts available for analysis from the *Düsseldorf General-Anzeiger*, 09/11/1917, n.pn and the *Düsseldorf General-Anzeiger*, 21/12/1917, n.pn. there is no reference to the maternal stereotype. It is possible this trope was used in the remainder of these articles but this could not be verified. See also *DN*, 1921 (?), n.pn. and *Der Mittag*, 26/03/1921, n.pn. which do not refer to this maternal stereotype.

<sup>87</sup> 1929: *Rheinische Illustrierte*, 03/04/1929, n.pn.; *DN* (?), 1929, n.pn.; Geburtstag, 1929, n.pn.; *DT*, 02/03/1929, n.pn.; Braune, 1929, n.pn.; Lehr, 03/03/1929 (?), n.pn.; Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn and Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929, n.pn.; *Kölnische Illustrierte Zeitung*, 04/05/1929, p. 581; Ey, 1929, p. 21. 1930: Ey, 1930, p. 76; Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.; *DN*, 28/10/1930, n.pn.; ‘Düsseldorfer Kunst’, 1930, n.pn.; Anon, 1930a, n.pn.; ‘Wissenschaft: Frau Ey im neuen Heim’, 1930, n.pn.; Anon, 1930b, n.pn.; Dr Jcks, 1930, n.pn.; Sprüngli, 1930, n.pn.; Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn. and Luise Straus-Ernst, 1930, n.pn. *Berliner Illustrierte*, 1930, n.pn. 1931: Osborn, 1931; Heymann, 21/02/1931, n.pn.; *DN*, 19/02/1931, n.pn.; Anon, 1931, n.pn.; Heymann, 1931, n.pn.; *DT*, 04/05/1931, n.pn.; Ginzel, 25/06/1931, n.pn.; *Kölnische Zeitung*, 25/06/1931, n.pn.; *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 04/07/1931, n.pn; *Westdeutsche Woche*, 12/07/1931, n.pn.; *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, June (?) 1931, n.pn.; *Kunst-Auktion Berlin*, 1931, n.pn.; *Koblener General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931, n.pn.; ‘Die Düsseldorfer Künstlermutter’, 27/08/1931, n.pn.; ‘Begegnung’, December 1931, n.pn. 1932: *Ostmarkrundfunk Illustrierte*, n.d., n.pn.; *Königsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.; ‘Sammlung Ey’, *Königsberger*

references to Ey between the beginning of 1929 and the end of 1933 only five do not invoke these connotations,<sup>88</sup> and of the eighty nine in total<sup>89</sup> from 1917 to 1933 only nine do not mention the maternal stereotype.

If one considers when the increased use of this image occurred, it is apparent that this took place after the *Junge Rheinland* had left Ey's premises, implying that Baumeister may well be right to suggest that she rose to prominence after this.<sup>90</sup> It is also noticeable that these texts were written about particular events in Ey's life which intrigued the media and which in turn increased the frequency of use of the maternal stereotype. These include Ey becoming known as the most portrayed woman in Germany, her sixty fifth birthday, Ey moving into new premises, her flight to Hamburg, her travelling exhibition and her threatened eviction in 1932 and 1933. It is also clear that Osborn's introduction to Ey's *Sammlung Ey* catalogue (1931) exerted a great influence, since numerous journalists writing reports about this travelling exhibition adopt very similar phraseology or cite from his text.<sup>91</sup>

From the source material it is also evident that certain journalists used this image frequently and consistently, thereby helping to cement this stereotype in the popular

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*Allgemeine Zeitung*, 04/01/1932, n.pn.; *Ostpreußische Zeitung*, 04(?)01/1932, n.pn.; *Königsberger Tagesblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn.; Kyser largely avoids this stereotype in the *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn. with the exception of a portrait by Dix which he calls 'Mutter Ey' (Fig. 1); *Volksstimme Mannheim*, 26/09/1932, n.pn.; 'Der Mannheimer Kunstverein', n.d., n.pn.; *Neues Mannheimer*, 16/09/1932, n.pn.; 'Die Künstlermama von Düsseldorf', n.d., n.pn.; *Neue Mannheimer Zeitung*, 17-18/09/1932, n.pn.; *Wiesbadener Zeitung*, 27/12/1932, n.pn.; 'Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden', n.d., n.pn.; Hannover newspaper, 1932, n.pn.; *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 06/02/1932, n.pn.; Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.; Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.; May, 16/11/1932, n.pn. (no further information about May could be found) and Heymann, 24/12/1932, n.pn. 1933: *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, 03/01/1933, n.pn.; *Der Mittag*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.; *Dortmunder General-Anzeiger*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.; *Kölner Zeitung*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.; Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn.; Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn.; Dorak, 1933 (?), n.pn. (Frank Dorak, art historian) and reference to 'Mutter Ey' in an article in Spanish (Goldmann, 03/06/1933, n.pn. Theodor Goldmann was a guest in the *Pension Weyer*, Majorca. Baumeister, 1999, p. 230).

<sup>88</sup> Brandes, 1930, n.pn. (J. Brandes, no forename could be found. Occupation unknown); *Berliner Börsen*, 1931, n.pn.; 'Das Ey wird international', 1931, n.pn.; 'Die Ausstellung Ey', 1932 (?), n.pn. and 1933: *Der Mittag*, 12/01/1933, n.pn.

<sup>89</sup> This total includes 'Mutter Ey - Tysklands', n.d., n.pn., 'En Konstens', n.d., p. 181, and 'Besuch bei der Düsseldorfer Künstlermama', n.d., n.pn. These reports have no date and therefore cannot be included in the study of the prevalence of this term in the media in a given year. However in all likelihood they are from the Weimar period.

<sup>90</sup> Baumeister: 'erst nachdem die Vereinigung "Das Junge Rheinland" an Bedeutung verloren hatte, konnte die "Kunsthändlerin Ey" zum Begriff werden' ('Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 160/ p. 163).

<sup>91</sup> See for instance: *DT*, 04/05/1931; Wellem; 14/11/1932, n.pn.; 'Die Düsseldorfer Künstlermutter', 27/08/1931, n.pn. and 'Die Künstlermama von Düsseldorf', n.d., n.pn.



imagination and potentially encouraging its use amongst other writers. Of these, Heymann is the Ey commentator in the Weimar period with the highest number of reports (seven) which use this maternal stereotype, followed by Luise Straus-Ernst (three). Helene is however the first female to use these maternal associations (Helene, 1925, n.pn.), followed by Luise Straus-Ernst and Theo A. Sprüngli (occupation unknown, Sprüngli, 1930, n.pn.). This demonstrates that the proliferation of the ‘Mutter Ey’ image is not to be viewed solely as a male ‘conspiracy’. Moreover Heymann’s frequent usage, together with that of his colleagues, shows that, contrary to his assertion, ‘Die Legende von der Mutter Ey haben wir nicht gewollt, sie hat sie selbst nicht geschaffen - die ist das Werk der Düsseldorfer Stadtverwaltung’ (Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn.), the press played an integral part in its proliferation.

Turning now to consider the prevalence of the ‘Mutter Ey’ image in the written documents of artists associated with Ey in the Weimar Period, Klapheck offers an interesting observation with which to open this investigation: ‘Diese Alten [Ey’s older artist friends] haben sie denn auch selten mit “Mutter Ey” angeredet, das taten erst die Späteren, als die Legende schon zu wirken begann, sie vielleicht auch milder und weiser geworden war. Für die alten Freunde war sie kurzerhand und unsentimental “die Ey”; und auch sie selbst hat sich nie anders genannt’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8f). Beginning with the latter point first, on the evidence of the surviving body of Ey’s correspondence she certainly appears to have favoured the use of her surname without the maternal prefix. However Klapheck’s assertion that Ey never used anything other than her real name is easily refuted in the light of letters, such as that to the family of artist and stage designer Werner Schramm in which she uses ‘Mutter Ey’ (Letter, 21/05/1927).

The time-frame Klapheck gives for the supposed growing popularity of this usage amongst ‘her’ artists is however far more difficult to evaluate. The remains of Ey’s correspondence record far more letters to artists than from them, and therefore provides a limited avenue of enquiry. Furthermore this issue is complicated by trying to decide what Klapheck means when she distinguishes here between ‘alte’ and ‘spätere’ friends. Even assuming that the mass departure from the *Junge Rheinland* group in 1923 is understood as the marker between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ ‘generations’ of the ‘Ey circle’, which is in itself controversial, it is not clear when this ‘old

generation' begins. This could refer to the start of Ey's career as a 'modern' art dealer or to when she first began to deal in art on a full-time basis, but it could also refer to her days as a coffee shop owner and her initial contact with artists from the *Düsseldorfer Akademie*.

In the absence of letters from the period and on the basis of Ey's autobiographical texts it certainly appears that many of the artists who had had contact with her before, during and shortly after the First World War but before she began to deal in 'modern' art did not refer to her as 'Mutter Ey' during this era, preferring 'Frau Ey'<sup>92</sup> or 'Asta'.<sup>93</sup> Moreover reference is made to the artists as a collective during this period addressing her as 'Ey' in her 1936 memoirs (Ey, 1936, p. 18). Following her decision to exhibit 'modern' art the term 'Mutter Ey' does however begin to be used by 'her' artists. The limitations of the corpus make it impossible to distinguish a pattern according to the 'generation' of artist. However if Klapheck's reference to the 'older' artists is understood as referring to artists associated with Ey from 1920 up to the meeting which led to many artists leaving *Das Junge Rheinland* in 1923, and the 'later' artists refers to those who came into contact with her after this point, doubt is certainly cast on her generalisations that the 'older' artists rarely used this term, whilst the 'later' artists used it frequently (Klapheck, 1958, p. 8f).

This is apparent from the few written documents to Ey or about Ey by 'her' artists which exist from before or during this meeting in 1923 and refer to her as 'Mutter Ey'. Dix for instance, someone who by the previous definition would belong to the 'old Ey circle' uses this term in two letters from 1922 and so too does artist Otto Griebel.<sup>94</sup> Wollheim also uses this designation in the aforementioned poem *An Mutter Ey* in 1921 and Adalbert Trillhaase follows suit in *Das Ey Gedicht* in 1922. Indeed if Kaufmann's citation of Schwesig is accurate, Schwesig addressed her as 'Mutter Ey' at the meeting of the *Junge Rheinland* in 1923 (Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.). In documents after 1923 the 'older generation's' use of this term is also apparent, such as in the aforementioned nineteenth chapter of Uzarski's *Die Reise nach Deutschland* (Uzarski,

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<sup>92</sup> Gebhardt (Ey, 1936, p. 19), Spatz (Letter, Spatz, March 1929: Ey, 1936, p. 51), 'Maler [Josef?] Struck' (Ey, 1936, p. 20) and Pankok (Ey, 1930, p. 79/ Ey, 1936, p. 21).

<sup>93</sup> Artist (Viktor) Savelsberg (Ey, 1936, p. 14), Wever (Ey, 1930, p. 78/ Ey, 1936, p. 15) and Professor (Wilhelm) Schmurr from the *Staatlichen Akademie Düsseldorf* (Letter, Schmurr, March 1929).

<sup>94</sup> Dix: Letter, 'Liebe Mutter Ey! Wie gehts?', 1922 and Letter, 'Liebe Mutter Ei! Ei!', 1922. Griebel: Letter, Griebel, 1922 and Letter, Christmas 1922.

1924, p. 170/ p. 174). It is however clear that the ‘Mutter Ey’ term was not used consistently amongst this ‘older generation’ as Trillhaase demonstrates when he uses ‘Frau Ey’ as well as ‘Mutter Ey’ in *Das Ey Gedicht*, 1922 and when Ernst simply calls her ‘Ey’ (Letter, 05/03/1932) and ‘Grosses Ey’ in a birthday telegram (Telegram, 04(?) /03/1929).<sup>95</sup>

In Ey’s correspondence with Sureda, which provides one of the few letter exchanges in which a large number of the artist’s responses are available, Klapheck’s theory is also not borne out. Here one would expect the ‘Mutter Ey’ term to be used as Sureda belonged to the ‘later second Ey circle’ since he made contact with her in 1926 (Ey, 1936, p. 119). However in the letters reproduced in Ey’s 1936 memoirs the designation ‘Mutter Ey’ does not occur. Instead she is referred to as ‘Johanna’,<sup>96</sup> ‘Ey’,<sup>97</sup> and ‘Johanna Ey’,<sup>98</sup> ‘Eychen’ or ‘Ey’chen’,<sup>99</sup> ‘Eylein’ (Letter, ‘Auf dem Wege zurück’, n.d.) and even ‘süsse Zitrone!’ (Letter, ‘Guten Tag, Du süsse Zitrone!’, n.d.), but not as ‘Mutter Ey’. Furthermore in the instances in her memoirs referring to how Sureda verbally addressed her, she is referred to as ‘Eychen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 30/ p. 41) and ‘Ey’ (Ey, 1936, p. 89) and on only one occasion is a reference to the maternal stereotype raised.<sup>100</sup> Pudlich who was one of the ‘later circle’ also does not refer to

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<sup>95</sup> See also Wollheim who is said to have addressed her as ‘Ey’ (Ey, 1936, p. 23) and in his *Komödie einer Unverschämten* calls her ‘Frau Johanna Ey’ and ‘Frau Ey’ (Wollheim, 1922). Furthermore Schramm, a member of the ‘older generation’ (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 337) calls her ‘Frau Ey’ (Ey, 1936 p. 47) and artist Jupp (Josef) Bell who became part of the ‘Ey circle’ in 1923 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313) and was thus on the cusp of the ‘old’ and ‘later Ey circles’, addresses her both as ‘Ey’ (Ey, 1936, p. 114) and ‘Liebe dicke Alte!’ (Ey, 1936, p. 116). Jean Paul Schmitz, whose contact with Ey possibly originates from 1923, given that he began to study at the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* in 1923 (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 440), also refers to her not as ‘Mutter Ey’ but ‘Das Ey’ in Letter, Jean Paul Schmitz, 1927. Letter, 01/05/1927 also uses this term but it is not clear that this is from J.P. Schmitz.

<sup>96</sup> See: ‘Bitte, Johanna, schreibe sofort’ (Letter, ‘Dein Brief vom 14. August’, n.d.), ‘Prost Johanna!’ (Letter, ‘Auf dem Wege zurück’, n.d.) and ‘Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!’ (Letter, ‘Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!’, n.d.).

<sup>97</sup> See: ‘Liebes Ey!’ (Letter, ‘Jetzt sitze ich mich in meinem Hause’, March (?) 1927); ‘Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe’ (Letter, ‘Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe’, n.d.); ‘Sicher, Ey’ (Letter, ‘Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!’, n.d.); ‘Liebe Ey!’ (Letter, ‘Ich weiss es’, n.d.); ‘Zum Teufel mit dem Ey!’ (Letter, ‘Zum Teufel mit dem Ey!’, n.d.); ‘es ist nicht notwendig Ey, dass es Dir gut geht’/ ‘Ey, wer kann sagen, wann und ob wir uns noch einmal wiedersehen werden?’ (Letter, ‘es ist nicht notwendig’, 1933); ‘Ey, ich hatte mir gedacht, ich bin halb tot’ (Letter, ‘Ey, ich hatte mir gedacht’, n.d.) and ‘Liebe Ey!’ (Letter, 06/06/1935).

<sup>98</sup> See ‘Liebe Johanna Ey!’ (Letter, 09/10/1932) and ‘Fabelhafte und phantastische Johanna Ey!’ (Letter, ‘Fabelhafte und phantastische Johanna Ey!’, n.d.).

<sup>99</sup> See: ‘Liebes Eychen!’ (Letter, ‘Dein Brief vom 14. August’, n.d.); ‘Na Ey’chen, gut angekommen in Düsseldorf?’ (Letter, 08/05/1927); ‘Auf Wiedersehen, Ey’chen!’ (Letter, 08/05/1927) and ‘Ey’chen, hast Du viel auf mich geschimpft, dass ich nicht schrieb?’ (Letter, ‘Ey’chen, hast Du viel auf mich geschimpft’, n.d.).

<sup>100</sup> Sureda: ‘Eine feinere Malermutter wie du gibt es doch nicht’ (Ey, 1936, p. 37).

the ‘Mutter’ image when he writes at the foot of a letter from Sureda to Ey, ‘Ist die Welt nicht klein, Ey?’ and ‘jetzt noch ein Glas auf dein Wohl, Ey’ (Letter, ‘Ey’chen, hast Du viel auf mich geschimpft’, n.d.). I would therefore argue that on the basis of this evidence the use of the ‘Mutter Ey’ term by ‘older’ and ‘later’ ‘generations’ of artists in the Weimar period appears to be linked to individual preference, was one of several ways in which Ey was addressed and cannot be attributed to a particular ‘generation’.

The titles of Ey portraits from this period also do not offer a reliable means with which to ascertain how different artists’ ‘generations’ referred to her, given that the titles of many of these art works vary according to different sources,<sup>101</sup> due to the fact that as a genre which is often privately commissioned they did not have a fixed title and were named or renamed to suit the agenda of third parties in publications or exhibitions. In certain instances however the artists themselves have made an inscription and dated their work and a reliable insight is offered into the way in which Ey was addressed. The impression given in these examples is once again that this was down to individual choice and was not attributable to a particular artists’ ‘generation’. For instance although the notion of Ey as mother to ‘her’ artists is raised, she is referred to as ‘Johanna Ey genannt Sebus (viel besungen)’ in a 1923 portrait of Ey by Schwesig (Fig. 21).<sup>102</sup> Kaufmann addresses her as ‘Mutter Ey’ in a portrait from 1923 (Fig. 22) and Sureda calls her ‘Frau Ey’ in a picture from 1927 (Fig. 23). In a portrait from 1929 (Fig. 24) and in a further work which clearly dates from 1931 or before<sup>103</sup> (Fig. 25) Hundt also calls her ‘Frau Ey’, whilst in a portrait from 1924 he refers to her as ‘Mutter Ey’ (Fig. 26).

The variety of guises and situations in which Ey is presented in visual works also suggests that as in the case of the written evidence the ‘Mutter’ image was not used exclusively and was one of a multitude of images the artists chose to adopt. There are

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<sup>101</sup> See for instance the portrait of Ey by Dix (Fig. 1), which is referred to as *Mutter Ey im Sonntagsstaat* (Schreiner, 1926, p. 44), as *Mutter Ey* by Kyser (*Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.) and as *Bildnis der Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey* (Barth, 1984, inside cover).

<sup>102</sup> The inscription Barth cites from Schwesig’s portrait reads: ‘Johanna Ey genannt Sebus (viel besungen), die die schweren Jungrheinlandkämpfe an der Westfront mitmachte/ sie teilte Patronen aus, Zigaretten u. Erfrischungen’, ‘ihr kampfgetrübter Blick schaut seherisch hinterwärts!’ und ‘die Liebe wohnte stets in ihrem Herzen, o Sohn, o Sohn, vergiß die Mutter nicht’ (Barth, 2007, p. 152). There is no date immediately visible on the picture but Barth seems certain as no ‘circa’ is mentioned.

<sup>103</sup> This portrait is depicted in *Sammlung Ey*, 1931, p. 53.

for instance many examples of humorous portraits of Ey which are documentary in nature and appear to be based on one of her remarks or capture certain events in which she was involved. These works show Ey as an iconic, comic figure for 'her' artists, applicable to many different scenarios and even periods of history as Hundt's depiction of her as Nero shows (Fig. 27) or when her statement, 'ich könnte jeden preussischen General erschieszen' became the basis of a work by Pudlich (Fig. 28) in which she does just that (Klapheck, 1958, p. 60).

When exploring these expansive depictions it is evident that whilst some reiterate the connotations of the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype others challenge them. For example Dix echoes the positive almost religious associations of goodness and self-sacrifice when he portrays Ey as an angel carrying a 2,000 Mark note in a letter thanking her for sending this unexpected amount of money (Letter, 'Du bist ein rettender Engel', 1922 (?)), and Hundt too uses this heavenly motif in one of his portraits (Fig. 29). Yet as has been mentioned Gottschalk's depiction of Ey as a mother hen (Fig. 19) shows these associations in a negative as well as in a positive light. Indeed whilst Meskimmon asserts that the maternal image in the Weimar period was the opposing pole of the moral spectrum to the 'decadent' prostitute and the fears they encompassed about urbanisation and women's new roles in society, maintaining that portrayals of mothers were 'de-sexed' in comparison to those of female street-workers (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 30), it is apparent that certain portraits of Ey mix this imagery, often to satirical effect and possibly with the intention of revealing these false distinctions. This is particularly evident in portraits of Ey with sexual overtones, which are explored in detail as part of the next chapter, 'Johanna Ey: 'Neue Frau'?

To summarise, the main strands of the 'Mutter Ey' image in the Weimar Period have been identified as portraying Ey as a caring, selfless and inherently good surrogate mother to the artists with whom she was associated and the Düsseldorf art scene. Although certain commentators have claimed that this popular image has overshadowed her achievements as an art dealer and that she herself did not like this term, this chapter has shown that the reality is more complex than we have been led to believe. Various visual and the majority of written sources from the Weimar period have instead shown that the maternal stereotype in this period was frequently presented together with an acknowledgment of her achievements as an art dealer.

Moreover no evidence has been found in the available newspaper articles up to Ey's death or in her correspondence to substantiate the quote which Klapheck attributes to Ey in which it is suggested she did not like this term of address (Klapheck, 1958, p. 40). In certain instances Ey has even been shown to have been involved in its promotion.

In comparison to the generalisations of Klapheck and Baumeister about the prevalence of the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype, an analysis of sources from the Weimar period has also provided a much more differentiated presentation of the use of this trope. The findings suggest that Düsseldorf and official bodies and figures rarely used the image, favouring instead 'Frau Ey' or translations or variations thereof. The media by contrast have been shown to have contributed greatly to the promotion of the 'Mutter Ey' stereotype with its usage peaking in 1932 and Heymann and Straus-Ernst being identified as the most prolific users. Importantly Straus-Ernst's contributions and those of other female contributors have also demonstrated that this image was not a media phenomenon pursued solely by male writers. In regard to the way in which Ey was addressed or depicted by 'her' artists in written and visual sources from the Weimar period it appears that the use of the 'Mutter Ey' image was not consistent amongst individuals and is not attributable to a particular 'generation' of the 'Ey circle' as Klapheck suggests. An investigation of the portraits of the art dealer has also revealed that the 'Mutter Ey' image was neither exclusive nor dominant amongst artists' portraits and was instead one facet of a wide array of images and associations some of which contrasted with the Weimar maternal stereotype. Indeed, as part of a broader investigation into the notion of Ey as a 'Neue Frau', the following chapter explores images of her, the sexual overtones of which challenge the wholesome connotations of the maternal image in the Weimar period.

### 3

## Johanna Ey: ‘Neue Frau’?

In an article entitled ‘Uebrigens...h. “Eine moderne Frau...”’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.) Fritz Heymann reports on Johanna Ey’s maiden flight from Düsseldorf to Hamburg and quotes her as saying: ‘Ich bin eine moderne Frau! Ich fliege!’ Ey then cites this quote in the reproduction of Heymann’s article in her 1936 memoirs (Ey, 1936, p. 58) and Körner and Wilkens re-visit this declaration in ‘Johanna Ey als Spanierin’ (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 2) in the introduction to a text which argues that Ey is to be viewed as a ‘modern’ woman. This chapter however, challenges the notion of Ey’s ‘modernity’ and questions the validity of viewing her as a ‘Neue Frau’. Before this undertaking can begin however, it is necessary to define ‘modernity’ and ‘modernism’ in the German context and elicit the connotations of the ‘Neue Frau’ stereotype. These definitions then inform a review of images related to Ey’s body, her sexuality, her attitude to women with focus on the aforementioned Heymann article (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.), portraits of her and further images available in primary and secondary literature.

When considering the origins of modernity Stuart Hall writes of how the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the nineteenth and the twentieth century all had a sense of ‘representing the culminating point of history and claimed the epithet “modern” for itself’ (Hall, 1992, p. 15). He argues however that it was towards the end of the nineteenth century when industrialization transformed social and economic life that the notion of modernity received enormous impetus (Hall, 1992, p. 15). Hall maintains that this was the period of the ‘new avant-garde intellectual and artistic movements in the arts, literature, architecture, science and philosophy, sometimes called “Modernism”, which aggressively embraced “the new” [...] and revelled in challenging and overthrowing the old forms, traditions and theories, institutions and authorities’ (Hall, 1992, p. 15). Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane share this

view that 'Modernism' is to be understood as the art of a rapidly industrialising world but emphasise that this was also influenced by the turmoil these changes induced. Indeed they present a more differentiated response to these developments and one which I consider more appropriate when they write:

Modernism was in most countries an extraordinary compound of the futuristic and the nihilistic, the revolutionary and the conservative, the naturalistic and the symbolistic, the romantic and the classical. It was a celebration of a technological age and a condemnation of it; an excited acceptance of the belief that the old regimes of culture were over, and a deep despairing in the face of that fear; a mixture of convictions that the new forms were escapes from historicism and the pressures of the time with convictions that they were precisely the living expression of these things (Bradbury/McFarlane, 1976, p. 46).

In the context of this chapter 'modernity' is therefore to be understood as relating to the period of dramatic change in all areas of life following the repercussions of industrialisation in the nineteenth century. Furthermore the notion of being 'modern' refers to the perception of an individual or group being at the forefront of at least one of these processes of change, whilst 'Modernism' is to be understood as a multi-layered artistic response to these changes which not only reflected this upheaval but intervened in and protested both for and against it. Although these general definitions are clearly transferable to the German situation it is apparent that they took a different form and occurred at different times in comparison to England since industrialisation happened at a later stage. Bradbury and McFarlane's suggestion that the 'fermenting decade' for 'Modernism' was in the 1890's (Bradbury/McFarlane, 1976, p. 46) thus offers an appropriate starting point for 'modernity' in Germany. Indeed their suggestion that 'Modernism' reached two peaks of influence in the years immediately preceding and following the First World War (Bradbury/McFarlane, 1976, p. 36) is evident in the German visual arts of this period. This chapter concentrates on the second of these peaks in 'Modernism' and explores this phenomenon in the Weimar period when Ey first began to deal in 'modern' art.



The unique paradigm of German modernity influenced by the repercussions of defeat in the First World War, the introduction of democracy and a turbulent financial, political and social atmosphere reflected and shaped by an abundance of developments in the arts consisted of individuals who belonged to societal groups which both embraced and resisted aspects of 'modernity' to varying degrees. One of the most notable, to whom a number of the Weimar artists and their supporters can be attributed, is that of the 'Neue Frau' - a type evident not just in Germany but also in the USA and other European countries. In the German context its origins lay in the women's movements at the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed Renate Pore describes how by the 1890s there were two distinct women's movements in Germany, one Socialist and the other liberal middle-class, or bourgeois, and that these movements had further sub-divisions within them (Pore, 1981, xi). It was however during the Weimar period that the 'Neue Frau' became an icon and this ascent can be attributed to a combination of factors. The new rights for women which gave them equal status to men (in theory at least) under the Weimar constitution, the right to vote and to attend institutes of higher learning certainly led to women being afforded a more visible role in society. Yet the growth of urban centres, influenced by the rationalisation of industry and new technologies, which presented job opportunities for women in factory and white-collar work, was also of great significance since it offered large numbers of women the opportunity to become more financially independent and increased their presence in the streets and workplaces of Weimar Germany.<sup>104</sup>

These factors provided the basis for the 'Neue Frau' trope, but as Annelie Lütgens suggests it was the discovery of the mass media and advertising of these female employees as a new target group which was responsible for the creation of this stereotype (Lütgens, 1997, p. 91).<sup>105</sup> Ute Frevert claims that this image offered a distorted picture of female modernity created by men out of fear or an exaggerated sense of progress (Frevert, 1989, p. 179). However Meskimmon attests that men were not the sole orchestrators of the 'Neue Frau' and that this term held ambivalent

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<sup>104</sup> In the field of office work for instance Katharina von Ankum notes that the number of women working in Germany increased from 55,100 in 1907 to 1,433,700 in 1925 (Ankum, 1997, p. 163).

<sup>105</sup> Meskimmon notes that the 'illustrated press mobilised the image of the *neue Frau* in features, celebrity at-homes, star pin-ups and vast quantities of advertising by the mid-1920's' (1999, p. 167).

connotations.<sup>106</sup> According to Lütgens the physical characteristics of this stereotype effectively combined lesbian subculture's 'men's haircut, monocle, tie, tailored suit - and the American model of the Girl and the vamp, which were a remake of the turn-of-the-century *femme enfante* and *femme fatale*' (Lütgens, 1997, p. 91). Moreover Meskimmon states that it involved associations with youth, modernity, independence, urban life, a sporty lifestyle and androgynous clothes, as well as mannequin-like make-up (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 163f/ p. 192) and referred to one small part of the workforce, the young, urban (usually single) white-collar workers involved in the clerical and service sectors (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 172f). Though often earning less than female factory workers (Frevert, 1989, p. 181) they enjoyed greater status because of the 'relative absence of manual labour [...] and the presence of fashionable accoutrements of urban, working life, such as modish clothes and modern forms of entertainment' (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 173).

The response to this 'Neue Frau' trope was mixed and changed throughout the Weimar period according to the economic, political and cultural situation and the perspective of the viewer. Meskimmon comments that because the illustrated press, advertisements and the cinema were often considered low cultural forms and were associated with a female audience and a 'feminine or shallow sensibility', the invention of the 'Neue Frau' by the media was viewed with intellectual scepticism (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 167). She also attests that the mass media themselves 'increasingly evacuated the *neue Frau* of all political potential in order to make it [...] more palatable for consumers' and maintains that although the stereotype experienced its height in the mid-1920's, the economic instability accompanying the Depression ensured the 'sharp criticism of women who had transgressed traditional gender roles in favour of independence, whether financial, social or sexual' (Meskimmon, p. 168).

Certainly in the more traditional quarters of society the 'Neue Frau' stereotype was often perceived as a woman who was too busy enjoying herself to the detriment of perceived domestic and social duties. Patrice Petro notes in this regard that 'the presence of women in places they had never been before (notably in industry and in

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<sup>106</sup> Meskimmon states that: 'Images of dancers [...] were at the centre of new modes of *Körperkultur*, and their lean, muscular bodies were often shown in aestheticised nude photographs for female consumers to enjoy in the pages of women's magazines', furthermore that these features in illustrated journals were very often produced by women (1999, p. 188).

the cinema) explains the perceived threat of woman registered in various discourses during the Weimar years' (Patrice Petro, 1997, p. 59). Moreover Meskimmon rightly asserts that the shift of women's labour market from the private, domestic sphere to the public was interpreted by conservatives as 'a sign of the destruction of the family (thus, the nation) and an unnatural realignment of gender roles', with the concept of the *Doppelverdiener* commonly deployed to keep women's wages down and to discourage female employment (Meskimmon, p. 171f). Access to forms of contraception against the backdrop of a falling birth rate in Germany and a rise in abortions also provoked further fears of moral decadence and the 'death of the nation'.<sup>107</sup>

Although Meskimmon acknowledges that certain contemporary female cultural critics were angered by the shallow presentation and commodification of the 'Neue Frau' in the media (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 177) she provides a more positive appraisal of this trope from the point of view of other sections of the female population:

The consumption of female icons, from pleasurable star images to "real life" stories of fame and fortune, permitted women in the period to glimpse changes which they rarely experienced personally and to identify with these new, young role models against the tide of traditional gender boundaries. So, while mainstream consumer interests may have been served by parading these stars simply to sell commodities, their very exposure and desirability as icons made them potentially subversive for women (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 189).

Indeed in regard to women artists she argues convincingly that the 'Neue Frau' stereotype was both the 'subject of critique and pleasurable investment for women artists who could see through the cliché and explore its potential simultaneously' (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 193). She notes for instance how artist Hannah Höch reworked the 'commodified display of the *neue Frau*' in photomontages which manipulated

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<sup>107</sup> Beth Lewis citing Hans Ostwald provides statistics which illustrate this phenomenon, noting that in 1914 there were 27 births per thousand persons and that in 1922 this fell to 11.5 per thousand (Ostwald, 1931, p. 159; Lewis, 1997, p. 210). Moreover Lewis refers to Anneliese Bergmann's estimate that half of all German women had had at least one abortion in 1914 and that in 1930 this number rose to two abortions per woman and exceeded live births (Bergmann, 1983, p. 86; Lewis, 1997, p. 211).

images of actresses, dancers and other famous female icons (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 186f) and suggests that ‘the neue Frau in the hands of contemporary women artists, operated as part of an emergent *Frauenkultur*, a space in which women began to explore, in their own terms, their relationship to modernity and modernism’ (Meskimmon, 1999, p. 193).

In summary it is apparent that the media image of the ‘Neue Frau’ as a young, slim and sporty woman often depicted in male attire was able to arouse both adulation and revulsion amongst the German population of the Weimar period. For certain women it offered a form of escapism and an alternative to the ‘traditional’ gender roles, yet for others it was a symbol for the disintegration of this very ‘tradition’ and represented the commodification of women. Although it has been established that the origin of the ‘Neue Frau’ stereotype can be traced to the turn of the century in Germany, for the purposes of this chapter it is to be understood as a Weimar trope created by the mass media and designed to sell consumer goods in response to, and based upon, the influx of women workers into urban centres. Its characteristics in this context reflected an increased financial independence for women through clerical and factory work and a greater sexual freedom resulting from the increased availability of contraception and less repressed attitudes to homosexuality. Moreover it encompassed the issues of emancipation which emerged from women entering the public workplace and being given the right to vote, and in terms of physical attributes is associated with androgynous, youthful, doll-like women in its promotion of the image of a single, childless woman who was quintessentially ‘modern’. The following discussion utilises these ‘traits’ to explore the notion of Ey as a ‘Neue Frau’. Integral to this undertaking is an analysis of the impression she herself projected and the image the press and artists sought to attribute to her, and how the public reacted to these portrayals.

Let us begin by analysing the implications of the Heymann article mentioned at the outset of this chapter. This report details Johanna Ey’s return flight to Hamburg paid for by the Düsseldorf authorities as a present for her sixty fifth birthday and offers many occasions in which a ‘modern’ impression of her is invoked. For example Heymann quotes her stating that she is a modern woman and describes her entering a symbol of modernity in the form of an aeroplane, and this image is reiterated when he

chooses ‘Eine moderne Frau’ as the title of the article. Furthermore the author places emphasis on her active role in striving to be at the forefront of modernity when he implies that the reasons for her wanting to fly were due to her competitive nature and her not wanting to be left behind the latest trends. Indeed the use of a direct quote: ‘Wenn andere Frauen durch die Lüfte gondeln, geht Johanna Ey nicht zu Fuß’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.) underlines this impression. The article also suggests Ey arrived at the decision to fly on her own and remained strong-willed despite friends and family advising against it,<sup>108</sup> which concurs with the independence and strong mindedness of the ‘Neue Frau’ trope. Moreover the unedited version of the article from the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* archive<sup>109</sup> notes that: ‘Sie, Johanna Ey, war nicht nur für die junge Kunst, nein, Sie war für alles Junge, Frische und Neue auf Erden gewesen, sie hatte als erste, lange vor allen anderen das Korsett abgeschafft’ (Heymann, 1931, n.p.). This sentence not only explains her support and contribution to ‘modern’ art in Düsseldorf, which again gives the impression that she was ‘modern’ but also suggests that ‘modernity’ permeated her character and that she was a precursor to the ‘Neue Frau’ of the Weimar era.

Despite these numerous instances however, the article does not present a comprehensive image of Ey as a ‘modern’ ‘Neue Frau’. Indeed comments made by Heymann and the events he chooses to report reveal the difficulties in trying to apply this stereotype to Ey and suggest that the author was knowingly playing on the differences between her and this trope. Throughout the unedited version of the article for instance he makes references to her body shape and weight. He writes of how the donkey she rode in Mallorca suffered under her load, cites Ey raising the issue of whether she would be too heavy for the aircraft and includes a mention of her exact weight in this description: 240 pounds.<sup>110</sup> Moreover in the edited version of this article mention is made of how she looked with suspicion at the tiny entrance to the

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<sup>108</sup> Heymann: ‘Die Familie stand händeringend um sie herum. Hundt und Pudlich weinten bittere Tränen, es war ein herzerreißendes Schluchzen rings um den Friedrichplatz: “Johanna, bleib bei uns auf Erden. Flieg nicht fort, Johanna!”’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.).

<sup>109</sup> As opposed to the edited reproduction of this article in the typescript of Ey’s memoirs (Ey, 1936, pp. 58-61) and Baumeister’s publication of Ey’s memoirs (1999, pp. 123-127).

<sup>110</sup> Heymann: ‘Auf der Insel Mallorca war sie auf einem Maultier zur Freude der Eingeborenen durch die Landschaft geritten, allerdings weniger zur Freude des armen Tieres’ and “‘Halloh, mein Gewicht!”, meinte sie zu der zierlichen jungen Frau, aber sie ließ sich gerne versichern, daß 240 Pfund Lebendgewicht für den Luftvogel eine Kleinigkeit seien’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.).

plane, implying she thought she may have problems getting through.<sup>111</sup> These remarks confound the stereotype of the slim, androgynous ‘Neue Frau’ and the emphasis on physical fitness, and in this respect Ey stands diametrically opposed to what Sabine Hake terms the narrow hips, small breasts and long legs of the *femme enfant* (Hake, 1997, p. 196).

Indeed, although Böll writes how a memorial to Ey should be an: ‘Erinnerung an eine weniger hygienische, weniger schlankheitssüchtige Epoche’ (Böll, 1960, p. 57), the references to Ey’s short, rotund figure abound in Heymann’s article, and numerous newspaper articles of the time<sup>112</sup> suggest that the issue of body image was also a favourite pre-occupation of the Weimar era. That the issue of her body shape features at all in these articles certainly shares similarities with the way in which the appearance of the ‘Neue Frau’ was the subject of analysis and comment. Where these descriptions differ however is in the lack of venom in regard to Ey, despite her ‘modern’ connotations as a working woman active as a ‘modern’ art dealer. In marked contrast to conservative descriptions of the ‘Neue Frau’ stereotype, Ey’s appearance and character are for the most part affectionately or factually portrayed and only very occasionally used in a vindictive or hurtful way in the articles available.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Heymann: ‘Die schmale Eingangstür erregte ihr Mißtrauen’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 60 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 124).

<sup>112</sup> For example: ‘Eine kleine, dicke Frau [...] heran und öffnet, und sieht mit hellen Aeuglein, kritisch auf den Besucher. Sie ist durchaus nicht elegant, bürgerlich, ein weing “Schlampat”, wie der Wiener sagt, gar nichts Besonderes, und doch hat man sofort den Eindruck einer Persönlichkeit’ (Helene, 1925, n.pn.); ‘halb zärtlich, halb rau und prüfend blitzt Freund und Fremden der Blick durch zwei kleine scharfe Aeuglein an, die dem Gesicht (neben einem ehrfurchtgebietenden Kinn) den Charakter geben’ (Stanhave (?), 1926, n.pn.); ‘Sie ist rund und gesetzt und eigentlich in allem das Gegenteil von Alfred Flechtheim, der ein ewiger Ulan bleibt’ (Wedderkop, 1928, p. 181); ‘etwas rundlichen, behäbigen, aber resoluten Frau mit dem sanftgeschwungenen Doppelkinn und den etwas zerzausten schwarzen Haaren’ (DN (?), 1929, n.pn.); ‘Schon rein äußerlich übertrifft die Dame Ey die beiden Schönheiten der klassischen Epoche [...] so hat sie doch Saskias fröhlich glänzende Augen, dazu - wenigstens in der horizontale - Helenes junonisches Format und schließlich mächtige Brillengläser als Konzession an unsere Zeit. [...] wird das Ganze, ein Ehrfurcht gebietender Gesamteindruck, von einem mächtigen dreigeteilten Kinn über zeitlos glatten Seidenkleidern’ (Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.); ‘Das Ey hatte seine schwellenden Formen in fließende braune Seide gehüllt, es stand mitten im Saal und es schaute vergnügt und rundlich von den Wänden’ (Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn.); ‘einer kleine Dame von molligen Format [...] mit bebrillten Augen, aus denen Güte und Klugheit sprechen’ (*Kölnische Zeitung*, 25/06/1931, n.pn.) and ‘Die rundliche Mutter Ey vom Hindenburgwall’ (Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>113</sup> For example: ‘Heute ist Mutter Ey eine der populärsten Erscheinungen im Rheinland. Nicht nur, weil sie mit Düsseldorfs Ruf als Kunststadt eng verknüpft ist, besonders deshalb, weil sie zu allen Menschen lieb und nett ist, wie ein Elefant, zu dem man Onkel sagen möchte’ (Stanhave (?), 1926, n.pn.).

This could be attributed to the fact that the majority of the corpus for this study originates from the collection of Ey and her friends and offensive reports may have been omitted. However another possible explanation is that Ey's celebrity and the notion of her as an 'original' encountered in articles of the time meant she was viewed as an exception and was therefore not subject to the criticism endured by other women. Another consideration is that she was not taken seriously as a 'modern' 'Neue Frau' by the press. Certainly it appears flying was not as 'modern' as Ey thought given that Heymann's article mentions that an eighty year old woman had flown before her and describes how an old woman on Ey's plane started to sew after takeoff: 'Die Dame [...] nahm etwas Weißes heraus und began in 600 Meter Höhe über Gelsenkirchen zu - täfeln. Einen Sofaschoner! Frau Ey begriff, daß auch Frauen, die nicht ganz so modern waren, wie sie, das Flugzeug benutzten, das eine Verkehrsart wie jede andere geworden war' (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.). The dramatic build-up to her inaugural flight and the impression of her as a 'Neue Frau' is certainly partially deflated by this juxtaposition. Moreover it raises significant doubts as to whether Ey's idea of what constituted 'modernity' was up-to-date and whether the authorities intended to invoke a particularly 'modern' image by sponsoring her flight.

Heymann's description of how Ey 'stemmte den molligen Arm in die stattliche Hüfte' (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.) and his use of the 'Mutter' prefix,<sup>114</sup> which invokes maternal connotations which fail to resonate with the masculine stereotype of the 'Neue Frau', also provides another possible clue as to why she appears to have received largely positive press coverage. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, these maternal associations were commonplace in articles throughout the Weimar period and although these reports frequently mention Ey's contribution to the 'modern' art scene and put forward the image of her as a businesswoman, using associations which share similarities with the stereotype of the 'Neue Frau', these articles are invariably framed by the image of her as a 'Mutter' and not as a 'Neue Frau'. Heymann's article is an exception since he keeps these maternal references to a minimum and usually refers to her as 'Frau Ey' 'Johanna' or 'Johanna Ey'. However, here too the dominant image of Ey striving to be modern is weakened by constant reference to her age, size

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<sup>114</sup> Heymann: 'Und während sowohl die leibliche, wie die künstlerische Familie der Mutter Ey sie beschwor' (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.).

and motherly traits, attributes which contrast sharply with the youthful, childless image of the 'Neue Frau'.

The prevalence of the maternal image certainly offers a plausible explanation as to why the image of Ey as a 'Neue Frau' never gained a significant foothold in the media. Indeed I would argue that Ey, who lived the life of a Weimar 'Neue Frau' in reverse, having been married and had children before going on to experience personal independence, may have escaped criticism because she was not viewed as posing the same threat as women who were a generation younger and had not yet fulfilled these societal expectations. Certainly mention of her being a mother<sup>115</sup> is a feature of press reports and from the point of view of the eugenics discourse which Lynne Frame notes became part of political practice after the First World War and highlighted the perceived biological responsibility that women had to society and their 'race' (Frame, 1997, p. 14), Ey with her four remaining children is likely to have been viewed as beyond reproach. In the context of the study of eugenics popular at the time, her curves and rounded figure would also support the notion that she was not viewed as 'dangerous'. This assertion is based on the typologies put forward by the Marburg psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer in his clinical studies of the insane in which a rounded physique suggested a 'Gemütsmensch' (Kretschmer, 1921: Frame, 1997, p. 16) who was an uncomplicated and good natured individual - far less 'troublesome' than the 'Gedankenmensch' embodied in women of a slender, angular, masculine build.

When comparing images of Ey with the stereotypes associated with the 'Neue Frau', the question of Ey's sexuality and the reception of this in primary, secondary, textual as well as visual sources, presents a further avenue of research. As has already been mentioned the perception of sexual freedom and connotations of promiscuity were an important element of the 'Neue Frau' trope, but to date this issue has remained largely neglected in the literature relating to Ey. Klapheck and Barth do not broach this theme directly and Böll avoids delving into such private matters, with his statement in regard to her marriage and divorce summing up his approach: 'Der Respekt vor der Toten,

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<sup>115</sup> For example: 'die Mutter ist von vier eigenen Kindern und unzähligen Künstlern und jungen Menschen' (*DN* (?), 1929, n.pn.); 'Eine Arbeiterfrau, Mutter von 12 Kindern' (Brandes, 1930, n.pn.); 'sie selbst hat deren zwölf geboren, von denen vier am Leben blieben' (*Königsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.) and 'Wie interessant ist allein schon der Lebenslauf der Frau Ey. In einem kleinen Laden verkaufte sie vor vielen Jahren Backwaren und Kaffee, um ihre vier Kinder aufziehen zu können' ('Besuch bei der Düsseldorfer Künstlermama', n.d., n.pn.).



den man gewiß auch der Lebenden gezollt hätte, verbietet, tiefer in dieses Geheimnis einzudringen' (Böll, 1960, p. 57). Moreover Baumeister leaves this possibility open, arguing that Ey reveals little of her private life in her 1936 memoirs when this is not related to her public life (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51). Though Körner and Wilkens do investigate this aspect of her character in more detail by analysing her associations with the image of the Spanish woman, here too no indication is given of her having had sexual relations with anyone else after Robert Ey.

On the basis of the aforementioned secondary literature written after Ey's death it therefore appears that she did not fit the promiscuous stereotype associated with the 'Neue Frau'. The absence of a 'smoking gun' in this regard however is not to say that sexual relations did not take place or that she was asexual. Indeed one Ey commentator in an 'off the record' remark suggests that she may have had a relationship with the *Revierpolizisten* Westerfeld - speculation which is given some credibility by his recurring presence in her life. It is for instance Westerfeld who put Ey in contact with the picture restorer Spinnrath and is said to have protected her from bailiffs; he is also present on her sixty fifth birthday<sup>116</sup> and at the opening of her new gallery in Postamt 8 where he held a speech.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore a letter from Sureda to Ey could refer to a current sexual liaison and to her having had a number of sexual partners when he writes: 'Ulrich [Lemann] erzählte mir aus Düsseldorf, Du wärest mit einem Pater einfach fortgelaufen, wie ein Mädchen. Das fehlte noch bei Dir! Du hattest schon allerlei Leute in Deiner Nähe gehabt, aber einen Benediktinermönch ist eine Kostbarkeit für Dich' (Letter, 'Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!', n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 134).

Further images of Ey in certain contemporary newspaper articles and private correspondence could also suggest she continued to have a sustained interest in this regard. Baumeister in the course of presenting Ey's 1936 memoirs, for example, publishes part of the Heymann article in which he writes: 'Johanna lächelte freundlich zurück, denn sie hat eine Vorliebe für schlanke und hübsche junge Männer in

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<sup>116</sup> Straus-Ernst: 'auch der Polizeiwachtmeister des Reviers erschien in voller Uniform und feierte die Jubilarin in wohlgesetzter Rede' (Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929, n.pn.).

<sup>117</sup> Heymann: 'der Revierschutzmann, der in den fröhlichen alten Tagen manchen Gerichtsvollzieher von Mutter Ey mit Waffengewalt ferngehalten hatte, sprach empfindsame Worte' (Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn.).

kleidsamen Trachten' (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936: Baumeister, 1999, p. 127), and Beil quotes Ey as saying to 'her' artists: "'Ach, Kinder'" pflegt sie zu sagen "dreißig Jahre jünger, was könnt ich euch da alles sein!" (Beil, 08/05/1920, n.pn.: Baumeister, 1999, p. 14). Moreover in certain descriptions of artists by Ey, emphasis is placed on their appearance. For instance she writes: 'Dix hatte vorher von sich ein Foto geschickt, es war aus der Zeit wo er aus dem Kriege gekommen war, ein freies, freches, offenes Gesicht, was mir sehr gefiel' (Ey, 1936, p. 25) and in a letter to Pudlich she makes flattering remarks about Pudlich and Sureda: 'Meine Freude war sehr groß, wie ich beide Briefe aus Marseille bekam. Gerade ausgerechnet Ihr beiden Hübschen. Es ist ja fabelhaft wie Sureda mir einen netten Brief schickte, ich liebe sie sehr, d.h. die Briefe' (Letter, 06/08/1928). Indeed the close relationship between Ey and Sureda which emerges from the diary of her first Spanish trip and their exchange of letters gives the impression that at least one of her relationships with an artist was deeper than a mere friendship. Although there is no insinuation that a physical relationship existed, a deep platonic love and affection between the two is apparent. One has only to read a description by Ey of their time spent together in Majorca in 1927, which is reminiscent of a couple complete with 'lovers' tiffs, for this impression to emerge:

Ich ging früh schlafen, Jacobo kommt spät heim. Andere Morgen um ½ 10 Uhr rief er von oben: ["Eychen, wie spät ist es? Komm doch mal nach oben!"] Ich freue mich dass er gute Laune hatte, mach die Tür offen und streife im Vorbeigehen die Lampe, die vor seinem Stuhle steht und umfällt. Ganz entsetzt sieht er dies, macht grosse Worte, als ob das grösste Unglück geschehen sei. Ein Wort bringt das andere, ich bin empört und laufe weg. Innerlich gekränkt kommen mir die Tränen. Nach einer Stunde kommt er auf die Veranda und bittet um ein paar Zigaretten für seine Pfeife [...] Nachdem ich nun versichert hatte, die Alleinschuldige zu sein, war das Einvernehmen nun mal wieder hergestellt. - Auf wie lange, wer weiss! (Ey, 1936, p. 41).

Further circumstantial evidence of her sexual side might be offered in the unedited version of Heymann's article from the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* archive which describes what she did after she had landed in Hamburg. Here previous references to her sexuality, which portray her in an innocent light such as the comment that Ey was

never a ‘Mädchen für Geld [...] Gott sei Dank, auf diese Feststellung legte sie Wert’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.), give way to descriptions which evoke connotations of debauchery, promiscuity and moral decadence compatible with the stereotype of the ‘Neue Frau’. Using religious associations, Heymann writes: ‘Es scheint aber, als ob Johanna Ey aus den höchsten himmlischen Sphären besonders tief in die irdischen Gefilde geglitten ist’ and goes on to describe how a ‘höherer Düsseldorfer Kommunalbeamter’ saw her leaving the *Trichter* on the Reeperbahn at four o’clock and ‘marching’ towards the *kleine Freiheit* in the company of several men from the Hamburg art scene. He states that this happened ‘unter dem Gesang: ...denn was kann es wohl schöneres geben, als in Hamburg ein Mädchen für Geld’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.). Furthermore this paragraph is accompanied by the intriguing claim that Ey did not want the chapter of her memoirs concerning this visit to Hamburg to be published until twenty years after her death, which implies that this passage contained sensitive and potentially embarrassing material.<sup>118</sup>

In response to an email from me in 2007 Baumeister however plays down Heymann’s claims (Email, 24/06/2007//25/06/2007). To her knowledge no such chapter exists and in her opinion it would not have been in the spirit of Ey to withhold this information. Instead Baumeister warns that the nature of the publication, which was a ‘Glosse’, means that the ‘revelation’ about this missing chapter does not have to have any basis in fact and implies that these details about Ey’s stay in Hamburg could be the result of exaggeration or tabloid speculation. This would certainly be in accordance with Baumeister’s statement that Ey was often the subject of rumour and legend: ‘Sicher hätte Johanna Ey in jedem Falle Stoff für Anekdoten geboten. Aber diesen Zügen ihrer Persönlichkeit wurde von Anfang an zuviel Platz eingeräumt’ (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51). I would argue such allusions may therefore have been included because the journalist thought the audience could believe it to be true and suggests the public may have considered Ey to be capable of such actions. Indeed since Ey was viewed as ‘modern’ in regard to the visual arts, this notion of modernity may well have been extended in the public imagination to include her having a more liberal attitude to sexuality in the mould of the ‘Neue Frau’. The possibility however also exists that this

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<sup>118</sup> Heymann: ‘Frohgemut zog sie hinaus in die fremde große Stadt, doch das Kapitel ihrer Memoiren, das von diesen Hamburger Tagen berichtet, das will sie uns nicht zeigen, das darf erst 20 Jahre nach ihrem Tode an die Oeffentlichkeit, also nicht vor 1995’ (Heymann, 1931, n.pn).

was a joke which was intended to be both ironic and satirical and relied on the audience thinking the exact reverse about Ey. Meskimmon notes for instance how dancer ‘Anita Berber was often seen out in Berlin’s underground gay and lesbian scene, known at the time as “Eldorado”, suggesting her more dangerous reputation’ (p. 188) and Heymann could be parodying this type of imagery, by contrasting it with someone associated with a non-promiscuous and heterosexual maternal stereotype.

Having explored written sources in which Ey’s sexuality is, implicitly or explicitly, an issue, I now want to move on to an investigation of visual imagery which holds these associations. Though an article by Heymann refers to how during the preparations for a *Karnevalsfest* in the *Kunstverein Malkasten* artists Bruno Goller, Kaufmann, Jean Paul Schmitz and Ernst Schumacher-Salig decorated the billiard room with naked women who included ‘als Putte im Kostüm der Eva in all ihrer Pracht Mutter Ey’ (Heymann, 21/02/1931, n.pn.: Baumeister, 1999, p. 35) no image of this exists in the corpus to hand. Instead Pudlich’s drawing of himself, Ey and artist Jankel Adler in the nude shall offer a base from which to begin this exploration (Fig. 30). Here, Ey is pictured sitting in a central position on a ladder elevated above the two men, giving the impression of power and dominance. Her arm pulls Pudlich close to her, which suggests possession and supports the idea that he was one of her favoured artists,<sup>119</sup> whilst his thin waif-like frame contrasts with Ey’s curves and his body is turned towards her with a wry suggestive smile on his face.

Although some may see this as hinting at a sexual relationship between the two, this would in my opinion be a gross misinterpretation. The impression given here is not one of promiscuity. The nudity is sexless and reminiscent of a nudist colony, with neither artist depicted as being visibly aroused and Ey keeping her legs closed. Instead humour and nudity are combined here, as is the case in the collage *Johanna Ey and Robert Pudlich* (Fig. 31) in which a door can be opened to reveal a naked Ey covering her vulva but with breasts exposed and the artist looking on. Indeed the naked trio could be interpreted as offering an ironic take on the young models from the

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<sup>119</sup> See Chapter 5 which details correspondence between Ey and Pudlich, and Ey and other correspondents in which Pudlich is mentioned. See also the numerous portraits of Ey by Pudlich discussed in this chapter.

*Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie* whom Barth suggests Ey despised,<sup>120</sup> or could be referring to the nudity often encountered in the theatre and revue performances of large German cities. Equally this could be understood as an ironic take on the nude photographs in the pages of contemporary magazines or Pudlich could be making a satirical reference to those involved in *Die Brücke* movement who supported and practised nudism. When one considers the often self-deprecating depictions Pudlich produced (Fig. 32), this could also be the work of an artist affectionately poking fun at himself, Ey and Adler and mocking the genre of figure drawing of which he was a great proponent.<sup>121</sup>

Wollheim also depicts Ey in a state of undress in an ink drawing which shows her with one nipple of her naked breasts exposed, taking part in what appears to be a game of strip poker (Fig. 33) with Wollheim's first wife pianist Leni Stein and actress Hilde Schewior. Here too I would argue any erotic overtones are subdued by poses which show Ey and the other women concentrating on the game in hand. Moreover Ey's modesty is largely maintained with one breast covered by cards and her lower half covered by the table. Hundt also offers three drawings of Ey which depict her in various states of nudity. The first of these is a sketch which shows her with a naked torso, breasts exposed and eyes closed, in a pose akin to a life drawing model but without obvious sexual overtones (Fig. 34). The second is a portrayal of the art dealer as a mythical beast (Fig. 35) which is half-woman, half-cat, with Ey's face featuring her trademark round-rimmed glasses and her neck adorned with a necklace which doubles as a collar, affixed to a feline body with female breasts. This could reveal the features Hundt found particularly striking in her i.e. Ey's face with its 'Wandlungsfähigkeit' (Klapheck, 1958, p. 58) and her large bosom, but to suggest this had only sexual overtones would be a selective interpretation. The overall impression is one of playfulness and humour, underlined by the fact that Ey is shown smiling. Hundt's depiction of Ey as an animal, which could be interpreted as demeaning and disrespectful by some, is also consistent with his at times surreal style

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<sup>120</sup> Barth: 'So sehr ihr die Maler jederzeit willkommen sind, so ungerne sieht sie die Modelle, Freundinnen und Frauen der Maler in ihrem Laden' (1984, p. 16).

<sup>121</sup> For more information about Pudlich see contributions by art historians Herbert Griebitzsch (Griebitzsch, n.d.); Erhard Goepel (Goepel, 1940; Göpel, 1942); Werner Doede (Doede, 1968); Karl Ruhrberg (Ruhrberg, 1968) and Monika Pfeil (Pfeil, 1985). Furthermore a text by *Galerie Vömel* run by art dealer Edwin Vömel (Vömel, 1983) and a publication by Peter Barth in conjunction with Pfeil (Barth/Pfeil, 1991).

evident in works such as *Blinde Musikanten auf den Trümmern Pompejis* (Fig. 36) in which he may be playing on his name and appearing as a dog.<sup>122</sup> Indeed rather than being derogatory this feline depiction of Ey can be interpreted as a compliment, since cats are said to have been one of Hundt's favourite animals.<sup>123</sup>

The third portrait by Hundt appears to show Ey (although it is not explicitly stated that she is the subject) completely nude, dancing with one arm raised and one breast visible, her bottom turned towards the viewer and her leg lifted exposing pubic hair. She is depicted as being almost spherical, wearing a scarf which only serves to emphasise her nakedness, looking directly into the onlooker's eye, with the cryptic words: 'Wenn Du mal in Hawai [sic] bist' pencilled next to the drawing (Fig. 37). When one considers that her leg is raised and her intimate areas are on display and that the written text could be interpreted as an erotic invitation, this is undoubtedly more provocative than the portraits mentioned previously. Yet this drawing also has a considerable humorous element and could well be understood as a satire of dancers such as Josephine Baker who performed nude routines and who Ey appears to have met.<sup>124</sup> A further ink portrait by Hundt however is one of the few depictions of Ey with explicit sexual content. Entitled *Johanna Ey wird heiß geliebt* (Fig. 38) this picture shows a fully clothed Ey, whose legs are crossed and closed being held by a man whose penis is exposed and who is in the process of ejaculating onto the floor. This depiction could be interpreted as referring to Ey's active sex life; however, given that her pose is very similar to that of Manet's *Olympia*, in my opinion this is intended as part of a series of works by artists soon to be discussed which parody the differences between Ey and Olympia.

Hundt also offers further portraits of Ey which could be perceived as representing a sexual side to the art dealer in *Ey in Mantille* (Fig. 39) and *Selbstbildnis an der Staffelei mit Johanna Ey als Modell* (Fig. 40). Both these works show Ey wearing a

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<sup>122</sup> Goebbels: 'In dem Bild glaubt man [...] Johanna Ey zu erkennen, der ihr zu Füßen sitzende Hund soll vermutlich auf den Maler des Bildes [Hundt] hindeuten' (1993, p. 11).

<sup>123</sup> 'Ob er einen Menschen [...], eine Landschaft, ja einen Stuhl malt: immer haben diese Bilder ein seltsames überwirkliches Leben, es steht etwas hinter ihnen, man spürt romantisch Zwiespältiges. Auffallend Hundts Vorliebe für das nächtliche Tier, die Katze, für die Stille Schönheit des Schwans' (DN, 03/04/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>124</sup> An article, presumably in the *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten*, refers to a photo in Ey's gallery which depicted Ey next to Josephine Baker (DN (?), 1929). See Chapter 6.

low cut dress and make an association between eroticism and the image of the Spanish woman. Ey and 'her circle' had a long-standing tradition of playing with this Spanish image. She is for instance depicted as early as 1924 (Fig. 1) wearing a mantilla,<sup>125</sup> is portrayed by Pudlich in this guise (Fig. 41) (Fig. 42) (Fig. 43) and is photographed in a Spanish costume for carnival (Fig. 44) and on the occasion of her sixty fifth birthday.<sup>126</sup> On the basis of these aforementioned Hundt portraits and Körner and Wilkens' assertion that sexual attractiveness and *Freizügigkeit* were important elements of this Spanish cliché (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 28), the temptation here is to view the use of this image solely in a sexual context and to see Ey adopting this attire as a form of role play which shares the sexually liberal connotations of the 'Neue Frau'. However whilst sexual overtones are clearly part of this Spanish trope Körner and Wilkens note that it also embodied female emancipation and dominance (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 28). Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that the portraits of Ey in Spanish attire are imbued with levels of meaning which extend beyond the purely sexual to encompass other aspects relevant to the 'Neue Frau' trope. By this I mean that the Spanish attire Ey adopted appears to have symbolised her desire to project an image of strength and modernity.

Indeed whilst Hake's statement that high society women followed trends inspired by foreign influences, for example that the wearing of Turkish harem pants, Egyptian headgear, Chinese pyjamas, and Spanish shawls (Hake, p. 189), could offer an alternate explanation for Ey's adoption of this Spanish guise, it seems likely that Ey, as in the case of those women who dressed in the style of the 'Neue Frau', was using this attire to symbolise her 'modern' aspirations and as a uniform to distinguish herself from those who held more conservative views. The Spanish image could therefore have provided Ey with a mask through which she could adopt the traits associated with the 'modern' woman and explore these elements of her character, as Körner and Wilkens suggest: 'Mit dem Habitus der Spanierin legte sich Johanna Ey

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<sup>125</sup> The portrait of Ey by Dix painted in 1924 in which she is depicted wearing a Spanish mantilla shows that her association with the image of a Spanish woman pre-dated her friendship with Sureda and trips to Majorca (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 47). Her time spent in Majorca with Sureda may have given this image a nostalgic dimension but this was not the beginning of the association.

<sup>126</sup> Straus-Ernst: 'Später führte Mutter Ey, prächtig ausstaffiert mit Mantilla, Schildpattkamm und Kastagnetten, unter lebhaftem Applaus ihren berühmten spanischen Tanz vor und entwickelte dabei ein Temperament und eine Beweglichkeit, um die Jüngere sie beneiden können' (Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929, n.pn.).

den Habitus der Modernität zu' (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 47). Her dressing as a Spanish woman when she took part in a revue in the *Apollo*<sup>127</sup> in Düsseldorf in 1932 entitled *Sieben Maler malen ein Modell* certainly implies she was trying to promote this 'modern' image to a wider public. Furthermore her decision to participate in this type of performance in which she posed on stage, whilst seven artists drew portraits of her accompanied by *Gladiatorenmarsch* music,<sup>128</sup> has in itself modern connotations, given that Nancy Nenno describes the revue sketches of the Weimar Period as an expression of the 'dynamic of modernity [...] overtly disclosed and negotiated through the fetishization of the female body for a paying audience' (Nenno, 1997, p. 149). In this instance Ey is knowingly making a spectacle of herself and may well be playing on the disparity between her body shape and that of the female dancers who often performed at this type of event. Indeed that the audience responded well to her performance at the *Revue theater* despite the supposed hostility to 'modern' women could suggest that they understood her to be playing a 'part'. Equally her apparent popularity may have overcome any ill-feeling in this regard, or if one considers Nenno's statement that 'the revue exploited the desires of decadent, middle-and upper-class audiences seeking (expensive) thrills' (Nenno, 1997, p. 149) it is likely this reflected the audience's more liberal mentality.

Returning to the subject of sexual connotations in the portraits of Ey in the chapter 'Johanna als Olympia' (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, pp. 51-60) Körner and Wilkens point out striking similarities between what they see as a preparatory drawing for artist Peter Janssen's *Frau Ey schlafend* (Fig. 45) and Manet's *Olympia* (Fig. 46) in which Ey, like Olympia, looks the viewer confidently and directly in the eye and adopts a similar pose to Manet's subject with one hand in her lap, her feet crossed, a band around her neck and her head supported by a pillow. I would suggest that Hundt too alludes to Manet's painting in two portraits (Fig. 47 and 38), which depict Ey striking a similar pose to that displayed in the French artist's work. Indeed, as indicated above, in *Johanna Ey wird heiß geliebt* (Fig. 38) the explicit sexual content could be interpreted as offering a further reference to the prostitute depicted in *Olympia*. The

<sup>127</sup> This venue is also referred to as the *Kleine Haus* (*Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 06/02/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>128</sup> These artists were: 'Ari Kampf, Heinz Tappeser, Baptist Hermann Hundt, Robert Pudlich, H. (d.h.E.) [Erwin] Wendt, Hans Füsser und [Hubert] Schöl[1]gen' (Ey, 1936: Baumeister, 1999, p. 128). The page which refers to this revue is missing from the typescript of Ey's memoirs hence Baumeister's version has been cited.



similarities in these portraits could be seen to add to the speculation about Ey's possible promiscuity implied in Heymann's article, but I would argue this would be an overly simplistic interpretation. Manet is said by Körner and Wilkens to have seen prostitutes, courtesans and mistresses as the 'Göttinnen der Moderne' (Körner/Wilkens, p. 56), and it is probable that Janssen and Hundt were referring to this tradition and parodying these insinuations of modernity and promiscuity in relation to Ey.

The satirical sexual references and humour apparent in Janssen and Hundt's homage to Manet that play on the disparity between Ey's body shape, age and behaviour and that of Olympia,<sup>129</sup> are also evident in a sketch by Pudlich. However in this instance the associations with the 'modern' woman of the Weimar Period are emphasised and used as a foil. In *Ich, die Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey sage Euch: Raucht Bergmann Klasse* (Fig. 48) Pudlich makes use of the 'Neue Frau' stereotypes of sexual freedom and modernity associated with women who smoked during the Weimar era, apparent in works such as Dix's *Puffmutter* (Fig. 49), and depicts Ey in a mock-advertisement for *Bergmann Klasse* cigarettes. Here her feminine curves are over-emphasised to comic effect, her low cut dress invokes eroticism, and the mantilla in her hair brings with it the sexual connotations of the Spanish stereotype. The humour lies in the contradiction that although Ey was a keen smoker<sup>130</sup> her physical attributes did not fulfil the stereotype of the new Weimar woman so often used to sell products. Her appearance is very different to that of the androgynous *Bubiköpfe* as she is neither youthful nor slim and there is little suggestion of promiscuity. This sketch can therefore be viewed as a visual continuation of the joke amongst certain artists close to Ey who called her 'Asta'<sup>131</sup> in a play on the slim Weimar actress Asta Nielsen who spawned the quintessential 'Neue Frau' *Bubikopf* hairstyle (Makela, 1997, p. 113) and was viewed as 'modern' woman (Fig. 50).<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> See Körner/Wilkens in reference to Janssen's portrait (Fig. 45): 'Die laszive, motivgeschichtlich sehr erotisch besetzte, sehr spanische und vor allem sehr pariserische Pose wird ironisch gebrochen in der Behäbigkeit und scheinbaren Harmlosigkeit einer korpulenten Mitsechszigerin' (2000, p. 60).

<sup>130</sup> Gert Wollheim: 'Deine Zigaretten zerbeißen den Schmerz zerrissenen Ehen' (*An Mutter Ey*, 06/05/1921).

<sup>131</sup> Hundt: 'Man nannte die sehr kleine, rundliche Ey scherzhaft "Asta"' (Hundt, 1957, p. 10).

<sup>132</sup> In reference to *Asta* (Astrid) Carla Sofie Amalie Nielsen (actress, \*11.9.1881 (or 11.7.1878) Copenhagen - † 25.5.1972 Copenhagen) Jürgen Kasten writes: '1910 wirkt sie in einem der ersten Langfilme von mehr als drei Akten mit "Afgrunden" (Drehbuch/Regie: Urban Gad) zeigte eine Hinwendung des Films zum sozialen Drama, das wesentlich um das Schicksal von Frauen kreist.

In a continuation of the investigation into images which explore the notion of Ey as a ‘Neue Frau’, I now want to extend this discussion to address the way she presented herself in her autobiographical texts and her attitude to emancipation and women in general. Although Ey’s correspondence reveals a sensitive and vulnerable private side, examined in depth in Chapter 5 and also apparent in her autobiographies,<sup>133</sup> the impression of stubbornness, strength of character and self-belief also emerge in these autobiographical works through her selective recounting of events. In her 1936 memoirs for instance she describes how at school she refused on two consecutive days to collect her teacher’s lunch because she felt she had been hit unjustly by that member of staff (Ey, 1936, p. 4). Moreover she notes in her 1930 and 1936 texts how she raised her four surviving children as a single mother, and in all three autobiographical accounts mentions that she ran her own store selling baked goods which gradually evolved into a café before the First World War and then opened an art dealership which later exhibited ‘modern’ art despite public derision.<sup>134</sup> The impression of her as a pioneer is also evident when she declares that she was the first woman to set foot on the *Moltke* ‘das [schnellste] Kriegsschiff [der Welt]’ when she visited her son Paul (Ey, 1936, p. 8).<sup>135</sup> These descriptions emphasise both her

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Unterstützt durch eine intensive Werbekampagne und ein besonderes Vermarktungssystem ihrer Filme wurde sie, seit 1911 in Deutschland überwiegend mit Urban Gad arbeitend, zu einem der ersten europ. Filmstars. Mit ihrer schlanken, fast hageren Physiognomie, den oft dunkel umschatteten großen Augen und dem kantigen Gesicht, vermochte sie ihren Rollen intensive Körperlichkeit und Charaktertiefe zu geben. Sie erschien als Verkörperung der modernen, um Selbstbestimmung ringenden, daran jedoch zerbrechenden Frau. Viele ihrer 70 deutschen Stummfilme variieren den melodramatischen Konflikt einer Frau, die sich abseits der gesellschaftlichen Konventionen bewegt. Meist wurde er im Bohème- oder Künstlervilleu (“Nachtfalter”, 1911, “Die Filmprimadonna”, 1913, oder “Die Börsenkönigin”, 1916), seltener im proletarischen Milieu (“Ziegeunerblut”, 1911, “Vordertreppe und Hintertreppe”, 1914) situiert. 1916 verließ N. Deutschland, kehrte aber nach Kriegsende zurück. Sie agierte nun in differenzierten Charakterrollen, die jedoch weiterhin den Konflikt von Figur und Sozialnorm betonten (etw “Rausch”, 1919, “Der Reigen”, 1920, und vor allem der von ihr selbst produzierte “Hamlet”, 1921, sowie “Vanina”, 1922). [...] “Unmögliche Liebe” (1932) war ihr einziger Tonfilm. Danach trat sie noch sporadisch in Tourneetheatern auf’ (*Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 1999, vol. 19, p. 230). The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 7, p. 407: ‘Seit Mitte der zwanziger Jahre zog sich N. zunehmend vom Film zurück und wirkte als Schauspielerin an verschiedenen Theatern. 1937 kehrte sie nach Dänemark zurück und lebte nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges zurückgezogen in Kopenhagen.’

<sup>133</sup> See for instance Ey’s comment in the context of having given up trying to convince the Nazis not to evict her from her gallery: ‘Ich verlor allen Mut, und meine Nerven gingen auch in die Brüche’ (Ey, 1936, p. 105).

<sup>134</sup> The negative response of the public to her works is not directly mentioned in Ey, 1929, but is evident in Ey, 1930 and Ey, 1936.

<sup>135</sup> The square brackets indicate handwritten annotations on the typescript of her 1936 memoirs, which may or may not be by Ey.

independence and business acumen, and present her as a precursor to the professional 'modern' woman of the Weimar era.

It is possible that Ey's promotion of such images was intended to quash chauvinist preconceptions that she was weaker or less capable than her male counterparts. Certainly some descriptions in newspaper articles from the Weimar period give the impression that she was an 'einfache Frau aus dem Volke' and play down her intellectual capabilities.<sup>136</sup> However when seen in the wider context of press reports from this era this position becomes difficult to maintain. As has already been noted, frequent references are made in these articles to her astute judgement in regard to art and her achievements in this field. The notion that she faced discrimination as a female art dealer is also not supported by sources which maintain that colleagues bought works from her<sup>137</sup> and held her in high regard. Art dealer Alfred Flechtheim for instance draws comparisons between her and art dealers P ere Tanguy and Paul Durand-Ruel:

Kurz nach dem Kriege aber verkaufte die gute Mutter Ey, eine Art niederrheinischer P ere Tanguy, ihre Gebhardts und M uhligs, um jungen Malern Kaffee, Brot und Butter zu geben. Bis jetzt hat sich das noch nicht bei ihr rentiert; aber eines Tages wird es sich f ur sie ebenso rentieren, wie es sich f ur Durand-Ruel rentiert hat, der f ur die Impressionisten sich oft ruinierte. Ach, der Handel mit moderner Kunst ist kein lukrativer (Flechtheim, 1926, n.pn.).<sup>138</sup>

This suggests that although it may be tempting to present Ey in the role of a 'strong woman' battling against prejudice one must not assume that all professional women were 'victims' in the Weimar era. When examining Ey's own autobiographical writings, there is also little evidence of her making an issue of her gender or suggesting that she faced discrimination because she was female. The implication

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<sup>136</sup> Ey is for instance described as an 'unverbildete Proletarlerin' (*K onigsberger Volkszeitung*, 02/01/1932, n.pn.) and an 'eine einfache Frau aus dem Volke' (*Neue Mannheimer Zeitung*, 17-18/09/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>137</sup> See for instance reference to art dealer Max Weinberg having bought a work from Ey when she started out as an art dealer: 'Ich verkaufte eine Gebhard-Studie und verdiente 150 M. daran; ein gro er Bildh andler Weinberg kaufte dieselbe, er hatte mir dieses Angebot gemacht' (Ey, 1930, p. 78).

<sup>138</sup> Flechtheim also printed a photo of Ey in a 1928 edition of the *Querschnitt* (Klapheck, 1958, p. 41).

instead is that she was interested in promoting a resolute image for posterity because she felt this best represented her and that in regard to her 1936 memoirs this self-projection was linked in part to an oppositional stance to the Nazis as is suggested in Chapters 4 and 5 of the present study.

By becoming one of the first female ‘modern’ art dealers however Ey undoubtedly contributed to the advancement of women in society by opening up the way for others to follow. Indeed when Frame notes how in the Weimar period women sought role models to evaluate their own position and potential (Frame, 1997, p. 13) Ey can be seen to provide an inspirational image of pioneering accomplishment which reached a wide audience through frequent mention in the press. Yet when considering whether this was her intention, an anecdote from Klapheck which describes Ey’s reaction to a woman who wanted to become an art dealer in Elberfeld: ‘Sie will Frau Ey imitieren, doch das geht schlecht’ (Letter, December 1939: Klapheck, 1958, p. 12) suggests that she was fiercely proud of having been one of the one of the few women in her field and did not welcome other women encroaching on her territory. Her initial reasons for becoming an art dealer also appear to be motivated by potential financial gain and not by issues of female emancipation.<sup>139</sup> Moreover her decision to switch to becoming a dealer in ‘modern’ art can be seen to stem from an interest in this type of art,<sup>140</sup> her sympathy for its proponents<sup>141</sup> and the negative reaction of the public to the first showing of works by Wollheim and Pankok in her gallery<sup>142</sup> but not from the explicit aim of furthering women’s advancement in society.

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<sup>139</sup> Ey: ‘Nach kurzer Zeit wo ich wieder nichts hatte, kam der Maler Julius Jungheim mit ein [sic] Feldweibel oder Offizier aus der Umgebung, es soll Weihnachten eine Ausstellung mit Verlosung für Verwundete sein, ich gab damals meine Sammlung Bilder für 500 Mark her, [...] und so hatte auch wieder Geld. Doch ich wußte nicht was weiter machen so kam ich auf den Gedanken, was früher scherzweise im Kaffee ausgesprochen wurde, Bilder zu verkaufen, also Kunsthändlerin zu werden’ (Ey, 1930, p. 78).

<sup>140</sup> Ey: ‘Ich sah ein Bild von Wollheim: Pankoks Porträt, von Pankok, eine große Zeichnung: Wollheim spielt Geige. Beide, gefielen mir, für mich war es etwas Interessantes, nichts Alltägliches’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

<sup>141</sup> For instance in regard to Pankok and Wollheim’s first visit to Ey’s gallery after the First World War, when Pankok asked whether she still sold coffee, Ey recalls: ‘Ich hocheifreut schon: Doch kommen Sie nur bitte durch und schon war ich in der Küche und kochte Kaffee, wie ich zurückkam hatten Pankok und Wollheim ihr Foto auf den Tisch mit Widmung, mein Groll war fort, und ich war weich und gerührt, all mein Groll gegen Wollheim fort’ (Ey, 1930, p. 79).

<sup>142</sup> Ey: ‘Und so kam ein Entschluß in mir, jetzt gerade stelle ich von den Modernen aus und so sagte ich zu beiden, von jetzt an könnten Sie das Fenster für sich immer zum Ausstellen behalten’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

On this basis it could be argued that 'traditional' beliefs about the role women should play in society was behind Ey not actively supporting other women's attempts to enter the previously male domain of the 'modern' art dealer. Certainly her promotion of very few female artists could be considered indicative of such an attitude, and Baumeister appears to suggest this was the reason behind her dealing in very few female artists when she writes: 'Frau Ey selbst hatte Probleme mit der Rolle der berufstätigen Frau, soweit es die Kunst betraf' (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51). However when asked in an interview about this aspect of Ey's character Baumeister qualified this statement and shed a different light on the art dealer's motives, arguing that Ey may have held the view that if she could achieve what she had achieved, every woman should be able to do the same and that no extra help was required (Interview Baumeister, 2005). The implication therefore is that Ey was not against women entering the art world per se, but she was of the opinion that it was up to women themselves to make their own way in life, as she herself had done, and that they should not receive any preferential treatment.

Barth, quoting female artist Trude Brück recounting a conversation with Ey, however suggests another explanation for her behaviour:

“Sieh mal” [...] “du bist ein schönes Mädchen” (das hörte ich stets, wenn etwas Unangenehmes darauf folgte), “bisher war ich hier bei meinen Malern die Mitte, aber seit du kommst, ist das nicht mehr so, wie früher. Ich weiß ja, daß du mit keinem von ihnen etwas hast, aber ich bitte doch darum.” Ich verstand sie gut, umarmte sie und verschwand für länger (Trude Brück quoting Johanna Ey: Barth, 1984, p. 16).

Here the implication is that Ey's actions were motivated by similar reasons to those which caused her negative response to the woman who wanted to become an art dealer. The suggestion is that this was part of a 'policy' to remain 'Königin in ihrem eigenem Reich' (Interview Baumeister, 2005) and was motivated by her jealousy of women who threatened her status as centre of 'her' male artists' group. This is also suggested when Barth writes: 'Sie möchte ihre Künstler nicht mit anderen Frauen teilen' (1984, p. 16). Indeed a further comment by Brück suggests Ey's attitude towards her was initially positive before she received too much attention from the

male artists: ‘Gleich am Anfang des Studienjahres landete ich als begeisterte Besucherin der Ausstellungen am Hindenburgwall bei Mutter Ey. Da ich immer wieder diese Bilder sehen wollte, entschuldigte ich mich bei ihr, daß ich noch nichts bei ihr kaufen könne, da ich noch an der Akademie lerne. Da erlaubte sie mir so oft zu kommen, als ich wolle’ (*Brück*, 1981: Baumeister, ‘Trude Brück’, 1993, p. 61f).<sup>143</sup>

However, as early as 1926 journalist and artist Gert Schreiner (real name Otto Wilhelm Ferdinand) suggests that this attitude represented a dislike of women in general and was not only linked to protecting her status as the female focal point amongst ‘her’ male artists: ‘So sehr sie aber auch die Künstler liebt, so wenig liebt sie die Frauen. Frauen war von jeher - mit wenigen Ausnahmen - der Zutritt zu ihrem Allerheiligsten verboten. “Künstler sind ganz friedliche und patente Leute”, sagte sie; “Frauen aber bringen nur Unfriede”’ (Schreiner, 1926, p. 49). Klapheck’s observation: ‘Auf Frauen war sie [Ey], mit geringen Ausnahmen, überhaupt nicht allzu gut zu sprechen, vor allem nicht auf die Malerfrauen [...] Ihre Freunde waren nun einmal “alles Männer in den besten Jahren”’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 12) also gives this impression - as too does Barth: ‘So sehr ihr die Maler jederzeit willkommen sind, so ungern sieht sie die Modelle, Freundinnen und Frauen der Maler in ihrem Laden’ (Barth, 1984, p. 16). Indeed even Ey herself is quoted as saying, ‘Wenn die Frauen dazukommen, wird es schwierig’ (Ey: Klapheck, 1958, p. 12).

The overwhelming picture which emerges from these quotes is that Ey had a disdain for women in general, did not let them get too close to her or ‘her circle’ of artists and had little contact with them. However I do not consider this a balanced portrayal of Ey, and in my view a legend has grown up around this aspect of her character which is in need of correction since it excludes significant evidence to the contrary and does not consider that her attitude may have been more differentiated, that it changed with time or even differed completely to that which has so far been suggested. Sources for instance show that Trude Brück exhibited works from trips to Spain and Algeria in

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<sup>143</sup> Brück notes: ‘zweimal in der Woche ging ich abends zum Zeichnen zu Mutter Ey, wo wir auch malten und diskutierten’ (*Brück*, 1981: Baumeister, ‘Trude Brück’, 1993, p. 67). Moreover Brück states in a letter to Goebbels, cited by Baumeister: ‘Einmal kam meine Mutter nach Düsseldorf um mich zu besuchen. Die Akademie interessierte sie nicht, aber meine Nachmittage im “EY” mit den Wilden wollte sie einmal sehen. Ich sagte es Mutter Ey am Tage vorher, und als wir kamen, hatte sie mit meiner Mutter ein gutes Gespräch’ (Letter, 08/02/1985: Baumeister, ‘Trude Brück’, 1993, p. 63).

two exhibitions in Ey's gallery post-1924 (Baumeister, 'Trude Brück', 1993, p. 68). Though it is not clear whether this was on Ey's initiative the fact that Ey gave Brück three paintings by Max Ernst in return for Brück's *Algerien-Blätter* (Barth, 1984, p. 78) implies that she held Brück's work in high esteem. Furthermore an article by female artist Gertrude Heyden suggests that Ey made exceptions in allowing women into her gallery:

Im Jahre 1924 nahm ich das Stipendium [*Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie...*]  
Dort lernte ich Marile Heidkranz kennen. Unser Weg führte uns ständig an Mutter Eys Laden vorbei. Dort haben wir uns an den Schaufenstern unsere Nasen bald platt gedrückt. Sie hatte uns beobachtet und hereingeholt. Es war gleich ein großes Vertrauen zwischen uns, und sie hat uns alles gezeigt, was an Bildern und Graphikmappen vorhanden war. Unsere Kritik ging sehr auseinander. Ich war mehr für das Natürliche. Mutter Ey freute sich so, als ich meine Meinung vertrat, daß sie mich in der Stube hinter dem Laden zum Kaffee einlud. Später erfuhr ich, daß das eine besondere Ehre war, da Mutter Ey meistens Frauen ablehnte. Sie meinte, Frauen brächten immer Unfrieden zwischen Maler. Aber bei mir machte sie eine Ausnahme ('Erinnerungen an Mutter Ey', 10/10/1964, n.pn.).<sup>144</sup>

Baumeister even argues that Ey's actions were not gender specific and that Ey had reservations about both male and female artists until they had proven themselves to be trustworthy and lacking in arrogance: 'Gegen ernsthaft arbeitende Künstlerinnen erhob sie aber keine anhaltenden Einwände' ('Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 162 and Interview Baumeister, 2005). Lauterbach also implies this when he

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<sup>144</sup> In the list of artists who had individual exhibitions as part of the fortnightly changing exhibitions of *Das Junge Rheinland* in Ey's gallery from 1921-1922, female artists Margarete Aldinger, Nora Dahlen, Amely Dannemann (female name but not verified as a woman) and Hedwig Petermann are also encountered (*Das Junge Rheinland*, 1996, pp. 158-171). Although these instances show that female artists were exhibited in Ey's gallery, they are not put forward here in support of the argument that Ey stopped being adverse to female artists, since as has already been mentioned the extent of Ey's influence over the content of *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions is debatable. A letter from Trude Brück to the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* (Letter, 16/03/1992) also mentions that she had a work of hers exhibited for a week in the window of Ey's Hindenburgwall gallery, whose subject was a figure blinded by a war injury. Furthermore female artist Lotte B. Prechner is said to have exhibited works in 1922 in Ey's gallery and artist Gertrud Klihm is said to have had an exhibition planned in 1922 but to have eventually exhibited in 1924 (Baumeister, 'Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 162). In the case of all three of these female artists it is however again not explicitly stated that Ey chose to exhibit them or approved of these works.

states: 'Wenn man ihre Liebe hatte, aber auch nur dann, erlebte man ihre mütterliche feine Menschlichkeit' (Lauterbach, 1981, p. 41). Furthermore the notion that Ey did not welcome the presence of models in her gallery (Barth, 1984, p. 16) could be attributed to her view of them as freeloaders rather than issues of gender, since Ey writes: 'Später nahm das Pumpen überhand, denn es warteten in den Ateliers noch Modelle, die etwas zu essen verlangten' (Ey, 1930, p. 77).

Klapheck's assertion that Ey's friends were with few exceptions all men (Klapheck, 1958, p. 12) is certainly challenged by Ey's friendship with the actress Lotte Witt, whom she appears to have gone to great lengths to visit and to have met with on a regular basis. Ey writes to Sureda: 'Am Freitag fahre ich ein paar Stunden zu Lotte Witt nach Mühlheim. Wir werden sehr viel von Dir reden wie es immer geschieht' (Letter, 15/11/1933). Baumeister, also states that Ey had many female acquaintances in her private life (Baumeister, 1999, p. 51) and evidence of this is offered in the diary of her first Majorca trip in which she writes in glowing terms of 'Frau Bruck, [not the aforementioned Brück] die charmante Frau eines deutschen Malers' (Ey, 1936: Baumeister, 1999, p. 91). Indeed in the same source Anita Bell, wife of artist Jupp Bell and Werner Schramm's wife are both described as 'reizend' (Ey, 1936: Baumeister, 1999, p. 92/ p. 110) and in a letter to Sureda Ey states: 'Deine Mutter steht doch über alle Frauen, wenn ich die ansehe, und denk, wie sie noch schaffen muß und wie mädchenhaft sie über alle alle [sic] steht und alle Menschen versteht kommt es wie Bewunderung über mich und ich möchte sein wie sie. Sage ihr, daß ich sie sehr verehere' (Letter 30/07/1933). In 1937 in correspondence to female medical doctor and art collector,<sup>145</sup> Dr Flora Scherer, who herself provides evidence of a female friendship, Ey also writes in positive terms of a woman named Hermy,<sup>146</sup> and in her 1936 memoirs states that film stars Brigitte Helm and Lilian Harvey visited her.<sup>147</sup> These memoirs themselves were typed by a woman, Hedwig Decker (later Mommertz) (Letter, 15/10/1946).

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<sup>145</sup> Information from Barth 2007, p. 78.

<sup>146</sup> Ey: 'Hermy hatte einen kleinen Schwips, so nett habe ich sie noch nicht gesehen; sie ist wirklich ein nettes anständiges Mädchen, auch nur Gefühlsmensch für andere und muß auch tausend Sachen auskämpfen' (Letter, 19/07/1937). No biographical information about 'Hermy' could be found.

<sup>147</sup> Ey: 'Brigitte Helm besuchte mich auch in ihrem schönen Wagen. Und Lilian Harvey und [actor] Harry Halm tranken auch Kaffee bei mir' (Ey, 1936, p. 72).



Ey's friendship with Ma Pudlich, the wife of Robert Pudlich, and the fact that Otto Pankok and his future wife journalist Hulda Droste met for the first time in Ey's gallery in 1920 (Heckmanns, 1993, p. 57), coupled with her writing retrospectively about the 'manche schöne Abende' she spent with Tatjana Barbakoff, a Jewish dancer, artist's muse and girlfriend of Wollheim,<sup>148</sup> (Ey, 1936, p. 71) also implies that she was not always as averse to the presence of artists' girlfriends and wives on her premises as Barth suggests (Barth, 1984, p. 16). Indeed Hulda Pankok's *Grabrede für Mutter Ey* implies that with time Ey became less hostile to the idea of women being part of 'her circle':

vor ungefähr 8 Tagen, als ich Mutter Ey zum letzten Mal besuchte, gestand sie mir, daß sie mich in der ersten Zeit gehaßt habe, weil sie fürchtete, daß ich das Herz der Künstler stähle, oder wenigstens eines Künstlers - bis sie erkannt habe, daß die Liebe nicht abnimmt, je mehr man von ihr fordert, und daß ihr nichts verloren ging, als das Herz ihres jungen Malerfreundes aufzublühen begann (Pankok, 1947).

In summary, when assessing whether Ey should be considered a 'Neue Frau', a complex, contradictory picture emerges. Heymann's article for instance shows her desire to be seen in a 'modern' light by wanting to fly and mentions her contribution to the 'modern' visual arts, as well as presenting the image of her as a determined, independent and adventurous woman. However this is contrasted by reference to her age, size, maternal attributes, and anecdotes which suggest that her desire to fly was not as 'modern' as she thought. Moreover in written documents explicit and implicit references to Ey's possible promiscuity in accordance with the 'Neue Frau' stereotype belong to the realm of speculation, and the portraits of Ey which could be perceived

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<sup>148</sup> I have not been able to establish when this relationship between Wollheim and Barbakoff began but it is clear that this existed. Trude Brück writes in a report about Barbakoff from 19/08/1988: 'Tatjana und Gert. Sie waren Liebende und obwohl ich seine Frau, Leni Stein, gern hatte - fühlte ich, dass Tatjana die tiefere Leidenschaft von Gert war' (Goebbels, 2009, p. 27). Certainly they appear to have been a couple by 1933 since Goebbels states: '1933 emigriert das Paar' (2009, p. 39). Mona Wollheim (born Loeb, after first marriage known as Eisemann-Loeb) a fellow emigrant to Paris who pursued various occupations including working as a secretary and married Gert Wollheim in 1947 (Goebbels, 2009, p. 41/ p. 95) writes how she often saw 'das Paar [Barbakoff and Wollheim]' on the streets of Paris after they had emigrated and suggests the pair cohabited (Letter, 10/05/1988: Goebbels, 2009, p. 42).

as having a sexual dimension have in many cases been shown to have a humorous and ironic subtext which play on the discrepancies with this trope.

Although Ey helped to advance emancipation by becoming the first female ‘modern’ art dealer, it is also clear that one has to be cautious when applying feminist perspectives to this career choice retrospectively. Rather than this decision being attributable to a struggle for equality, it appears that she was motivated by the opportunity to make money, deal in an art form she liked and be surrounded by artists she viewed as friends. Nevertheless her relative lack of help towards female artists should not be interpreted as her being against equal rights for women, and it seems plausible that this behaviour was motivated by her desire to maintain her status as one of the few female ‘modern’ art dealers, to remain the focus of her male artists’ attention and because she believed the opportunities for women already existed. Though initially she may have blocked attempts by certain women to become part of ‘her circle’, the notion of her being someone who disliked women in general and did not associate with them is also clearly in need of revision. In stark contrast to the images put forward by Barth, Klapheck and other commentators sources suggest that she rated the *Algerien-Blätter* by Trude Brück highly, got on well with particular women, had female friends and over time allowed female artists and the girlfriends and wives of painters to visit her premises.

In conclusion, whilst the strength of character and independence Ey displayed in raising a young family as a single parent and setting up her own businesses can be plausibly integrated into the narrative of her as a ‘Neue Frau’, and even to see her as a precursor to this trope, it must be conceded that her size, age, body shape, maternal connotations and assumed lack of promiscuity confound the stereotypical image of the slim, youthful, sexual libertarian in the Weimar period. The contradictions these images reveal thus do not merely point to idiosyncrasies evident in Ey, but demonstrate the limitations of the ‘Neue Frau’ as a blanket term and the need for a differentiated approach to the classification of women in the Weimar era, in which women are treated as individuals rather than coerced into general and inappropriate typologies.

## 4

# ‘Ich sitze hier in meinem “Exil”’<sup>149</sup>: A reading of Ey’s 1936 memoirs

Whereas the previous chapter suggested Ey was not noticeably sympathetic to or interested in the gender politics of the ‘Neue Frau’, this chapter widens the debate to consider her relation to politics in a broader context. Here a summary of women’s experiences of politics in the Weimar Period prefaces an investigation into the extent and nature of Ey’s political leanings, during which her statement that she was not political is examined and her associations with the politics of the left are considered. An exploration of the notion of ‘inner emigration’ and the characteristics of this category of literature then provides the basis for an investigation into her stance towards the Nazis in the first detailed critical reading of the typed manuscript of Ey’s 1936 memoirs, an edited version of which was first published by Baumeister in 1999 (Baumeister, 1999).

Though Baumeister asserts that Ey wanted to publish these memoirs during the Third Reich (Baumeister, 1999, p. 52), I will argue that the content of these memoirs, which records for posterity the life of a ‘modern’ art dealer whose gallery was closed by the Nazis and which mentions numerous individuals the regime vehemently disapproved of, would have made publication in Germany impossible. Any such attempt would in my view have required a political naivety which does not correlate with Ey’s experiences at the hands of the Nazis and her knowledge of what had happened to friends and acquaintances.<sup>150</sup> Instead I regard Ey’s memoirs as writing *für die*

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<sup>149</sup> Ey, 1936, p. 113.

<sup>150</sup> Chapter 5 in this thesis demonstrates that Ey knew what had happened to particular individuals.

*Schublade* and an example of ‘inner emigration’ literature, written for publication in the post-Nazi period but heavily influenced by the possibility of Nazi discovery in the present. This is apparent in Ey’s omission of certain controversial figures, the absence of direct criticism of the Nazis and the reproduction of newspaper articles and her own statements which suggest conformity.

Let us begin the investigation into Ey’s political views with a short résumé of Weimar women’s political experience to offer a yardstick against which images of Ey’s behaviour can be measured. Though German women had been allowed to attend public meetings and join political organisations since 1908 (Petro, 1997, p. 59) it appears that it was only after the First World War and the introduction of the women’s right to vote that they began to play a more significant part in political life. Statistics record this apparent political enthusiasm, noting that the female membership of the SPD rose from 66,000 to 207,000 from 1918 to 1920 and that the *Independent Social Democrats* (USPD) experienced a similar increase within this same period. Furthermore in the Weimar National Assembly in 1918, 9.6 percent of members were women (*Women in the Metropolis*, 1997, p. 3f).<sup>151</sup> Maria Makela however suggests that these figures offer a selective image of this period and writes how ‘with the exception of the Communist party, the major political parties proved consistently reluctant to integrate women into their organizations, thereby making it difficult for the few elected women legislators to enact laws that would significantly help their constituency’ (Makela, 1997, p. 119).

This casts doubt on how widespread women’s influence on Weimar politics really was. Indeed it appears that once the economic and social realities of Weimar society had begun to take effect and women realised that the equality they had hoped for would not be forthcoming, their political enthusiasm began to wane. Female membership of the Central Union of Clerical Staff for example dropped from 175,204 in 1919 to approximately 60 percent of that figure by 1930 despite large increases in the number of women working in this sector (*Women in the Metropolis*, 1997, p. 4). Thus whilst Makela exaggerates when she suggests that the ‘New Woman of Weimar Germany was, finally, really not all that different from her counterpart in the Empire’

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<sup>151</sup> It is not clear who wrote the introduction.

(Makela, 1997, p. 119), it is apparent that a marked difference existed between the equality promised by the Weimar constitution and the reality of women's experience in society and the work-place.

In contrast to the growing number of Weimar women who showed their political interest through party or union membership, Ey does not mention any allegiance to a political party and rarely comments on politics in the written material available. Indeed her remark in her 1930 autobiographical article suggests that she was a supporter of 'modern' art but was apolitical: 'Die Dooven und Hetzer dachten immer, es würde Politik hier getrieben, es wurde nur eine fortschrittliche Kunst hier durchgekämpft' (Ey, 1930, p. 81). If taken at face value this quote implies Ey believed politics was absent from her gallery and that she did not make the link between 'modern' art and politics. It would also suggest she was politically naïve, since there is much to suggest that her gallery did contain a political element. The themes tackled by some of the artists with whom she was associated were for instance at times openly political. Wollheim's *Der Verwundete* (Fig. 51) for example can be interpreted as a critique of the First World War and the *Kaiser's* policies.

It is however also possible that the comment by Ey was intended to make it clear that whilst politics was frequently an element of 'modern' art, the promotion of the art 'movement' itself was of greater importance to her. This interpretation would certainly concur with Barth's statement that although *Junge Rheinland* members' art contained socialist themes the artists were primarily concerned with establishing 'modern' art in the Rhineland area and reforming the old-fashioned academies and that few were active members of a political party (Interview Barth, 2005). Ey's statement may therefore have been intended to return the emphasis to the 'modern' art she dealt in and correct her public image in the context of a number of artists who were part of 'her circle' but who had little or no political element to their art, such as Hundt or Pudlich. When viewed in this light the use of the term *Das rote Malkästle* in the title of Ey's 1930 biographical article, a term Klapheck suggests was coined by art historian and editor of *Das Kunstblatt* Paul Westheim (Klapheck, 1958, p. 36), in which Ey's aforementioned comment was made, may have been intended as an ironic reference to the overstatement of these political associations. Certainly an article in the *Königsberger Tagesblatt* suggests that her interest in this type of art and its

creators was foremost: ‘Bezeichnend ist es, daß Mutter Ey in den Revolutionszeiten auf Seiten der jüngsten und röttesten Kunstjünger stand, daß sie allen tollen Zauber mitmachte. Nicht aus politischer Überzeugung, sondern weil es sie immer auf die Seite der jungstaufstrebenden, noch verkannten, irgendwie unterdrückten Künstler hinzieht’ (*Königsberger Tageblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn.).

Alternatively the use of the term *Das rote Malkästle* by Westheim could be understood as a demonstration of the communist leanings that he perceived Ey or ‘her’ artists to have. When one considers that many of her friends and acquaintances were left-wing artists, with Wollheim, Pankok, Adler, Werner Heuser, Adolf de Haer, Gerd Arntz, Hans Rilke and Gerth Schreiner (Barth, 1984, p. 26) all former members of the leftist *Aktivistenbund 1919*, the impression is given that Ey was sympathetic to such views. When *Das Buch von Köln Düsseldorf/Bonn* by author H. v. Wedderkop (Wedderkop, 1928, p. 182)<sup>152</sup> mentions that she ‘liebt Russenfilme, während Cowboys und Liebe und derartiges überhaupt nicht für sie in Betracht kommt’ this too could imply that she had communist sympathies. Certainly the anti-communist graffiti, ‘Rote Drecksau raus!’ (Nicolaus, 1983, p. 69) said to have been smeared on her gallery windows in 1933 suggests this was an impression held by those on the political right.

Communist associations are also suggested in the image constructed for her in an article in *Die Freiheit*, entitled ‘Mutter Ey, 65 Jahre! Ein Stück Geschichte der jungen Deutschen Kunst’ by R. Braune (Braune, 1929, n.pn. No forename or occupation could be found). Here, in an art world which is described as a clique that is both financially and ideologically corrupt and where artists are said to prostitute themselves, Ey is portrayed by the author as a rare example of the class-conscious proletariat and is described as exhibiting traits which complement communist ideology. For instance Braune implies she had worked for the good of all and placed little value on money and personal requirements, describing her ‘selbstlose Aufopferung’ in regard to the credit facility she provided in her coffee shop so that artists could afford to eat. Moreover, left-wing associations are suggested when he writes how certain artists whose works ‘den Kampf des Proletariats sekundierten’

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<sup>152</sup> Forename could not be determined.

found valuable help and support in her gallery. Braune also notes that the gallery had been called ‘mit durchsichtigem Hohn von den Einen, mit sympathisierender Zustimmung von den Anderen, “Das rote Malkästchen”’.

In Braune’s exaggerated description of Ey’s involvement in the *I.Internationale Kunstausstellung* in 1922, in which he implies that she organised the exhibition, he also observes that young Russians were amongst the many international artists she allegedly invited. He considers this to have been a very courageous move on her part and again communist associations are implied through this act. The article ends with the statement that the ‘Deutsche Proletariat 1929’ does not have any need for art because it is absorbed by the ‘Kampf ums tägliche Brot’ and calls for the artists who are similarly poor to join their ‘front’ to gain the sympathy of the ‘working’ masses. In this context Ey is presented as an example for these artists to follow through reference again to her lack of materialism and pomposity, her never having dealt with the ‘Kunstbetrieb’, and how her premises had remained a ‘Laden’ and not become a ‘Kunsthandlung’. The implication here is that Ey was one of the people and did not belong to the art clique that Braune viewed with such disdain.

The foreign and Jewish artists<sup>153</sup> she supported and the accommodation she provided for artists from around the world during the *I.Internationale Kunstausstellung* in Düsseldorf in 1922,<sup>154</sup> as well as her adoption of the Spanish image mentioned in the previous chapter, also endorse this narrative of an internationalist, left-wing outlook. Furthermore the portrait by Pudlich entitled *J E [Johanna Ey] erschießt am Tage der Schlacht von Austerlitz einen preussischen General* (Fig. 28) clearly has leftist political overtones, as too does a legal document regarding the authority’s payment of financial compensation to Ey’s family (*Entwurf II*, July 1959, p. 3) for the treatment she received during the Nazi period. Here it is written that: ‘Unmittelbar nach [d]er Machtübernahme durch die Nationalsozialisten habe man auf jede Weise versucht, ihre Galerie zu ruinieren. Die Fenster seien beschmiert und mit Boykottzetteln beklebt worden.’ It is implied this occurred because: ‘Die Kunst, welche sie vertrat, sei als

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<sup>153</sup> Adler was Polish and came from an orthodox Jewish family. Levin was a Jew born in Poland. Monjau was half-Jewish and Wollheim had Jewish ancestry (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 312/ p. 333/ p. 335/ p. 344).

<sup>154</sup> Ey: ‘Hier Hindenburgwall 11 wurde Quartier gemacht für die ausländischen Künstler’ (1930, p. 84).

entartet gebrandmarkt worden und ihre politische Gesinnung, da sie politisch links stand, als parteipolitisch ausgelegt worden.'

It is also interesting to note that when Ey was facing eviction in 1929 Robert Görlinger of the SPD wrote to *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr in an attempt to help her: 'Ich wäre Ihnen ausserordentlich dankbar wenn Sie [...] Zeit finden würden, an Frau Ey zu denken und ihr in irgend einer Form Hilfe zukommen liessen' (Letter, 25/10/1929). Görlinger also states in the same letter that he will ask Dr Johannes Meerfeld (SPD politician and *Kulturdezernent* for Cologne) whether there is money available to perhaps buy a picture or whether there is any other means of helping her. Another letter shows he did contact Dr Meerfeld to find out whether the city of Cologne was in a position to help (Letter, 05/12/1929). This in turn appears to have led to Dr Ernst Buchner of the *Wallraf-Richartz-Museum* being given the task of looking at Ey's collection, and the implication is that the Cologne authorities were considering a purchase. Again this suggests that Ey did not have a right-wing reputation as otherwise such efforts by the SPD would have been highly unlikely. Similar evidence can be found in a letter from Otto Nagel to Ey (Letter, 22(?) /09/1931) which mentions that Ey had provided various works for the exhibition *Internationale Ausstellung Frauen in Not* whose *Protektorat* included left-wing artists such as Kollwitz, Dix, George Grosz and John Heartfield.

Moving on to explore images related to Ey's attitude to politics shortly before the National Socialists' rise to power, Max Osborn's foreword to the *Sammlung Ey* catalogue is of great interest. Here an image of Ey in connection with the *Volk, Erde* and *uralte Kultur* is presented when he writes:

Nicht in Berlin, wo alle Werte immer in Gefahr sind, von riesigen Mühlsteinen zerrieben und in kleine Brocken aufgelöst zu werden, konnte dies Naturkind [Ey] gedeihen, auch nicht in München, das sich so müde aufs Ruhebett gestreckt hat, sondern nur am Rhein, wo gesundes Volkstum die Wurzeln nie zerschnitt, die es mit dem saftigen Erdboden verbinden, und zugleich in schöner Unbewußtheit mit uralter Kultur getränkt blieb (Osborn, 1931, p. 3).



Rather than aligning Ey with the urban stereotypes of the ‘Neue Frau’ she is presented in this passage as a product of nature (‘Naturkind’) and Osborn partakes in what can be described as the ‘political reorientation toward the provinces and away from the city’ (*Women in the Metropolis*, 1997, p. 3). The terms used here have clear points of contact with National Socialist ideology and since they come from the introduction to her catalogue might be taken to imply Ey had sympathy for their politics. However in my estimation Osborn’s description does not have to be seen to indicate this but may deliberately use the language and imagery of nationalism to present Ey as an alternative role model to the ideals which the Nazis were in the process of corrupting - particularly when one considers that Osborn was Jewish, co-founded the *Jüdische Kulturbund Berlin* in 1933, helped persecuted German Jews and emigrated to Paris in 1938 and to the USA in 1941.<sup>155</sup> When viewed in this context Ey’s ‘gesundes Volkstum’ could be understood as the antithesis of that which the National Socialists were seeking to popularise and Osborn’s text as a precursor to ‘inner emigration’ writing.

The concept of ‘inner emigration’ which describes the ‘retreat into the self’ of those who felt alienated by the National Socialists but who stayed in Germany during the Third Reich remains highly controversial. It therefore seems prudent to highlight the complexities of the debate surrounding the literature associated with the term before parallels are sought in Ey’s 1936 memoirs. Reinhold Grimm is certainly right to state that the ‘front of *inner emigration* cut across [...] the full breadth of different ideological and political camps’ (Grimm, 2003, p. 35) and that in this regard: ‘one has to free oneself from [...] compartmentalized thinking and instead keep in mind a sliding scale that extends from active resistance to passive refusal. The former culminates in open action, while the latter culminates in mute silence’ (Grimm, 2003, p. 33). To be more precise than this is precarious given the difficulties posed by what

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<sup>155</sup> In reference to Max Osborn (pseudonym: Heinrich Garbel, a literature and art historian and publicist, \*10.2.1870 Cologne - †24.9.1946 New York) the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 7, p. 510f, notes: ‘Der einer alten Kölner Bankiersfamilie entstammende O. [...] war [1894-1914...] Mitherausgeber der “Jahresberichte für neuere deutsche Literaturgeschichte”. O. betätigte sich als Kunst- und Theaterkritiker, 1900-1909 für die “National-Zeitung”, seit 1910 für die “BZ am Mittag” und 1914-33 für die “Vossische Zeitung”. 1915-18 war er Kriegsberichterstatter. O. schrieb eine *Geschichte der Kunst* (1910) und Monographien zu zeitgenössischen Künstlern (u.a. *Max Pechstein*, 1922) und veröffentlichte eine Reihe von Berlin Führern. Als Mitbegründer des Jüdischen Kulturbundes Berlin 1933 setzte er sich für verfolgte deutsche Juden ein. 1938 emigrierte er nach Paris, 1941 in die USA, wo er vor allem in der Exilzeitschrift “Aufbau” publizierte.’

Michael Philipp calls: ‘der nicht immer eindeutig bestimmbare Charakter der NS-Literatur, und gerade hier bestehen sowohl vom Ästhetischen wie vom Verhalten der Autoren fließende Übergänge’ (Philipp, 1994, p. 16). In light of these difficulties, it seems appropriate to adopt Philipp’s approach in which: ‘die Abgrenzungen nach beiden Richtungen müssen im Einzelfall mit Untersuchungen der jeweiligen individuellen Lebens- und Werkgeschichte ermittelt werden’ (Philipp, 1994, p. 27).

To understand the notion of ‘inner emigration’ literature it is also necessary to explain the Nazi social and cultural policy against which these individuals reacted. Volker Dahm notes that the National Socialists believed that art should only develop ‘within the framework of “national laws of life”’ and that the artistic individual should be ‘replaced by the artist [as] a servant and member of his people and nation’ (Dahm, 2003, p. 169) and pursued the policy of *Gleichschaltung* in an attempt to realise these aims. As a result cultural leaders ‘seen as protagonists or beneficiaries of Weimar cultural activity’ were replaced with those who were ‘politically “reliable” and aesthetically conformist’ (Dahm, p. 171). In all areas of culture and across all social classes propaganda and subsidies were increased to ‘break the educational privileges and the literary monopoly of the bourgeoisie’ (Dahm, 2003, p. 172) and reward those who conformed. The *Reichskulturkammer* law of 22 September 1933 also ensured that individuals who wanted to remain active in the arts had to become licensed members of *Berufsgemeinschaften* with the effect that authors, booksellers, publishers, literary agents and librarians had to join the *Reichsschrifttumskammer* (Dahm, 2003, p. 170). Those who were former political opponents, criminals, homosexuals, mentally ill or members of religious sects, ‘non-Aryan’ or those perceived to have shown ‘active opposition to the regime [...] as proven by a court judgement or incarceration in a concentration camp’ faced *Berufsverbot* and rejection and expulsion from these *Berufsgemeinschaften* (Dahm, 2003, p. 171).

Dahm notes that the *Reichsschrifttumskammer* tolerated political indifference as long as it had no discernable aesthetic connections to modernist artistic and stylistic movements and that whilst Nazi literature was desired it was not demanded or coerced (Dahm, 2003, p. 173). However, those authors who remained in Germany and wanted to express openly a critical anti-fascist message, address themes which were not tolerated by the Nazis or who were not able or did not want to become members

of the *Reichsschrifttumskammer* were forced either to write with no intention of immediate publication (*für die Schublade*), resort to illegal means such as distributing self-printed or hand-copied texts or publish abroad under a pseudonym (Grimm, 2003, p. 35). Those who were able to get their texts published had another possibility open to them. They could write works which carried a veiled message and used the ‘language of subversive servitude (*Sklavensprache*)’ (Grimm, 2003, p. 35) to allude critically to events in Nazi society. This ‘inner emigration’ literature variously offered the readership a flight from the present, an exemplary demonstration of how things could be and a ‘Rahmen zur Distanzierung, um mit dem Blick auf die Geschichte die Gegenwart zu begreifen’ (Schnell, 1976, p. 99f) achieved through the presence of certain characters and historical figures, parallels in structures of power and their effects and through *Wortfelder* which bore similarities to contemporary usages (Schnell, 1976, pp. 115-130). Different techniques were used to encourage a sensitive reading of these texts and hint at their underlying critical meaning, such as the use of mottos or preambles as a *Dechiffrieranleitung*, the chosen *Erzählhaltung*, a change in the *Erzählperspektive*, a play between the *Erzähl- und Reflexionsebene* and the use of *Vorausdeutungen und Rückwendungen* (Schnell, 1976, pp. 103-114).

General themes which featured prominently in the literature of the ‘inner emigration’ published during the Third Reich included the ‘rejection of totalitarianism’, ‘the fear of the inevitable catastrophe’, ‘the vague hope for an anticollectivistic social order’ and ‘disgust for political gigantism and a longing for privacy and the simple life’ (*Neue Schweizer Rundschau*, 1944: Trommler, 2003, p. 113). In addition, as Hans Dieter Schäfer states, ‘along with the literature of despair, there arose a broad variety of the idyllic that [...] affected all genres’ (Schäfer, 2003, p. 62), and if there is a stylistic aspect common to these works it lies in the ‘literature of the turn of the century and in the classical and realistic tendencies of premodernist writing’ (Schäfer, 2003, p. 74f). It is also apparent that these authors frequently dealt with notions of inwardness and retreat, a double life and escapism alluded to in the motifs of nature and an absence of political and historical consciousness. According to Philipp, their work is often characterised by ‘eine naive Grundhaltung des Gottvertrauens, die Sichtweise der Schicksalhaftigkeit der Abläufe und die traditionelle Selbstdefinition des Schriftstellers als autonomes Wesen, das sich als unpolitisch verstand und keinerlei aktives gesellschaftliches Engagement anstrebte’ (Philipp, 1994, p. 24).

When addressing the tendency of certain authors to ‘search for fictional or poetic zones of timeless nature or humanity [...] to establish distance from the rhetoric and the ready-made phrases of official language’, Frank Trommler also importantly draws attention to the ambivalent nature of ‘inner emigration’ literature when he argues that these motifs ‘cannot always be distinguished from the mythification of timeless moments in *völkisch* narratives’ (Trommler, 2003, p. 120). Indeed Philipp goes further still and hints at why the label of ‘inner emigration’ remains so controversial when he states that: ‘kaum zu überschätzen schließlich ist die nationale Einstellung und patriotische Verbundenheit vieler Autoren mit ihrem “Volk und Vaterland”’ and warns that: ‘Dissens und Konsens, [...] Distanz und Anpassung’ and ‘die paradoxe Gleichzeitigkeit von oppositionellen Momenten und Systemstabilisierung’ (Philipp, 1994, p. 24/ p. 28) are an integral part of this canon.

Having explored the notion of ‘inner emigration’ literature and the methods and themes involved in this category, the following section uses these findings to inform a critical reading of Ey’s 1936 memoirs. Baumeister asserts that Ey intended to publish these memoirs during the Third Reich (Baumeister, 1999, p. 52) on the basis of a letter from Ey to ‘Krause’ (a.k.a. artist Jean Paul Schmitz) in 1936:

Das Leben bei mir ist noch dasselbe wie immer. Meine Arbeit besteht aus alten Zeitschriften Bilder d.h. gute Reproduktionen auszuschneiden und aufzukleben, es gibt mir etwas Abwechslung, dazu (lache nicht) bin ich dabei, mein Leben zu beschreiben, es wird ja Quatsch sein, doch das kann auch mal gut sein (Letter, 12/03/1936: Baumeister, 1999, p. 7).

Indeed in a later section of the same letter which Baumeister does not cite, Ey remarks: ‘Johanna geht und immer kommt sie wieder. Meine Hoffnung ist das Buch und wenn nicht, dann hat ja auch keiner Schaden’ (Letter, 12/03/1936) which could be interpreted as her hope that the publication of her memoirs in the Third Reich would return her to her previous status.

It is however possible that this comment does not refer to Ey’s hopes of publication during the Nazi period, since no reference is made by Ey as to when this should

happen. Instead Ey may well be referring here to a time after the Nazis' removal from power, with the idea that her celebrity could be resurrected then by the publication of her memoirs. If however this does refer to her seeking publication during the Nazi period this could also be explained as a temporary fantasy on her part, given that this is the only letter available from the Nazi period which mentions Ey working on her memoirs and which could be interpreted as signalling her intent to publish them. There is also no record of Ey attempting to obtain membership of the *Reichsschriftumskammer*, required to publish in Germany at this time. In addition, the content of Ey's memoirs, as will become evident in the following analysis, is such that had her intention been to publish during the Nazi period, this would never have occurred. Her memoirs could only have been published abroad during this era but there is no written evidence that she considered this possibility. With these considerations clearly in mind the following close reading of Ey's 1936 memoirs is conducted from the standpoint that Ey was writing *für die Schublade* and not with the intention of publishing in Germany during the Nazi era. Excerpts from this typescript have been selected, cited and commented upon when they in my opinion reveal something of Ey's views on National Socialism.

Ey opens her text with the motto 'Leben heisst kämpfen. Wer arbeitet, soll leben! [sic]' (p. 1)<sup>156</sup> - a sentence which could be interpreted as a reference to the general hardships she had experienced during her life but could also imply that the Nazis provided the latest in a long line of 'fights' she has had to undertake. Indeed 'Wer arbeitet, soll leben!' could allude to the closure of her gallery as the result of pressure from the Nazis and the feelings of uselessness she experienced due to her unemployment. Thus this motto could utilise a technique employed by 'inner emigration' authors to encourage the reader to look for underlying oppositional meaning in the text which follows. In the description of her childhood memories thereafter she reminisces about the visit of a family of tightrope walkers to her village (pp. 1-3). This choice of theme suggests she had sympathy with those who lived alternative lifestyles, whilst the description of how she followed the acrobats to the next village and was subsequently late for school (p. 2) presents the image of an independently-minded individual who was not always dutiful.

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<sup>156</sup> All page numbers in this section refer to the typescript of Ey's 1936 memoirs from the S.D.A. (Ey, 1936) unless otherwise stated.

During her school days however Ey implies she was someone who gained enjoyment from doing her duty, when she writes: ‘Man ist doch so stolz, für seine Lehrerin etwas tun zu dürfen’ (p. 4) although she also suggests she was not afraid to disobey authority. This impression emerges when she recalls that for two consecutive days she did not collect her teacher’s lunch after she had been hit for refusing to sing a song (p. 4) and could be considered an instruction to the reader to think independently and oppose authority when this contrasts with their own moral judgement. Ey then proceeds to recount details about having her own children. This description of her large family would undoubtedly have struck a chord with the Nazi policy of the ‘woman as mother’ and the notion of ‘strengthening’ Germany through a high number of births, however the ensuing description of her divorce contrasts with the importance the Nazis placed on the family unit. The details she gives of her raising her children as a single working mother would also have been in opposition to the favoured Nazi model in which the man was the breadwinner (p. 5).

Thereafter Ey describes the period up to and including the First World War. In this passage she mentions her eldest son Paul’s desire to complete four years’ voluntary service in the navy (p. 5) and his involvement in the: ‘grosse[...] Seeschlacht von Skager[r]ack, wo die Deutschen Kriegsschiffe mit den Engländern in grossem Gefecht sich gegenüberstanden’ and writes that she was ‘so stolz, dass mein Sohn Paul doch auch etwas geholfen hat’ (p. 15f).<sup>157</sup> She also recounts her younger son Hermann’s contribution to the war effort (p. 16) repairing war ships in Constantinople and describes the overwhelming joy she felt when she saw a photo of him in the newspaper under the headline ‘deutsche Marine am Bosphorus’ (p. 16). Here the impression is given that her family had served their country and that she was a patriot and proud mother. This would have been well received by a Nazi censor had her memoirs been discovered and may well have been a device intended to reduce the

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<sup>157</sup> This battle - known in English as the Battle of Jutland - was fought between the Germans and the British and began on 31/05/1916 near Skagerrak, Denmark. It lasted for 12 hours and involved 100 German ships with a crew numbering approximately 45,000 against 151 British ships with 60,000 men (Rahn, 2009, p. 139). The German navy’s official version of this battle in 1924 presented themselves as the winners since they had destroyed 3 British battle cruisers whilst losing only one, inflicted higher casualties (6,094 to the Germans 2,551) and caused the loss of 115,025 tons to their 61,180. Werner Rahn however notes that this was a simplified version of events which overlooked that the Germans avoided a continuation of this battle on June 1 (Rahn, 2009, p. 188/ p. 194).

impact of the rest of her text. However it does not have to be interpreted as an attempt to curry favour. Instead it could be argued that Ey was orientating herself towards a more 'honourable' period of nationalism in this section and was being loyal to Germany but not to the Nazis. This is also suggested by a description of a visit to see her son Paul in Wilhelmshaven which contains positive appraisals of navy officials. She notes in this context that she had breakfast with a *Deck-Offizier* (p. 6) and that an exception to the rules was made to allow her to board a warship (the battle cruiser *Moltke*) and visit her son (p. 7). Moreover in response to her request that her son be given 14 days' leave she notes that the *Oberkommandierende* gave him 21 days instead (p. 8).

There is certainly no suggestion here that her patriotism and loyalty are to be equated with Nazi sympathies or a desire for war. In reference to her son being in the navy for instance, she implies an aversion to armed conflict when she writes: 'Dies waren schöne Zeiten damals, bis dann der 1. August 1914 die Nachricht von der Kriegserklärung brachte' (p. 14). Indeed there is a marked absence of National Socialist vocabulary and frequent reference is made to the human and financial cost of war on a personal scale which may be intended to allude to the pitfalls of nationalist crusades. She mentions for instance the death of her son Hermann's friend whilst on active service (p. 18), and her statement: 'Ich hörte jeden Tag von meinen Künstlern: ich habe mich freiwillig gemeldet! Und ich glaube, es sind wohl keine freudigeren Herzens dem Rufe gefolgt, als aus Künstlerkreisen, darunter auch mein Freund [artist Viktor] Savelsberg' (p. 14) is followed by the description of Savelsberg's death (p. 15). Her description of the fate of the artist Jakob Thiessen also points to a link between death and overzealous nationalism. She writes of Thiessen's patriotism: 'er meinte ganz witzig, wenn eine Drehorgel die "Wacht Am Rhein" spielte, oder "Heil dir im Siegerkranz", ging das Bild besser vorwärts' (p. 15) and then reveals the result of these convictions: 'Er war nicht gerne Soldat gewesen, und doch meldete er sich schnell als einer der ersten freiwillig.- und ist auch als einer der ersten gefallen' (p. 15).

Ey also writes of first-hand experience of the horrors of war when she describes the German troops coming home: 'Den ersten So[l]daten habe ich sterben sehen vor meinen Füßen [...] Alles war so traurig' (p. 17). In this context she mentions that she

provided blankets upon which this soldier could be laid and that she offered water, ice, slices of lemon and cognac as well as postcards and writing material to the returning troops (p. 17). This again suggests her loyalty to Germany and a willingness to help. Yet when she writes: ‘Nach ein paar Wochen hörten die Truppensendungen auf, ich stand allein da, ohne einen Pfennig’ (p. 17) it becomes clear that this was also a way for her to earn a living. The financial hardship induced by war is also evident in the description of having to work in a *Militärbekleidungsstelle* where the uniforms of German soldiers were recycled. The nature of the work again suggests Ey made a contribution to the war effort. However the implication here too is that this was for economic rather than ideological reasons (p. 18).

In Ey’s account of her time as a coffee shop and gallery owner it is also notable that there are many references to movements and individuals who would not have been favourably received by the Nazis. For instance mention is made of the *Sonderbund* who she states exhibited ‘moderne Bilder’ and of her visit to the *Junge Rheinland* exhibition in Berlin in which she comments favourably on works by ‘modern’ artists Christian Rohlf’s and Heinrich Nauen.<sup>158</sup> Furthermore in the early stages of her text she refers to Pankok and Wollheim’s visit to her gallery (p. 21) - albeit through the use of initials<sup>159</sup> - despite the fact that Pankok had his exhibition *Passion* in Mülheim shut down by the Nazis in 1935 and his book *Die Passion* banned,<sup>160</sup> and that Wollheim was of Jewish descent, associated with left-wing politics and had fled to

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<sup>158</sup> Ey: ‘Ich muss schon sagen, mich interessierten die “Chr. [Christian] Ro[h]lfs-Aquarelle[?]” und “[Heinrich] Nauen” mehr als “[Hans] Thoma” und andere (p. 21). 21 works by Rohlf’s were displayed in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 332) and 400 works of his were confiscated from German museums in 1937 (Barth, 1984, p. 106). Nauen was sacked from his Professorship at the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie* in 1937 (Barth, 1984, p. 100) and had works shown in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 312). Nauen is also mentioned in Ey, 1936, p. 54. In this critical close reading of Ey’s 1936 memoirs every individual Ey mentions has been investigated to discern whether their biographies before and during the Third Reich (e.g. their persecution by, opposition to or support for the regime) may have been significant in Ey naming them and provide a subtext to what she wrote. Where relevant information has been found it has been included in the footnotes or main text.

<sup>159</sup> Wollheim is first referred to by his full last name on p. 26 and Pankok on p. 28.

<sup>160</sup> ‘1933 bis 34 entstand der Zyklus der “Passion”, der heftige Angriffe seitens der Nationalsozialisten auslöste. Die Ausstellung der “Passion” in Mülheim 1935 wurde geschlossen und bis 1945 war Pankok auf keiner Ausstellung mehr vertreten. 1936 erhielt der Künstler Arbeitsverbot, er arbeitete im geheimen weiter, stets von Hausdurchsuchungen und Polizeikontrollen bedroht. Es folgte ein Leben in verschiedenen Schlupfwinkeln, zuletzt in Pesch in der Eifel’ (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 336). 51 works of Pankok’s are said to have been confiscated during the Nazi period and his work was also shown in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 325). Zimmermann however states that 56 works by Pankok were taken from German museums and destroyed. He also notes that Pankok tried to emigrate to Switzerland but failed (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 428). Pankok is mentioned several times in Ey’s 1936 memoirs (see Ey, 1936, p. 22/ p. 24/ p. 28/ p. 61/ p. 64/ p. 65/ p. 66).



Paris in 1933.<sup>161</sup> This use of abbreviations could be understood as an attempt by Ey to protect these individuals had her memoirs been discovered. However given that their identities could easily have been established by consulting her previous autobiographical texts,<sup>162</sup> and considering that other ‘degenerate’ artists are mentioned by name in her memoirs and that Pankok and Wollheim themselves are later named in full, this seems to be a shorthand reference.

Aside from references to movements and individuals the Nazis would not have approved of Ey does not seek to play down her own role in the promotion of ‘modern’ art. Indeed she suggests she was instrumental, stating that she asked Pankok and Wollheim whether she could put their works on public display (p. 22). Her description of how people gathered in front of her gallery window and laughed and shouted abuse in reaction to this could also be intended to invoke connotations of Nazi mobs. This would employ a technique used by certain ‘inner emigration’ authors in which descriptions of the past were used to draw critical parallels with the present. Indeed the resilient impression she gives in the face of this intimidation in the Weimar period: ‘Sie können das Fenster ständig für sich behalten [...] Wenn die Leute draussen mich ärgern, so sollen sie weiter lachen, denn sie ärgern sich ja bloss selbst und lachen deshalb’ (p. 22) could be intended as an allusion to her ‘inner’ resistance to the National Socialists.

Thereafter Ey once again underlines her role as a promoter of ‘modern’ art when she writes: ‘Es kamen immer neue Bilder und neue Maler’ (p. 22) and in this context she

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<sup>161</sup> Wollheim organised a political art exhibition entitled *Der Kampf* in the *Düsseldorf Kunsthalle* in 1924, which is said to have displayed art for the ‘proletarians’. In conjunction with Schwesig and Ludwigs he also founded a Socialist orientated satirical magazine *Die Peitsche* in 1924, which rallied against militarism and published crimes committed by the *Freikorps* (Barth, 1984, p. 46). In the Nazi era Wollheim emigrated in early 1933 from Berlin to Paris via Saarbrücken. Whilst in Paris with his girlfriend Barbakoff, Wollheim co-founded the *Kollektivs Deutscher Künstler* and was voted on to the board of the *Freien Deutschen Künstlerbundes*. After the outbreak of war in 1939 he was interned in several French camps (in chronological order: Vierzon, Camp du Ruchard and Gurs) before having his freedom bought by Barbakoff and a French priest. He was then recaptured and sent to a camp in Septfonds but used the opportunity of being given an *Ausgangsschein* to flee to Nay in 1942 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 346). Zimmermann states this date was 1943 and notes that Wollheim was hidden in Nay until the end of the war (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 462). Wollheim also had works exhibited in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 355). Mention of him is also made in Ey, 1936, p. 22f/ p. 25f/ p. 31f/ pp. 37-39/ p. 54/ p. 64/ p. 117 and in a letter from Sureda reproduced by Ey (Letter, ‘Jetzt sitze ich mich in meinem Hause’, March (?) 1927: Ey, 1936, p. 119).

<sup>162</sup> In Ey, 1936, p. 91 reference is made to her 1930 autobiographical text in *Das Kunstblatt* in her edited version of Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.

mentions artists Kurt (Curt) Lahs and Lorenz Böskens, both of whom appear to have been considered ‘degenerate’ at the time of writing.<sup>163</sup> She also openly recalls her affection for this period: ‘es wurde für mich eine herrliche, schöne Zeit, da ich diese geistig wertvollen Künstler um mich hatte’ and mentions Fritz Feigler who was also regarded as a ‘degenerate’ artist (p. 23).<sup>164</sup> Moreover she declares Wollheim’s *Der Verwundete* as her favourite picture (p. 23). The anti-war theme of this painting and the political associations of the artist who painted it would have reflected badly on Ey had her memoirs been discovered. This suggests she was not afraid to stand by certain opinions even if they were viewed as ‘politically incorrect’ during the Third Reich.

Ey then describes the visit of Hans Frank (Franck)<sup>165</sup> (p. 24) to her gallery, an author who was one of the 88 authors who signed a *Gelöbnis treuster Gefolgschaft* to Hitler. She mentions that Franck came ‘als ich P. [Pankok] gerade die Haare am Schneiden war. Ich stand auf dem Fussbänkchen, ich glaubte, Hans Franck kann nicht über die Schwelle vor lauter Schrecken und Staunen, doch mir machte das gar nichts aus. Der Künstler hatte doch den Friseur gespart’ (p. 24). The insinuation here could be that Ey did not care what those who supported Hitler thought of her and that her loyalties lay first and foremost with ‘her’ artists. She then moves on to place emphasis on the status her gallery had once held, in what could be interpreted as a reminder of what the Nazis had destroyed: ‘Schauspieler, Sänger, Journalisten, Regierungs-Assesoren

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<sup>163</sup> Lahs, who was a professor at the *Staatliche Kunstschule* in Berlin, was sacked in 1933 because he was viewed as ‘degenerate’. After a spell in ‘protective custody’ he then fled (1933?) to Yugoslavia and Albania (Barth, 1984, p. 95). Lahs is also mentioned in Ey, 1936, p. 56. Böskens’s work was viewed as ‘degenerate’ and confiscated during the Third Reich, yet he continued to produce small-scale critical pictures (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 314). Ey also mentions Böskens in Ey, 1936, p. 23. Adolf de Haer is also mentioned in conjunction with the aforementioned artists although works by him are not said to have been confiscated until after 1937 (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 382). De Haer is mentioned in Ey, 1936, p. 22f.

<sup>164</sup> In regard to Feigler: ‘Nach dem Scheitern der Berufung zum Direktor der [Staatlichen] Hochschule [für Bildende Kunst, Weimar], Übersiedlung nach Berlin. Ausstellungsverbot als entarteter Künstler’ (Barth, 1984, p. 84). Feigler is also mentioned in Ey, 1936, p. 28/ p. 64/ p. 65. Ulrich Leman, also mentioned in this list, was considered a ‘degenerate’ artist but this was after 1936. From 1939 to 1945 Leman was ‘Aus der Kulturkammer als “entwurzelt, volksfeindlich, politisch unsicher” ausgeschlossen’ (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 323/ p. 333).

<sup>165</sup> The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 3, p. 388, writes of Hans Franck (author, \*30.7.1879 Wittenburg (Mecklenburg) - †11.4.1964): ‘1914 wurde er von Louise Dumont als Leiter der neugegründeten Hochschule für Bühnenkunst, Dramaturg des Schauspielhauses und Herausgeber der Zeitschrift “Die Masken” nach Düsseldorf berufen und lebte seit 1921 als freischaffender Schriftsteller auf dem Landgut Frankenhorst. F. behandelt in seinen insgesamt über hundert, oft mehrmals aufgelegten Werken Themen wie Heimat, Freundschaft, Liebe, Volk und Religion [...] Politisch schwenkte er von konservativen Anschauungen schon früh zum Nationalsozialismus (*Das Dritte Reich. Ein nationalsozialistisches Glaubensbekenntnis*, 1922), wurde jedoch von den Machthabern nicht exponiert.’

[sic] und angehende Staatsanwälte, der bekannte und berühmte rheinische Dichter Adolf von Hatzfeld gehörte auch zu den Besuchern' (p. 24). In this context she describes her contact with artist Conrad Felixmüller and how Pankok wrote to Dix to invite him to come to Düsseldorf and to send works to her gallery, which again emphasises her contacts with artists who were not viewed favourably by the Nazis (p. 24).<sup>166</sup> She then mentions that she sold some of the pictures Dix had sent and displayed reproductions of works by Chagall, Kokoschka, Nolde, (Ernst Ludwig) Kirchner and others in the *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* (p. 24f) which once more demonstrates her connections with 'degenerate' artists and, through reference to a period when such works could be sold and exhibited, emphasises the extent to which society had changed.

In regard to Dix, Ey again gives the impression that she was at the forefront of the 'modern' art movement when she notes: 'Ich kaufte hier in Düsseldorf die ersten Bilder von Dix, dann kauften Sammler, und Dix fing an, Karriere zu machen' (p. 26). Ey's subsequent remark: 'Alles, was bei mir ausgestellt war, wurde bekrittelt, und so ist es auch geblieben' (p. 26), read in the context of 1936, is then clearly dismissive of the sentiment which had existed during the Weimar era and was now endorsed by the Nazi state. Such continuities are also suggested in her description of the confiscation of Wollheim's picture *Stück Festland passiert unter wehender Flagge den Raum von Omega* in the Weimar period<sup>167</sup> and the ensuing trial for which the *Anklageschrift* read: '30000 sittliche Jün[g]linge und Jungfrauen nehmen Anstoss an dem Bild' (p. 26). Yet this could also be understood as a nostalgic reference to a more balanced time since the judges are shown to have ruled in Wollheim's favour (p. 26). Indeed in the following description of an international exhibition in Düsseldorf (*I. Internationale Kunstausstellung*) in 1922 she notes that artists from Italy, Russia, Holland, France

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<sup>166</sup> Felixmüller had 40 works branded as degenerate by the Nazis in 1933 and was ejected from the *Verein Berliner Künstler* soon afterwards. Depending on the source used either 151 of his works in total were confiscated by the Nazis - the majority of which were destroyed (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 238) or in 1937/38 alone 151 works were confiscated from public collections (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 324 and Zimmermann, 1994, p. 368). Felixmüller also had 6 works of his included in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 238). Dix was sacked from his post as Professor at the *Dresdener Kunstakademie* in 1933 and was banned from exhibiting his works from 1934 onwards. In February 1944 he was called up for the *Volkssturm*, and after a month of fighting was captured and interned in Colmar until 1946 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 319f). Dix had 26 works included in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 and approximately 260 works were confiscated from collections in Germany during this period (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 226). Dix is also mentioned in Ey, 1936, pp. 24-26/ pp. 28-30/ p. 54/ p. 56/ p. 64f/ p. 73f.

<sup>167</sup> See Chapter 6, Fig. 55.

and Japan were invited, and this too may have been intended to emphasise the differences between the more open-minded Weimar republic and the xenophobia of Nazi society. Ey implies she shared this exhibition's spirit of openness and international co-operation when she mentions the French and Russian artists who stayed at her gallery.<sup>168</sup> She also reasserts her allegiance to 'modern' art in this context when she writes: 'ich war so stolz, dass ich unermüdlich mitarbeiten konnte am Aufbau einer modernen Kunstepoche' and rather than distancing herself from these artists implies her unequivocal support for them: 'ich kann behaupten, dass ich mein Hab und Gut gegeben hätte, solange es reichte' (p. 27).

Ey then mentions the appointment of artists such as Dix and Feigler<sup>169</sup> as professors at various art institutions in Germany during this period (p. 28) in what could be viewed as yet another attempt to draw attention to the esteem in which such 'degenerate' artists had once been held. She then goes on to write of how she herself had 'arrived' and 'gehörte zu den Prominenten', received many visitors from abroad and was no longer the subject of ridicule (p. 29). Here the image of her as an individual who was an important and respected cultural figure in Weimar Düsseldorf is presented, illustrating the fall from grace that she had suffered. The differences between the Weimar and Nazi eras are again apparent when she mentions that works by artists Lovis Corinth, (Max) Slevogt, (Max) Liebermann, Chagall and Kokoschka had been part of an exhibition alongside Dix's *Meine Eltern* (Fig. 52) in the *Kunstverein* in Cologne (p. 29f). In this regard she mentions that 'Secke' (Hans Friedrich Secker)<sup>170</sup> the head of the *Wallraf-Richartz-Museum* in Cologne had bought the latter's work and that 'Biemann' (Georg Biermann)<sup>171</sup> and the head of the *Kunstverein* in Cologne, *Direktor* (Walter) Klug, had asked her to exhibit this picture by Dix (Ey, 1936, p. 29). The inclusion of such details shows a lack of caution on Ey's part since this would

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<sup>168</sup> Ey writes: 'Bei mir waren [occupation unknown] Tristan Remy, [artist and stage designer] Pierre Hodé aus Paris, [sculptor] Rudolf Belling aus Berlin, [sculptor K.F. Forenames could not be determined] Zalit aus Russland' (Ey, 1936, p. 27f). Belling had work included in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 211).

<sup>169</sup> Artist Paul Bindel is also mentioned here. Although Bindel had work exhibited in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 211) he remained professor for *künstlerische Lehramt* at the *Kunstakademie* in Düsseldorf from 1930-42. Ey emphasises her links to this artist when she notes that 'Paul Bindels Koppelschloss, wo eine Kugel vorbei ging Im Kriege, trage ich heute noch als Vorstecknadel, sogar jetzt beim schreiben' (Ey, 1936, p. 28). See also mention of Bindel in Ey, 1936, p. 54/ p. 64/ p. 66.

<sup>170</sup> Information from Baumeister, 1999, p. 236.

<sup>171</sup> Georg Biermann was the editor of the *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* from 1908-1920 and the *Cicerone* from 1909-1932 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 227).

have emphasised these individuals' links to 'degenerate' art had her memoirs been seized (p. 29).

Ey then goes on to describe her friendship with Sureda and her first visit to his residence in Majorca. She mentions how she borrowed money for the trip from a collector named 'Herr. G' (p. 30) and in contrast to many other instances in her memoirs uses a shortened form,<sup>172</sup> which could suggest an attempt to obscure his identity for his sake or her own, or as in the case of Pankok and Wollheim could be explained as a form of shorthand. Amongst the group who accompanied Ey to Majorca she once again openly refers to Wollheim and mentions that she met up there with Alfred Leithäuser, who was also regarded as a 'degenerate' artist<sup>173</sup> (p. 35). It is also stated that Walter Kaesbach the head of the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* wrote a *Begleitschreiben* which helped Ey and several others to get the visas necessary for this trip (p. 31). This again emphasises Ey's connections with an individual persecuted by the Nazis since Kaesbach was removed from his post in 1933 (Barth, 1984, p. 62). Ey then details her visit to Montmartre on her way to Majorca via Paris, in which she writes of the beauty of racial minorities in stark contrast to Nazi views: 'doch wir gingen weiter in verschiedene Cafés, wo man Einblick hatte in alle Misere und Elend des Lebens. Neben Kindern von 15 Jahren alte zerlumppte Männer und alte zerfallene Frauen, schöne Mulattinnen und Negerinnen' (p. 32).<sup>174</sup>

The ensuing recollection of her first trip to Majorca initially presents the image of an idyll: 'Eine solche Autofahrt zwischen Bergen und Olivenbäumen, wie in einem Märchen! Sehr viele Dörfchen am Meer und an Küstenabhängen, die Wege in Zickzacklinien, alles mit weissen Mauern umgeben, dahinter vollhängende Zitronen - und Orangenbäume, ein Paradies!' (p. 34). Indeed her numerous positive descriptions

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<sup>172</sup> See for instance Ey's description of how she used the money she earned from the sale of Dix's *Meine Eltern* to commission a portrait of herself by Dix which she then states was bought by Hermann Lange from Krefeld (Ey, 1936, p. 30). This would have been potentially dangerous for Lange, an art collector, as it would have provided the Nazis with evidence of his interest in 'degenerate' art had her memoirs been discovered.

<sup>173</sup> Leithäuser is also referred to in a letter from Sureda that Ey reproduces (Letter, 'Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe', n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 132). Zimmermann notes that Leithäuser was regarded as a 'degenerate' artist from 1933 (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 408).

<sup>174</sup> See also a letter from Ey to Pudlich whilst he was in Marseille in which Ey could allude to her affinity with women of mixed race: 'Was macht die Mulattin? Hast du viel Typen entdeckt? Ich möchte dort sein, ich glaube, ich bin seelisch etwas verwandt, doch ich kann nichts dafür' (Letter, 06/08/1928).

in this context could suggest a retreat into these memories as a form of escapism from the period of writing. She writes for instance: ‘Nun sitze ich hier in meinem schönen Quartier und lasse mich von der Sonne bescheinen’ (p. 36) and notes: ‘Ich war so glücklich’ (p. 37). Moreover in the description of her departure she states: ‘wir waren alle sehr sehr fröhlich, doch innerlich war ich sehr trauig’ (p. 43) and remarks: ‘Nachdem das Signal gegeben wurde, dass die Nichtmitreisenden das Schiff verlassen mussten, wäre ich am liebsten mit an Land gegangen’ (p. 43f). In addition her description of the atmosphere in the bar *Lapin Agill* in Montmatre which she visited on the return leg of this journey could offer an intentional contrast to her situation in Germany in 1936: ‘Ich fühlte mich sehr wohl dort, denn da konnte ich mich benehmen wie ich wollte’ (p. 49). On her return to Düsseldorf she also reminisces: ‘Ich [...] denke jeden Tag an die schöne, schöne Reise nach den Balearen’ (p. 49).

However, to view this trip solely as a pleasant collection of memories from which to flee the present requires selective reading since there is also the suggestion that Ey experienced loneliness whilst there: ‘Ich sehe, dass er [Sureda] manchmal sehr trauig ist, weil ich mich etwas einsam fühle ohne die anderen Künstler. Ich wollte, ich könnte mich anders benehmen. Er hat, statt Freude von mir, vielleicht nur Aerger’ (p. 36). Moreover she implies she was not content with the work she had to do whilst in Majorca: ‘ich hatte mir doch geschworen, in Spanien nicht die Hand zu rühren zum Arbeiten. Daraus ist nun leider bei Sureda nichts geworden, und jeden Abend nahm ich mir vor, mich auszuquartieren’ (p. 38). She also appears to resent not being able to speak the language: ‘Ich denke, es sieht blödsinnig aus, wenn man jemanden anlächelt und kann nicht mit ihm sprechen’ (p. 41) and to have experienced strain in her friendship with Sureda: ‘ein Wort bringt das andere, ich bin empört und laufe weg. Innerlich gekränkt kommen mir die Tränen [...] Er macht mir auch immer Vorwürfe, ich wäre nicht nett zu seinen spanischen Freunden’ (p. 41). Mention of Wollheim receiving the news of his father’s death during this visit and deciding to leave Majorca early (p. 39) and Ey’s description of an injury she suffered to her arm following a fall (p. 43) also contribute to a mixed impression of this first trip.

The later description of her second visit in 1933 however can be viewed as a description of a temporary physical emigration, the memory of which offered Ey the opportunity of ‘inner emigration’. As is the case throughout her memoirs the presence

of the NSDAP in Germany is implied here but not mentioned directly. Instead when she describes how Dutch artist Bob Gesinus Visser and the stage designer Hein Heckroth, who received a *Berufsverbot* in 1933,<sup>175</sup> bought her a ticket and put 600 Pesetas into a bank in Palma for her trip to the Spanish island she states this was: ‘Um etwas aus dieser aufregenden Zeit heraus zu kommen’ (p. 87). The impression of warmth and humanity in the descriptions of Sureda certainly suggest a flight into nostalgia here: ‘Er hatte mir schon so oft geschrieben, er möchte mich so gerne noch einmal sehen und mit mir plaudern’ (p. 87) and ‘es wäre herrlich, wenn wir zusammen nach Palma reisen könnten’ (p. 88). However the events unfolding in Germany are shown to impinge on this oasis: ‘Da ich nun in den Zeitungen dort viel von Unruhen in Deutschland las, hielt ich es für richtig, sofort zurück nach Düsseldorf zu fahren.’ Indeed her description of her return home to find everything ‘still und friedlich und in schönster Ordnung’ (p. 90) could be an ironic reference to the Nazis having taken control.

In regard to her sixty fifth birthday in 1929 Ey then reproduces correspondence received from various dignitaries and cultural figures,<sup>176</sup> which again emphasises the standing she once had, underlines her contribution to the Düsseldorf ‘modern’ art scene<sup>177</sup> and indirectly refers to the change that had occurred in society. This includes best wishes from Professor Spatz (p. 51) (Letter, Spatz, March 1929), Professor Wilhelm Schmurr from the *Staatliche Akademie* (p. 51f) (Letter, Schmurr, March 1929), a telegram from Max Ernst (p. 52) (Telegram, 04(?/03/1929)<sup>178</sup> and a letter

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<sup>175</sup> According to the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 4, p. 472 Hein Heckroth (stage designer, \*14.4.1901 Gießen - †6.7.1970 in the Netherlands) ‘arbeitete [...] als Chefbühnenbildner am Stadttheater von Münster, danach bis 1933 an den Städtischen in Düsseldorf, Berlin, München und Paris tätig [...] 1933 erhielt H. Berufsverbot in Deutschland, emigrierte und lebte seit 1935 vorwiegend in Großbritannien.’ See also mention of Heckroth in Ey, 1936, p. 64/ p. 70.

<sup>176</sup> In reference to a letter from Lehr to Ey on the occasion of her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday (Letter, 03/03/1929 (?)) Baumeister notes that in Ey’s 1936 memoirs: ‘Frau Ey den Brief nicht nur gekürzt, sondern auch redigiert hat’ and states that this was also carried out in regard to other letters and articles which follow the aforementioned example. She writes that for reasons of copyright the letters and quotes included in her version use the ‘Originalwortlaut’ (1999, p. 112). In this review of her memoirs Ey’s edited versions have been used instead, in an attempt to remain as true as possible to the way Ey wanted to present herself. Where these differences appear relevant to Ey’s attitude to National Socialism they have been commented upon.

<sup>177</sup> For example Professor Willi Spatz writes in this context: ‘Es soll Ihnen auch unvergessen bleiben, wie Sie später nach dem Kriege den jungen Drängern und Stürmern ein künstlerisches Heim boten’ (Letter, Spatz, March 1929: Ey, 1936, p. 51).

<sup>178</sup> At the very latest Ernst appears to have been viewed as a ‘degenerate’ artist in 1937 since he had works exhibited in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 232). Barth notes that from 1939-1941 Ernst was detained and incarcerated in camps and that in 1941 he emigrated to New York (1984,

from the *Generalintendanz der Städtischen Theater Düsseldorf* Walter Bruno Iltz (p. 50f) (Letter, 04/03/1929). This is then followed by the inclusion of an article reporting on her birthday, which although not fully cited is from Straus-Ernst (Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929). In this edited text, it is mentioned that the city authorities gave Ey plane and theatre tickets as a present, that representatives of the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* and many artists' groups sent flowers and presents, that *Polizeiwachtmeister* Westerfeld visited her and that renowned architect Henry van de Velde congratulated her personally (p. 52f).

Continuing to focus on the events of 1929 Ey proceeds to describe how due to her financial difficulties she approached the city authorities to request that she be allowed to move her gallery to the state-owned premises at Postamt 8 (p. 53). Here she mentions that she did not receive *Künstlerhilfe*, indicating that she was not asking for anything more than she was due - a statement which may have been included to allay accusations that she had received preferential treatment. In a demonstration of the level of support she enjoyed at that time she then writes: 'Alle Künstler, sowohl alle Solisten vom Opernhaus, vom Schauspielhaus, Akademie, Künstlervereinigungen, und verschiedene alte Freunde aus dem Malkasten unterstützten meinen Antrag' (p. 53), thereby incorporating information which emphasises the comparative lack of such support when she was evicted in 1934.

Thereafter an article by Heymann is reproduced, although Ey does not mention he is the author,<sup>179</sup> in which he underlines her importance as a 'modern' art dealer and in the context of the Weimar period argues that she should be provided with a new gallery: 'Jeder Kunsthändler von internationalem Ruf weiss, dass er die Jungen, deren Schöpfungen dereinst in die Unsterblichkeit eingehen sollen, in dem kleinen Hinterzimmer der Mutter Ey findet' (p. 55). Heymann also describes her as a 'Göttin der Kunst' (p. 57), as 'die Henne, unter deren Flügel die Küken der neuen sachlichen Zeit die ersten Stürme des Lebens überstanden haben, um später als stolze Professorengockel in die weite Welt hinauszustolzieren' (p. 55) and as a 'Bannerträgerin an der Spitze' (p. 55) of a new era in art. He also presents her as the

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p. 321). See also mention of Ernst in Ey, 1936, p. 64 and letters from Sureda reproduced by Ey (Letter, 'Fabelhafte und phantastische Johanna Ey!', n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 124 and Letter, 'Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe', n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 132).

<sup>179</sup> Although this article is not fully cited by Ey it is identifiable as Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.



most portrayed woman in art history and mentions how Wollheim, Dix, Janssen and many others had painted her (p. 54). Citing this remark in 1936 Ey again makes no attempt to conceal her association with ‘degenerate’ art and artists.<sup>180</sup>

The article also demonstrates once more the status Ey had enjoyed during the Weimar period in comparison to the situation she experienced during the Third Reich.

Furthermore Ey could be using this Weimar report to articulate the feelings she had harboured in the lead up to, during and after her eviction by the Nazis: ‘Vielleicht verlässt Frau Ey Düsseldorf, den kleinen Laden, ihre Freunde hier, alles was sie geschaffen hat. Sie will nicht fort, sie sträubt sich, sie möchte bleiben und bangt darum, ob nicht die äusseren Umstände stärker sind als ihr Wollen’ (p. 56). Indeed Heymann’s argument that she should be provided with a gallery by the local authorities since otherwise ‘Ein Stück Düsseldorf wäre verloren, wenn Johanna Ey, die originellste Frau, die je in unseren Mauern weilte die Stadt verlassen müsste’ (p. 57) may have been reproduced by Ey to emphasise what the city had lost under the Nazis.

There then follows an edited version of the article by Heymann ‘Eine moderne Frau’ (pp. 58-61) (Heymann, 1931), which again does not name the author, in which Ey’s flight to Hamburg (paid for by the Düsseldorf authorities) is described. As argued in the previous chapter, the full version of this article presents an ambivalent impression of her modernity in contrast to the ‘Neue Frau’ stereotype, which includes emphasis on her large size and weight. Some of these details are however omitted in her reproduction of this article, possibly for reasons of vanity, with the effect that the ‘modern’ image of Ey becomes more pervasive and more at odds with the role of women promoted under National Socialism. The absence of the description of her night out on the *Reeperbahn* in the company of several men could however suggest that Ey did not want to push the boundaries too far and invoke the debauchery of the Weimar stereotype used in Nazi propaganda should her memoirs have been discovered. It is however equally possible that this omission may be because this section had no basis in fact or because she did not want this to be remembered for posterity.

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<sup>180</sup> Peter Janssen received a *Malverbot* in 1934 and was in Spain, France, Italy, England and the USA from 1934-39. In 1940 he was in the military, presumably on the German side, and from 1944-45 was in a concentration camp (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 328f). See also mention of Janssen in Ey, 1936, p. 64/ p. 70.

Ey then describes how she was allowed to move into ‘Friedrichsplatz 1 Ecke Hindenburgwall’ (Postamt 8) (p. 61)<sup>181</sup> and again clearly associates herself with ‘modern’ art when she writes: ‘Ich mache Ausstellung [sic] von Bildern, die mein Eigentum sind und andere der vielen Künstler, die Lust haben, in einer modernen Ausstellung zu hängen’, and when Pankok is mentioned as one of the exhibitors (p. 61). An article ‘Frau Ey im neuen Heim’<sup>182</sup> follows in which the opening of her new gallery and her first exhibition there *15 Jahre Düsseldorfer Kunst* (p. 64) are described. Here her links with ‘degenerate’ art and artists are once again emphasised through mention of works by Heckroth, Feigler, Wollheim, Pankok and Dix which had been on display. The inclusion of the article ‘Eröffnung des neuen Heimes der Mutter Ey’<sup>183</sup> from 1930 underlines these connections further still when her gallery is referred to as the: ‘Zentrum der jüngeren bildenden Kunst’ and the author notes ‘Hier fand er seine Stütze. Von hier wurde er durchgesetzt’ (p. 65).

The aforementioned article also lists the guests who came to this opening, thereby once again drawing attention to the status she had held and since lost: ‘Eine Staatliche Anzahl Gäste war erschienen, darunter Kunstfreunde, Maler, Professoren und der Akademie-Direktor Kaesbach.’ Indeed *Regierungsrat* Konrad Niermann is said to have given a speech and Ey herself offers a detailed list of who visited her on this occasion, which once more refers to the ostracised Kaesbach:

Zur derselben Zeit kamen auch Gratulanten von der Akademie, Direktor Kaesbach, Professor Bindel, Professor Herberholz, Professor [Lothar von] Kunowski und viele andere und brachten Glückwünsche in Form einer grossen Atrappe, von 2 Ateliardienerin getragen. Der Inhalt war ein grosser westfälischer Schinken, der wochenlang gut geschmeckt hat unter Beteiligung vieler Künstler, also Frühstück mit einem alten Korn (p. 66).

Following this section various letters are reproduced, the first of which is a reply to Ey’s letter to the fascist leader of Italy (Benito) Mussolini in 1932 (Letter,

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<sup>181</sup> This occurred in 1930.

<sup>182</sup> Although this article is not fully cited it is identifiable as ‘Wissenschaft: Frau Ey im neuen Heim’, 1930, n.pn.

<sup>183</sup> Although this article is not fully cited it is identifiable as Dr Jcks, 1930.

11/05/1932) documenting her request to exhibit in Rome. This would have been well received by the Nazis and may well have been included as a form of ‘damage limitation’ to soften the impact of her memoirs had they been discovered. Reference is also made here to replies from letters to the ‘Detroit Museum’ and car manufacturer ‘Henri [sic] Ford’ sent in a similar time-frame (p. 67) and although these are not reproduced in her typescript, ‘Brief folgt’ in the margin of page 67 suggests she intended to include them. The missing reply from the ‘Detroit Museum’ published for the first time by Baumeister (Baumeister, 1999, p. 133) implies Ey had asked them whether they or private collectors in Detroit were interested in buying works from her collection, whilst the letter sent on behalf of Henry Ford does not clarify her request (Baumeister, 1999, p. 133f).<sup>184</sup>

The emphasis Ey places on her contact with the USA then continues when she notes that the President of the University of Chicago, Robert Maynard Hutchins, and his wife visited her gallery and bought a watercolour (p. 67). This again implies the standing she once enjoyed and appears to have led to an invitation by Hutchins to take part in the exhibition *A Century of Progress* in Chicago in 1933. Ey indicates here too that she wanted to include the letters she had received in this regard when she writes ‘Ich bekam auch beiliegende Briefe’,<sup>185</sup> but mentions that she was unable to attend due to the effects of the dollar crash (p. 68). That she presents herself as having contact with individuals of greatly differing political backgrounds in an attempt to get works exhibited suggests her political views did not have a vast influence on her actions in this regard. The inclusion of these diverse letters may have been to reinforce the notion put forward in her 1930 autobiographical text that she was only interested in promoting ‘modern’ art<sup>186</sup> and could have been intended to distance herself from the communist associations her gallery had acquired as a precautionary measure in case her memoirs were seized.

From the description of her sixty fifth birthday onwards it is noticeable that Ey’s memoirs often use newspaper and magazine articles to ‘tell’ her story. This could be

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<sup>184</sup> See Letter, 28/03/1932 and Letter, 12/04/1932.

<sup>185</sup> Baumeister published this correspondence for the first time in Ey, 1936: Baumeister, 1999, pp. 134-136/ p. 138f. These letters are: Letter, 15/11/1932; Letter, 03/01/1933; Letter, 02/02/1933 and Letter, 04/02/1933.

<sup>186</sup> Ey: ‘Die Dooven und Hetzer dachten immer, es würde Politik hier getrieben, es wurde nur eine fortschrittliche Kunst hier durchgekämpft’ (1930, p. 81).

intended to present a more humble and objective view of herself or it could be a skilful technique to express her feelings on politically sensitive subjects without having to formulate them in her own words. By using this method she certainly recedes into the background of the narrative and creates a buffer zone between the views expressed in these articles and those which were her own. This arguably allows her to articulate more through implication than she would have wanted to directly. It is also apparent that with the exception of Kyser none of these reports explicitly mentions the name of the author concerned. The closest Ey comes to this is in the reproduction of articles by Straus-Ernst in which she cites her initials.<sup>187</sup> This may have been because Ey wanted to emphasise that these were her thoughts as well as those of the authors and that no distinction should be made or because she did not want mention of them to detract from her life-story. However in the case of the two journalists, Heymann and Straus-Ernst, it may be that mentioning them would have been dangerous. Heymann fled to the Saarland in 1933, founded the exile magazine *Westland* and in 1935 sought refuge in the Netherlands before being caught and sent to Auschwitz where he was murdered in 1943;<sup>188</sup> Straus-Ernst fled to Paris in 1933 and was sent from a French camp to Auschwitz in 1944 where she also died (Flecken, 1996, p. 237). Ey's choice of these particular articles could therefore be viewed as a sign of veiled opposition to the Nazi regime and solidarity with these individuals.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> See Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 52f and Luise Straus-Ernst, 1930, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 62f.

<sup>188</sup> The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 5, p. 25, writes in regard to Friedrich Heymann (journalist and author, \*28.8.1897 Bocholt - †1943 concentration camp Auschwitz): 'Nach Teilnahme am Ersten Weltkrieg und Mitgliedschaft in einem Freikorps studierte H. Literatur- und Rechtswissenschaft und wurde zum Dr. jur. promoviert. 1927 trat er als Redakteur in die "Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung" ein, schrieb er auch für "Vossische Zeitung". 1933 emigrierte er wegen seiner jüdischen Abstammung in das Saargebiet und arbeitete dort für die antinationalsozialistische Zeitung "Westland". 1935 flüchtete H. über Paris in die Niederlande, wo er 1940 von der Gestapo verhaftet wurde. Neben Übersetzungen veröffentlichte er *Der Chevalier von Geldern. Eine Chronik vom Abenteuer der Juden* (1937, Neuaufgabe 1963). H. wurde 1943 im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz ermordet.'

<sup>189</sup> Ey's reference to a letter from Kyser (Letter, Kyser, 1932: Ey, 1936, p. 73) and an article by him (*Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, pp. 74-76) may also have been included for similar reasons. The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 6, p. 185, writes in regard to Karl Kyser (actor and artist, \*4.12.1891 Vienna - †9.4.1951 Vienna): 'K. debütierte als Schauspieler 1909 in Marburg/Drau, wurde später Mitglied des Josefstädter Theaters sowie nach der Teilnahme am Ersten Weltkrieg des Deutschen Landestheaters Prag, wo er auch als Bühnenbildner tätig war. Weitere Engagements führten ihn nach Düsseldorf [*Schauspielhaus Dumont-Lindemann*: Letter, 09/11/1937], Frankfurt/Main, an die Münchener Kammerspiele und schließlich zurück nach Wien. Hier spielte er am Raimundtheater, am Deutschen Volkstheater und am Theater in der Josefstadt und wurde Mitglied des Neuen Hagenbundes. Er wurde von den Nationalsozialisten verhaftet und zur Zwangsarbeit verurteilt; dabei erlittene gesundheitliche Schäden erlaubten ihm nach 1945 nur noch Gastauftritte am Josefstädter Theater und der Renaissancebühne in Wien. Zu seinen Hauptrollen zählte Hassenreuter in Gehart Hauptmanns Stück *Die Ratten*. K. malte Porträts und Landschaften.' I have not been able to establish

Numerous articles are for example used to recount the tour of the *Sammlung Ey* travelling exhibition to various German cities and the reaction this caused. An article from the *Stadtanzeiger* in Cologne for instance (*Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, June (?) 1931, n.pn.) describes the opening of the exhibition in the city, and in this context paraphrases a speech by Dr Meerfeld in which he is said to have referred to the ‘urgesunden Instinkt der Frau Ey über das künstlerische Wertvolle’. This could also be viewed as an act of solidarity with an individual persecuted by the Nazis, since Meerfeld, an SPD politician who was *Kulturdezernent* for Cologne was arrested on 5 March 1933 and after being moved to a hospital because of *Haftunfähigkeit* on 8 March, fled to Switzerland the following day. In his absence he was officially sacked by the Nazis and after his return to Germany due to a lack of finance in May 1934 was subject to observation by the police and was banned from living in Cologne.<sup>190</sup>

The report then goes on to portray Ey as coming from the ‘unteren Volksschichten’ (p. 68) and therefore being even more deserving of recognition and states that Ey represented a ‘gesundes Stück niederrheinischen Volkstums’ (p. 68). These formulations appear to draw on Osborn’s introduction to the catalogue of this exhibition,<sup>191</sup> and a report from the *Koblenzer General-Anzeiger* (*Koblenzer General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931, n.pn.) cited by Ey continues to use terms which carry these connotations when the author writes of ‘die kleine rundliche Frau mit flinken Augen und einem echt rheinischen Herzen’ (p. 70). The notion of her being a ‘Frau aus dem Volke’ (p. 78) is also reiterated in the *Königsberger Tageblatt* (*Königsberger*

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when Kyser was arrested. If this occurred after 1936 when Ey wrote her memoirs this would of course make it unlikely that her inclusion of this letter and article was intended to refer to his persecution by the Nazis. Other biographical details about Kyser are revealed by Ey in the preamble to the citation of his letter from 1932 (Ey, 1936, p. 73). Here she mentions that he was part of the *Münchener Kammerspielen* and was a guest actor playing the role of ‘Mephisto’. Kyser states this was in the *Neuen Schauspielhaus* (Letter, Kyser, 1932: Ey, 1936, p. 73). Furthermore Ey writes in correspondence to ‘Krause’ (artist J.P. Schmitz) in 1943: ‘Er [Kyser] hat eine liebe Frau, die für ihn sorgt und ein entzückendes Kind Eva’ and gives Kyser’s address as being Vienna (Letter, 08/08/1943). His address is also given as Vienna in another letter to ‘Krause’ (Letter, 14/12/1943).

<sup>190</sup> Meerfeld therefore moved with his family to live with his sister in Bonn. Describing life after his move to Bonn Meerfeld states: ‘Von der Gestapo wurde ich fortan ständig mit kleinen Schikanen bedacht, wie Vorladungen, Verhören, Haussuchungen, Beschlagnahme von Büchern usw., und zeitweise sogar auf Schritt und Tritt von einem Spitzel “beschattet”. Eine Verhaftung ist allerdings nicht mehr erfolgt’ (*Die Reichstagsabgeordneten*, 1991, p. 391).

<sup>191</sup> Osborn: ‘am Rhein, wo gesundes Volkstum die Wurzeln nie zerschnitt, die es mit dem saftigen Erdboden verbinden, und zugleich in schöner Unbewußtheit mit uralter Kultur getränkt bleib’ (Osborn, 1931, p. 3).

*Tageblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn.)<sup>192</sup> and the description of her ‘bescheidener Laden’ (p. 74) and how ‘Ich weiss, dass diese Frau öfters ihr letztes Geld mit anderen teilte’ (p. 75) in the *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung* (*Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.) elicits the impression of a grounded and socially-minded individual.<sup>193</sup>

Ey’s inclusion of articles which praise her using vocabulary and sentiments common to the policies of the Third Reich could be interpreted as an attempt to portray herself in a conformist light in order to temper the effect of her text should it have fallen into Nazi hands. However as in the case of Osborn’s introduction to her *Sammlung Ey* catalogue it could also be argued that this was a tactic intended to contrast the Nazis’ attempts to corrupt these terms with an example of a woman who represented a ‘healthy’ regional alternative to the nationalism they preached. Indeed in an article in the *Ostpreussische Zeitung* reproduced by Ey reference is made to how her ‘gesunder Menschenverstand und ihre vorurteilsfreie Einstellung liess sie stets das Richtige treffen’ (p. 78) (*Ostpreußische Zeitung*, 04(?) / 01/1932, n.pn.), and an article in a Hannover newspaper which she also includes refers to her as ‘Eine Persönlichkeit [...] aus der reinen Tiefe des Volkes’ (p. 80) (Hannover Newspaper, 1932, n.pn.). The latter also states that she was not afraid to say what she feels: ‘Vielleicht auch hat sie Ihnen schon mal ziemlich ihre Meinung gesagt, [...] denn das gehört zu ihrem geraden Charakter’ (p. 79) and comments ‘Schade, dass es keine zweite Ey gibt’ (p. 80). The implication of the author and Ey in her reproduction of this article in 1936 could be that these were the qualities that were lacking in Germany.

It is also interesting to note that in the version of the Hannover newspaper article reproduced in her memoirs a list of individuals associated with Ey’s gallery is

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<sup>192</sup> Ey’s version of this article interestingly omits the sentence: ‘Bezeichnend ist es, daß Mutter Ey in der Revolutionszeiten auf Seiten der jüngsten und röttesten Kunstjünger stand, daß sie allen tollen Zauber mitmachte. Nicht aus politischer Überzeugung, sondern weil es sie immer auf die Seite der jungstauftrebenden, noch verkannten, irgendwie unterbrüdten Künstler hinzieht.’ This could be to avoid drawing attention to her association with communist artists or because she disagreed with its suggestion that she was not politically motivated.

<sup>193</sup> In the *Königsberger Tageblatt*, 06/01/1932, n.pn. it is also mentioned that Max Osborn wrote about Ey. Ey’s decision to reproduce an article citing Osborn, who as already mentioned was a Jew who set up the *Jüdischen Kulturbund Berlin* in 1933 and helped persecuted German Jews, suggests that she was once again showing her solidarity with certain individuals who had fallen foul of the Nazi regime. Osborn is also referred to in Ey, 1936, p. 91 where a large section of Osborn’s introduction to the *Sammlung Ey* catalogue is reproduced as part of Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn. and when Ey cites a letter from Dr Georg Reismüller, a librarian at the *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek* (Letter, Reismüller, Feb 1932: Ey, 1936, p. 100f). Biographical information about Reismüller follows shortly.

omitted. The list of absentees includes Schreiner, Schwesig and Adalbert Trillhaase or his son Siegfried who was also an artist. This could be a coincidence attributable to Ey's need to reduce the length of this article for its inclusion in her autobiographical text or for reasons of copyright since the original states *Nachdruck verboten*. However these absences could also be explained by these individuals' 'negative' connotations in the Nazi period. Schreiner for example fled Germany in 1933 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 236), whilst Schwesig was arrested and tortured in the *Schlegelkeller* by the SA in 1933, had pictures and books confiscated from his atelier and was sentenced to 16 months imprisonment for high treason before emigrating to Antwerp in 1935. He was then imprisoned in the southern French camps of St. Cyprien, Gurs, Noé and Nexon from 1940 to 1944 (Barth, 1984, p. 107).<sup>194</sup> Adalbert Trillhaase, meanwhile, received a *Malverbot* in 1933 and Siegfried was regarded as 'degenerate' (Barth, 1984, p. 111).

Absences are also evident in Ey's reproduction of an article 'Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden: Ausstellung im Neuen Museum' ('Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden', n.d., n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 80) which fails to mention amongst others Mathias Barz who became a member of the KPD in 1919, married a Jew in 1929 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313) and whose painting *Die 15. Station*, exhibited in Ey's gallery in 1924 was burned by the Nazis in 1933. Barz, who did not want to divorce his Jewish wife, received a *Berufsverbot* in 1935 and in the years that followed fled with his wife, only surviving with the help of friends (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313). Artist Werner Gilles, who had work exhibited in the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition in Munich in 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 241), and Schwesig and Adalbert Trillhaase are also absent from this report. Indeed mention of Adalbert Trillhaase is also missing from Ey's version of an article by *Die Wiesbadener Zeitung* (*Wiesbadener Zeitung*, 27/12/1932, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 81).

Moving on to examine Ey's own description of the arrival of her exhibition in Königsberg, she states that Dr (Alfred) Rohde, director of the *Kunstsammlungen Königsberg*, did everything he could to promote her exhibition (p. 73). At a later point in her memoirs she then refers back to this travelling exhibition and includes a letter of thanks from *Oberbürgermeister* Dr (Hans) Lohmeyer for the donation of two

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<sup>194</sup> See Remmert/Barth, 1984 for more information on Schwesig.

watercolours by Pudlich and artist Heinrich Hoerle<sup>195</sup> to the *Städtische Kunstsammlungen Königsberg* (Letter, 12/03/1932). She also includes correspondence from the *Universitäts-Bibliothek*, Greifswald (Letter, Greifswald, Oct 1931), *Bayerische Bibliothek*, Munich (Letter, Reismüller, Feb 1932) and *Staatliche Kunstbibliothek Berlin* (Letter, Glaser, 1931) requesting copies of her *Sammlung Ey* catalogue (p. 100f). Here Ey again seems intent on illustrating the esteem in which she was once held and showing the willingness of institutions to associate with ‘modern’ art in contrast to the purges which began in 1933.<sup>196</sup> Furthermore, given that Lohmeyer,<sup>197</sup> Dr Georg Reismüller<sup>198</sup> and Kurt Glaser<sup>199</sup> had all been removed from their positions by the Nazis by the time Ey composed her memoirs, the inclusion of these letters could also be viewed as an act of solidarity with these individuals.

Between these descriptions relating to her travelling exhibition Ey lists the addresses of two individuals resident in the USA, a woman from Australia and people from Sweden and Holland who had visited her gallery (p. 71f) which again could be intended to illustrate her international standing. Ey then highlights her connections with high profile individuals such as Brigitte Helm who had come to visit her, Lilian Harvey<sup>200</sup> and actor Harry Halm who had drunk coffee with her and poet Theodor

<sup>195</sup> Hoerle had works exhibited in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 254).

<sup>196</sup> Ey’s inclusion of the *Kölner Stadtanzeiger* article which states: ‘Jeder schätzt und verehrt sie’ (*Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, June (?) 1931, n.pn: Ey, 1936, p. 69) and the *Koblenzer General-Anzeiger* which writes: ‘[Ey] ist fast zu Tränen gerührt von der Anerkennung und Verehrung’ (*Koblenzer General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931, n.pn.: Ey, 1936, p. 70) may also have been included to demonstrate the extent to which sentiment towards her had changed.

<sup>197</sup> *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 6, p. 463 writes in regard to Hans Lohmeyer (politician, \*23.6.1881 Thorn (Westpreußen) - †28.2.1968 Berlin): ‘Als Oberbürgermeister von Königsberg hatte L. seit 1919 Anteil an der wirtschaftlichen Konsolidierung der ostpreußischen Provinz. In enger Zusammenarbeit mit Carl Friedrich Goerdeler trat L. in wirtschaftspolitischer Hinsicht für einen sozialen Liberalismus ein. [...] 1933 amtsenthoben, widmete er sich in Berlin kommunalwissenschaftlichen und zeitgeschichtlichen Studien.’ Ludwig Luckemeyer notes that: ‘Obwohl er von der NSDAP überwacht wurde, blieb er [Lohmeyer] mit Goerdeler in Verbindung’ (*Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 1987, vol. 15, p. 133). Goerdler was a politician who became active in the anti-Nazi conservative opposition (*Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 4, p. 55f).

<sup>198</sup> In reference to Dr Georg Reismüller (librarian, \*11.5.1882 Ingolstadt - †12.5.1936 Günzburg) the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 8, p. 231 writes: ‘R. [...] wurde 1921 Direktor der neugegründeten Pfälzischen Landesbibliothek in Speyer [...] seit 1929 Generaldirektor der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München [...] 1935 wurde er in den Ruhestand versetzt.’

<sup>199</sup> According to the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 4, p. 24, Kurt Glaser (librarian, art historian, \*29.5.1879 Leipzig - †23.11.1943 Lake Placid (USA)) ‘war [...] Kustos am Berliner Kupferstichkabinett, leitete von 1924 bis zu seiner Demission 1933 die Staatliche Kunstgewerbebibliothek in Berlin und emigrierte nach einer Tätigkeit als Kunsthistoriker beim Berliner “Börsen Courier” im selben Jahr über die Schweiz, Frankreich und Italien in die USA (1940).’

<sup>200</sup> According to the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 4, p. 418, Lilian Harvey (real name L. Muriel Helen Pape, actress, dancer, \*19.01.1907 Hornsey (now London) - †27.7.1968 Cap d’Antibes) ‘spielte [...] in zahlreichen Ufa-Operetten- und Revuefilmen. H. und ihr Schauspielerkollege



Däubler who visited her gallery in 1929,<sup>201</sup> once again emphasising the status she once held. In this context she also mentions both individuals who were popular with the Nazis such as the poet Hans Reimann<sup>202</sup> who is said to have paid her a visit with Henry Endricat<sup>203</sup> and those who were not held in high regard. She writes for instance that she spent ‘manche schöne Abende’ with Barbakoff, who was later murdered in Auschwitz,<sup>204</sup> and that author and artist Joachim Ringelnatz<sup>205</sup> had dedicated a copy of his book *Kutteldaddeldu* to her with a ‘humorvolle[...] Zeichnung’ (p. 72). Thus the impression is once more given of Ey being politically neutral, possibly again with the view of limiting the impact of her memoirs had they been discovered by the Nazis.

Ey also makes reference to several articles which deal with the attempts to evict her from her gallery at the behest of the Düsseldorf authorities in 1932. In the first, ‘Flüchtige Liebe zu Mutter Ey’ (Heymann, 07/01/1933) the author Heymann (who is again not named) appears to adopt a technique later employed by certain ‘inner

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Willy Fritsch stellten jahrelang das volkstümliche Liebespaar des deutschen Films dar, u.a. in *Der Kongreß tanzt* (1931). 1933 ging H. nach Hollywood, kehrte bald wieder nach Deutschland zurück und emigrierte 1939 nach Paris, dann in die USA. Nach 1943 trat sie nur noch als Bühnenschauspielerin auf.’

<sup>201</sup> Dr Johannes Brockt is also said to have dedicated a manuscript of his opera *Morphium* to Ey (Ey, 1936, p. 72). No information about this individual could be found.

<sup>202</sup> In reference to Hans Reimann (pseudonym Max Bunge, Hans Heinrich, Hanns Heinz Vampir, Arthur Sünder, Andreas Zeltner, author, \*18.11.1889 Leipzig - †13.6.1969 Schmalenbeck) the *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 8, p. 210, notes: ‘Seit 1925 lebte er in Berlin. R. war u.a. Herausgeber der satirischen Zeitschriften “Der Drache” (1919-25) und “Das Stachelschwein” (1924-29) und arbeitete zeitweise auch als Kabarettist. Er wurde vor allem als Verfasser humoristischer Erzählungen, Grotesken, Satiren und Parodien bekannt. Erfolg hatte er insbesondere mit seinen mundartlichen *Sachsischen Miniaturen* (5. Bde., 1921-31). Seine Parodien richteten sich gegen Erfolgsautoren wie Hedwig Courths-Mahler und Edgar Wallace, aber auch gegen den antisemitischen Schriftsteller Arthur Dinter. R. schrieb das Drehbuch zu Heinrich Spoerls Roman *Die Feuerzangenbowle* (1936). Während des “Dritten Reiches” arbeitete er zeitweise für den “Kladderadatsch” und die “Brennessel”. 1939 siedelte er nach Bernried (Oberbayern) über und wurde während des Krieges als Frontunterhalter dienstverpflichtet.’

<sup>203</sup> No information could be located about ‘Henry Endricat’.

<sup>204</sup> At the end of April/beginning of May 1933, Jewish dancer, artist’s muse and girlfriend of Wollheim, Tatjana Barbakoff emigrated by train from Berlin to Paris. She was imprisoned in Gurs on approximately 23/05/1940 then set free in July 1940. In January 1944 she was captured by the Gestapo and sent to camp Drancy near Paris. In February 1944 she was deported to Auschwitz where she was gassed on arrival (Goebbels, 2009, p. 84f). Barbakoff is also mentioned in Ey’s memoirs in a letter from Sureda reproduced by Ey (Letter, 09/10/1932: Ey, 1936, p. 122).

<sup>205</sup> Joachim Ringelnatz (real name Hans Bötticher, a.k.a. Pinko Meyer, Fritz Dörny, Gustav Hester, \*7.8.1883 Wurzen (Sachsen) - †17.11.1934 Berlin). The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 8, p. 316 writes: ‘Nach der nationalsozialistischen Machtübernahme erhielt R. 1933 Auftrittsverbot und verlor damit seine Existenzgrundlage.’ Walter Pape in the *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 2003, vol. 21, pp. 631-633, notes: ‘1922 hatte er seine erste Ausstellung in der Galerie Flechtheim, 1925 wurden zwei Bilder auf der Ausstellung der Preuß. Akademie der Künste verkauft. 1930 zog R. von München nach Berlin; seit 1933 hatte er Auftrittsverbot, letzte Gastspiele fanden in Zürich und Basel (1933/34) statt. In der Lungenheilstätte Beetz-Sommerfeld führte er ein letztes Tagebuch und schrieb an einem Roman (Krankenhaus-Tag., *Der letzte Roman*, 1934).’

emigration' authors when a historical reference is used to refer critically to the present. In this case parallels are drawn between the story of 'heilige Genoveva' and Ey. This comparison stems from 3 January - the day on which Genoveva is remembered - also being the day on which Ey's eviction was announced. The author notes for instance: 'von der guten alten Genoveva weiss das Volksbuch zu berichten, dass ihr hartherziger Gemahl sie ins Elend hinausgejagt habe' (p. 81) and therefore implies that Ey has been treated in a similar way. Moreover the hope is expressed that Ey's fate will be akin to Genoveva's and that she will be welcomed back: 'Denn deren Gemahl erkannte schliesslich ihre Unschuld, fand sie auf einer Jagd zufällig wieder und führte sie unter grossem Gepränge heim in die Burg zu Mayen' (p. 82). The subsequent description of Düsseldorf's *Oberbürgermeister* shifting responsibility for the decision to evict Ey onto the *Finanzausschuss* emphasises this comparison: 'Vielleicht, wir geben die Hoffnung nicht auf, sind ausgerechnet unsere Finanzstrategen barmherzig, führen sie unsere wohlbeleibte Genoveva zurück in ihre 2 -Zimmerige Kemenate auf dem Hindenburgwall' (p. 82).

The use of 'unsere' in this instance suggests that support for Ey was not limited to the author but was shared by a significant proportion of the population. Indeed throughout the article the idea of a decision being carried out against the will of the people is present through the continued use of 'wir' and by reference to other articles which are sympathetic to Ey. The author for instance describes how a 'Kölner Blatt' published 'ein rührseliges Bild mit einer herzzereissenden Beschreibung, wie die städtischen Beamten die arme Frau Ey mit roher Gewalt auf die Strasse treiben' (p. 85). It is therefore possible Ey included this article to draw attention to the numerous oppositional voices who gave her their support at this stage. The author even suggests that the officials were not united on the issue of eviction and that this was instead the work of one individual when it is noted with heavy sarcasm: 'es hat sogar den Anschein als ob jener geistvolle Kopf, welcher der Stadtverwaltung den genialen Gedanken eingab, den Ehrensold der Mutter Ey durch die Gerichte einzuklagen, auch im Rathaus mit seinen seltsamen Methoden keinen Anklang mehr findet. Aber es ist schon allzuviel Porzellan zerschlagen' (p. 85). Lehr is later revealed to be the person referred to here: 'Dr. Lehr, den Mann, der sie ins Elend stiess' (p. 86) and Ey's decision to include this report suggests she agreed that this initiative came from him.

Aside from again highlighting her previous standing and the support she had once enjoyed, an article entitled ‘Mutter Ey und die dankbare Vaterstadt Düsseldorf’<sup>206</sup> also implies Lehr was behind attempts to evict her. Though the author (again not identified) acknowledges that the authorities are within their rights, Lehr is described as wanting to exploit these rights to the full (p. 92). Indeed double standards are insinuated when he is described as an individual who ‘aller Kritik zum Trotz für die Prunkwohnungen seinen Beigeordneten, [...] jeden Betrag bereit gestellt’ (p. 92) and who has lost 20 million in shares (p. 92f) yet does not want to make an exception in Ey’s case. Here the question is raised as to whether a personal vendetta lay behind his actions or whether this was an attempt to please the Nazis or a symbolic gesture to demonstrate that he was in control of city finances in response to the aforementioned accusations of incompetence and excess.

The sense of Ey being treated unfairly is certainly heightened when her contribution to the city is mentioned in this report: ‘Diese Frau hat sich um die deutsche Kunst und die Kunststadt Düsseldorf insbesondere unvergessliche Verdienste erworben’ (p. 92). At the close of the article the author, and Ey by proxy, again underline the fact that Lehr alone was to blame. It is suggested here that he had adopted a minority position and yet still had the possibility to change the situation: ‘Dr. Lehr steht seit langem völlig isoliert da, ohne Konnex mit der heimischen Seele. Noch kann er es vermeiden, dass durch trotzig Ueberspitzung der Gegensätze ein Machtproblem aktuell wird’ (p. 93). That Lehr is later revealed not to have altered his course of action therefore provides further implicit criticism of his behaviour.

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<sup>206</sup> Although this article is not fully cited this is identifiable as Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn. by ‘Jan Wellem’ (likely to be a pseudonym). In the version of this article provided by Ey reference to the *Querschnitt*, *Uhu* and the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* is omitted. *Der Querschnitt* was co-edited by Jewish art dealer Alfred Flechtheim who emigrated in 1933 via Paris to London (*Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 3, p. 338). The *Uhu* and *Berliner Illustrierte* were published by the Jewish family-owned *Ullstein Verlag* who were forced to sell their firm in 1934 to the *NSDAP-Zentralverlag Franz Eher Nachfolger GmbH*, and many of them emigrated to the USA (*Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 10, p. 139f/*Brockhaus*, 2006, vol. 28, p. 256f). Ey may therefore have avoided these associations as a form of ‘damage limitation’ should her memoirs have been discovered by the Nazis. In her version of this article Ey does mention *Das Kunstblatt* edited by Paul Westheim, who was Jewish and emigrated from Germany in 1933 to France and then 1941 to Mexico (*Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 10, p. 459), but reference to Westheim himself is also omitted.

An article in the *Kölner Stadtanzeiger* in 1933, ‘Seltsame Kunde von der Düssel’,<sup>207</sup> once again highlights Ey’s contribution and offers its support. Yet importantly it differs from previous articles by stating that Ey is the latest of several instances of disharmony between the local authorities and cultural figures. It notes for instance that the *Generalmusikdirektor* Hans Weisbach had been fired and that there had been arguments with the *Generalintendanz des Düsseldorfer Schauspielhauses* (Louise Dumont - (Gustav) Lindemann (p. 94). This implies that there was a clampdown in the area of culture which may be attributable to already prevalent right-wing tendencies. Certainly a change in attitude towards Ey becomes apparent when the author contrasts visits by the local authority on her sixty fifth birthday and her being used to promote the city with attempts to seek her eviction (p. 94f).<sup>208</sup> Indeed questions are raised as to the reason behind this turnaround: ‘merkwürdig, dass sie von der ganzen Reklame, die Düsseldorf mit ihr machte, nicht einmal ein Dach über dem Kopfe haben soll’ (p. 96). *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr’s biography reveals that he was a member of the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* during the Weimar years, which suggests he may have sought to please or appease the NSDAP by purging the cultural scene, or had similar views.<sup>209</sup> If this was the case it does not appear to have helped his cause since in April 1933 he was arrested and removed from his post on corruption charges and imprisoned for five months.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>207</sup> Although this is not cited in full it is identifiable as *Kölner Zeitung*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.

<sup>208</sup> It is possible that Ey’s mention earlier in her memoirs that: ‘An der Spitze der “Rheinischen Sezession” standen sehr gute Förderer, Oberbürgermeister Dr. Lehr öffnete schon öfter eine Ausstellung oder schickte einen von seinen ersten Beigeordneten’ (p. 29), coupled with her reproduction (albeit an edited version) of Lehr’s letter of congratulations on behalf of Düsseldorf on the occasion of her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, in which he thanks her profusely for the help she had given to so many young artists (p. 50), may also have been included to emphasise Lehr’s change in attitude.

<sup>209</sup> Brigitte Kaff in reference to Robert Lehr (politician, \*20.8.1883 Celle - †13.10.1956, Düsseldorf): ‘In Düsseldorf leitete er das Polizei- (1914-18) und das Finanzdezernat (1919-24); 1924 wurde der parteilose L. zum Oberbürgermeister gewählt. Leitlinie seiner Tätigkeit war, Düsseldorfs Position als Rheinmetropole gegenüber der Rivalin Köln zu stärken. Durch die Ansiedlung von Industrieunternehmen, den Ausbau des Flughafens und städtebauliche Projekte leitete L. eine Phase des wirtschaftlichen Aufstiegs ein. Seine Verdienste für Wirtschaft und Sozialwesen fanden öffentliche Anerkennung durch die GESOLEI (Ausstellung für Gesundheitspflege, soziale Fürsorge und Leibesübung, Düsseldorf 1926). In der Frage der kommunalen Neuordnung setzte L. die Düsseldorfer Ansprüche auf Eingemeindungen und Gebietszuwachs wenigstens teilweise durch, allerdings unter Verzicht auf seine parteipolitische Neutralität. Anfang 1929 wurde er Mitglied der DNVP [*Deutschnationalen Volkspartei*], in der er dem gemäßigten Flügel um Graf Westarp angehörte’ (*Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 1985, vol. 14, p. 112f).

<sup>210</sup> Brigitte Kaff: ‘Nach der Machtergreifung Hitlers wurde L. im April 1933 verhaftet und wegen angeblicher Beamtenbestechung angeklagt; nach fünfmonatiger Haft amnestiert, lebte er bis Kriegesende als Privatmann in Düsseldorf. Er gehörte seit 1935 dem interkonfessionellen Widerstandskreis um K. Arnold und W. Hensel an’ (*Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 1985, vol. 14, p. 112f). It is highly unlikely Ey would have known that Lehr was part of the aforementioned circle. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that her description of Lehr, expressed by proxy in the articles

A further anonymous article written by Heymann<sup>211</sup> certainly suggests financial reasons were not foremost in Lehr's decision-making process when it draws attention to the fact that the local authorities had no one else to take over the room Ey was being evicted from (p. 96). Sympathy for Ey is again shown here when it is implied that she was not making unfair demands and that the authorities had conducted a policy reversal: 'Die "bescheidenen Wünsche" die Dr. Lehr damals zu erfüllen wünschte, sind inzwischen nicht unbescheidener geworden' (p. 97). The report then closes with the statement: 'Die Stadtverwaltung hat die Legende von Mutter Ey geschaffen. Die ganze Welt glaubt daran, und wenn sie selbst sie nicht mehr wahr haben will, es hilft ihr nicht, Legenden lassen sich nicht einsparen und abbauen' (p. 99). This defiant passage may have been included by Ey as a means of referring not only to her treatment in the Weimar period but also as a way of voicing her thoughts about the closure of her gallery in 1934.

Despite these media protests Ey notes that in January 1933 the decision to evict her from her premises (Postamt 8) was ratified and that retrospectively from October 1932 she had to pay 5 Marks a day in rent. She then mentions Hitler's rise to power: 'Dann kam die Machtübernahme durch unseren Führer Adolf Hitler' (p. 101) and states that Dr Lehr was replaced by Dr Wagenführ but does not reveal why this took place. Werner Alberg in the *Düsseldorfer Kunstszene 1933-1945* confirms that Lehr was retired by the Prussian Minister of the Interior on 22 July 1933 and Wagenführ replaced him on 14 August of the same year (Alberg, 1987, p. 14). That Ey talks of 'unseren Führer Adolf Hitler' in this context should not be viewed as indicative of her support for the Nazis. Instead this can be attributed to her using conformist language that would have been expected of any German citizen in 1936 as an *Absicherung* against the eventuality of her manuscript being discovered and her being asked to give an account of herself.

Ey goes on to state that 'all' her friends advised her to approach Wagenführ in regard to the matter of her eviction and notes that she followed this advice and was referred

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she includes, does not take account of this and was instead based on her experience as described in the articles she cites.

<sup>211</sup> Although this is not cited in full it is identifiable as Heymann, 29/10/1932.

to *Kunstdezernent* Horst Ebel but decided not to contact him: 'Ich überlegte und wusste, dass die Herren doch mit Arbeit überlastet waren, darum wollte ich warten' (p. 102). This could imply that she had begun to realise the Nazis' intentions to change society radically and had decided not to draw attention to herself. Indeed when she writes 'ich war glücklich, dass ich ein ganzes Jahr von allen Sorgen verschont blieb' (p. 102) this could refer to the relative success of her approach. That her gallery was not closed in 1933 could however suggest that the Nazi authorities were considering how to proceed in her case, given that on the evidence of the previous articles she had considerable popular support.

Whatever the reason for this delay may have been, by 16 February 1934 the authorities had arrived at a decision and Ey writes that she received notice that the *Grundstücksverwaltung* had found someone else to rent her premises and that she had to leave by 28 February (Letter, 16/02/1934). The reasons given here appear to be financial however in my opinion this disguised the real intention to remove her from the cultural scene. Ey describes approaching *Direktor* Bernhard Gerlach (*Grundstücksverwaltung*) personally and asking for a stay of eviction so that she could celebrate her seventieth birthday in her gallery. He is said to have agreed and to have extended the eviction date to 7 March. This gesture suggests a limited degree of humane behaviour - again perhaps due to her popular standing. A letter on behalf of *Direktor* Gerlach, also included by Ey, shows however that she had still not moved out by this date (Letter, 12/03/1934, p. 103). This could be indicative of her oppositional stance against her eviction, the real reasons behind it and those who were carrying it out, but equally it may simply be that she had nowhere else to go. This is certainly suggested by her remark: 'WO soll ich hin?' (p. 102) made after the initial extension of her eviction date.

A letter Ey cites from 28 March 1934 which gives 6 April 1934 as the new date for her eviction again suggests that the Nazis were exercising a degree of restraint in her case (Letter, 28/03/1934, p. 103f). However when Ey goes on to recount a telephone conversation with *Direktor* Gerlach (Transcript, 1934: Ey, 1936, p. 104) in which she asks whether she can live in the storeroom of the premises she still occupied, a less sympathetic impression emerges. His reply according to Ey was: 'Die Stadt Düsseldorf hat keinen Grund, Ihnen einen Gefallen zu tun. [...] Weil Sie sich so

banausenhafte gegen den Oberbürgermeister Dr. Lehr benommen haben.' Gerlach continues: 'die Presse hat den Herrn Oberbürgermeister angegriffen, und Sie haben nicht gestoppt!' Given that the Nazis had by this time imprisoned Lehr and were therefore unlikely to have been genuinely sympathetic towards him, this quote suggests they were using this as a pretext for their actions. Ey describes that she responded to Gerlach's comments 'mit Lachen' and said: 'ich bin doch nicht irrsinnig, dass ich der Presse den Mund verbiete, die mich alle lieben und verehren!'

This coupled with the closing exchange, in which Gerlach states: 'Machen Sie, was Sie wollen!' and Ey's response 'Das tu ich auch' shows her in a defiant mood. However her next statement suggests that this open opposition to the local Nazi authorities was short-lived: 'Ich verlor allen Mut, und meine Nerven gingen auch in die Brüche' (p. 105a). She then implies that she had been unfairly treated by the Nazis since in her opinion she had in certain respects acted as they had wanted: 'Ich hatte 35 Jahre das getan was unser Führer uns heute lehrt. Und das ist meine Belohnung jetzt! [...] Ich hatte geteilt mit allen, gepumpt für viele, kein Geld aufgespart' (p. 105a). This example of her 'conformism' can again be interpreted as an attempt to dampen the effect of her memoirs had they been found by the Nazis. Her feelings about the closure of her gallery are then voiced, and the impression is given of an individual who has been broken by the Nazis' decision to pursue this eviction: 'Ich hatte keinen Mut mehr, alles, alles, was ich mir durch Hilfe und Kosten mit grosser Mühe angeschafft hatte zum Ansehen meiner Ausstellungen wurde mir genommen' (p. 105b).

In similar fashion to the second trip to Majorca, Ey then mentions her physical flight to Wuppertal for three days and her decision to leave her children to deal with the practicalities of her eviction (p. 105b). On her return she then states that she wrote to Wagenführ and asked that if rent arrears were to be demanded, he should wipe these debts or take pictures from her collection as payment (p. 105a/ p. 105b). Here the authorities are clearly presented with an opportunity to be lenient towards Ey, however the ensuing correspondence and information she reproduces suggests that a more stringent and underhand course of action was taken. Head of the Düsseldorf *Kunstmuseum* Dr Hans Hupp for instance informs her that her rent arrears totalled 3602 Marks 78 Pfennigs and that pictures would be taken as a 'Sicherung' for her rent

arrears but not as a settlement of these debts (Letter, 02/06/1934). Ey then notes that he and *Direktor* 'Cooks' (Fred Kocks)<sup>212</sup> chose paintings to the value of approximately 4,000 Marks not 3,602 Marks (p. 106) and that the authorities exchanged one of the pictures they had taken for another without her knowledge and without it being the property of the authorities (p. 106).<sup>213</sup> She also notes they had not returned the '5 Schaufenster-Kasten, Holzwände und Holzhaus' (p. 106) taken as part of their 'Vermieter-Pfandrecht' (Letter, 12/03/1934, p. 103). Despite this treatment however, Ey recalls her donation of 5-6 tobacco pipes that used to belong to Professor Gerhard Janssen to the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* and states that she received a letter of thanks from art historian Dr Alfred Schubert on behalf of the museum's head (Letter, 04/08/1934). This could be interpreted as Ey rising above the politics of the time and the treatment she had received from the Nazis to remain loyal to 'her' city or could be understood as an astute tactical move to gain favour amongst important individuals in light of the negative attention she was receiving.

Ey then proceeds to cite an article, without mentioning the author, which appears to be from the *Frankfurter Volksblatt* (*Frankfurter Volksblatt*, 25/06/1935, n.pn.) and which portrays her in a positive light despite being published during the Nazi period. Here Ey's story is introduced with reference to Jeanne d' Arc, who, the reader is reminded, was burned to death only to be turned into a saint hundreds of years later. The unnamed author makes it clear that the intention is not to see Ey either burned or regarded as a saint, but that: 'wir wollen diese herzensgute, fürsorgliche Patronin der Kunst, dieses letzte Erbe deutscher Künstler-Romantik lieben und ehren' (p. 107). The suggestion here is that Ey, similar to Jeanne d' Arc at her time of death and for a long time thereafter, is not regarded as highly as she should be and once again historical parallels appear to be employed to refer critically to the present. In certain instances the author also describes Ey using vocabulary which could be interpreted as underlining her suitability for rehabilitation and reverence in Nazi society. For instance she is referred to as a 'Frau aus dem Volke' (p. 107) and is said to have

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<sup>212</sup> Artist and head of the *Kunsthalle* Düsseldorf and acting head and curator of the Düsseldorf *Kunstmuseum* (Baumeister, 1999, p. 232).

<sup>213</sup> Here Ey states that amongst others a picture by Karl (Carl) Barth was taken. In regard to artist Carl Barth's treatment by the Nazis: 'Von den Nationalsozialisten werden Werke Barths aus folgenden Ausstellungen beschlagnahmt: "Deutsche Graphikschau", 1936, "Schaffendes Volk", 1937, einer Ausstellung des Kölnischen Kunstvereins, 1939 sowie die gesamte Ausstellung in *Galerie Vömel*, Düsseldorf, 1941' (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313).



exhibited ‘kameradschaftliche[...] Hilfsbereitschaft’ (p. 110). Frequent use of the name ‘Mutter Ey’ and ‘traditional’ female associations also invoke connotations compliant with Nazi views on the role women should adopt, such as when the author writes: ‘Langsam gruppierte sich die Düsseldorfer Künstlerschar um den Schoss Johannes’ (p. 108) and refers to: ‘die jungen Flammen, die an ihrem häuslichen Herd loderten’ (p. 109).

Ey’s intellect is also played down in favour of her instinct in what could be understood as an attempt to align her with the intellectually non-threatening role preferred for women during the Third Reich. For instance the author writes of how she ‘unbelastet von allem konventionellen Wissenskram, erkannte die grossen Dinge’ (p. 109) and notes that she ‘erkannte mittels ihres gesunden und primitiven Instinktes die aufsteigenden Talente’ (p. 109). In addition, her generosity and willingness to share are emphasised, implying personal sacrifice for the benefit of the collective of which the Nazis could also approve: ‘Das Wenige, das sie hatte, die Kanne Kaffee, die paar Stullen Brot, teilte sie gerne und half ihnen damit, bis sie sich weiter helfen konnten’ (p. 108). The article also notably stops short of directly addressing her impact on ‘modern’ art presumably because this would do much to undo the image of her possessing attributes valued by the National Socialists. Equally, the artists she had contact with are not mentioned by name and instead generic references are made to them, for example describing them as: ‘Helden aus dem Stacheldrahtverhau’ (p. 110f) when recounting their return from the First World War, in a clear attempt to underline their patriotism and that of Ey by association. On the basis of these examples Ey’s reproduction of this article may therefore once again be intended as a form of ‘damage limitation’ should her memoirs have been discovered by the Nazis.

Ey also reproduces an article from the *Dortmunder Anzeiger*<sup>214</sup> which although not dated appears to be from after 8 January 1933 as the original unedited version refers to an article in the *Grüne Post* from this date.<sup>215</sup> The *Dortmunder* article implies that a

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<sup>214</sup> Although this article is not fully cited it is identifiable as Dorak, 1933 (?), n.pn.

<sup>215</sup> In its unedited form Dorak, 1933 (?), n.pn. states: ‘Mit Freude haben die Leser in Westdeutschland das tapfere Eintreten für diese Frau begrüßt. Die Grüne Post beweist mit diesem Artikel wieder einmal, daß sie nicht nur Unterhaltungsblatt sein will’. The article which Dorak is referring to here appears to be Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn. Ey’s omission of reference to this article and newspaper does not appear to be due to the content of Schmidtsdorf’s report since any information it contains which could be viewed as controversial is mentioned in her memoirs either by herself or in other articles she

significant amount of public support remained behind her, although as has been mentioned it cannot be established whether this refers to the Weimar or Nazi period: ‘Mit Freude haben die Leser in Westdeutschland das tapfere Eintreten für diese Frau begrüsst’ (p. 112). If it does date from the Third Reich its author, who Ey does not name but is identifiable as art historian Frank Dorak, is courageous since criticism is made of the way in which public money was being spent during difficult financial times: ‘Jeder von uns ist auch noch heute in der Lage, in der schlimmsten Notzeit Ausgaben von behördlichen Stellen zu nennen, über deren absolute Notwendigkeit man bestimmt geteilter Meinung sein kann’ (p. 112) and questions are asked as to why money can be found in these instances, but not 150 Marks for Ey. Moreover it asks why the industrialists who ‘bei jeder passenden Gelegenheit das Wort von der Volksgemeinschaft, von Mitempfinden der Nöte im Munde führen’ have not parted with a small percentage of their income to support her, when the ‘behördliche Apparat durch ein kaltes, lebensfremdes Bürochema [sic] es nicht fertig bringt, die verlangte Summe zu bezahlen’ (p. 112).

Ey then omits the following sentence in her version of the article: ‘Eine Entschuldigung durch Nichtwissen gibt es nicht, denn der Kampf geht in allen seinen einzelnen Phasen schon einige Wochen durch die Zeitungen Westdeutschlands’ (Dorak, 1933 (?)), perhaps in an attempt to tone down this criticism should her memoirs have been discovered. The article ends by acknowledging the financial difficulties suffered by the self-employed during this period but suggests that they would nevertheless pull together to help Ey. Dorak even calls for donations from the ‘junge Künstlerschaft’ for Ey to show their ‘Solidaritätsgefühl’ (p. 113). If this report does not refer to the Nazi period it could once again be viewed as Ey using an article from the Weimar era to express her feelings about the Nazis. However if this does date from the Third Reich, the citation of this article by Ey is a brave move given that it presents the industrialists as hypocrites, criticises the behaviour of the authorities and its inclusion suggests that she shared this point of view.

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reproduces. Ey’s omission could therefore again be because *Die Grüne Post* was an *Ullstein* publication.

When Ey resumes the narrative she then portrays herself as a banished ‘inner emigrant’ and a sense of bitterness and betrayal is evident when she addresses the notion of solidarity raised in the aforementioned article:

Wie ich diesen Artikel las, war es mir zum Lachen, wenn es nicht zum Heulen wäre. Ich sitze hier in meinem “Exil”, wie ich Stooekampstrasse 40, Atelierhaus nenne. Bei schwachem Feuer sitze ich hier und schreibe und denke über das Wort Solidarität nach [...] dass Menschen, auch viele Künstler bei einem zufälligen Begegnen mich lieber nicht sehen aus Angst, es könne ihrer politischen Einstellung und Position schaden, darüber bin ich nicht nur traurig sondern auch wütend. Ich kann mich mit diesen Menschen nicht einverstanden erklären. Sie sind vergessen für immer und stehen auf der Verlustliste. Wie ich als Prominente eine Rolle spielte, ohne zu wollen, scharten sich Tausende Menschen um mich, um auch gesehen zu werden, - doch wenn man arm geworden ist, man kann so anständig sein, wie man will, ist man nicht mehr da (p. 113).

Thereafter Ey’s attention turns to the theme of death: ‘Heute kann man ruhig oder unruhig sterben, um nicht einen brutalen Ausdruck zu gebrauchen. Die Freunde lassen einen in Frieden’ (p. 113f). This choice of the phrase ‘unruhig sterben’ could refer to death at the hands of the Nazis, whilst the notion of friends leaving one in peace could reflect her feelings of being ostracised by people she considered friends or it could be making a broader point about people abandoning their moral responsibilities during the Third Reich. Ey then contemplates her own death and suggests she could only regain her status posthumously when the Nazis were no longer in power: ‘Es geht mir ganz bestimmt, wie es so vielen vor mir gegangen ist, ich muss erst 20 Jahre oder noch länger unter der Erde liegen, nachher kommt der Ruhm, der niemand was kostet’ (p. 114). In this ‘trübselige[...] Stimmung’ (p. 114) she proceeds to recount anecdotes concerning Jupp Bell, the ‘armen, lieben, weil so früh verstorbenen Maler’ (p. 114) in what could be interpreted as a flight into memory as a diversion from her own troubles and a eulogy for the artist who died in 1935.<sup>216</sup> In contrast to Ey’s previous

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<sup>216</sup> In the literature available there is no indication that Bell’s death was not from natural causes. In reference to Bell, Ey writes: ‘In den Düsseldorfer Neuesten Nachrichten veröffentlichte der Dichter und Maler Adolf Uzarski einige Witze von Künstlern, darunter auch von Jupp Bell’ (Ey, 1936, p. 115).

description of how certain individuals avoided her Bell is held up as an example of a loyal friend, who in a letter to her, which she includes, writes: ‘Ich bin Dir aber treu wie Gold’ (p. 116) (Letter, Jupp Bell, n.d.).<sup>217</sup> After this interlude her thoughts return to her own death in the form of a poem by Wollheim which she states she wants inscribed on her gravestone (p. 116f).

A page in her memoirs entitled ‘Ein anderer Sinnspruch’ (p. 118) follows, which Baumeister notes is an extract from 29 July 1922 from Gert Wollheim’s *Komödie einer Unverschämten* (Wollheim, 1922: Baumeister, 1999, p. 182) but which is not cited as such. The reproduction of this passage in 1936 can be viewed as a further example of Ey transposing a text by a third party from the Weimar period to the Nazi era in order to transform its original meaning and use it as a mouthpiece for her own views. In this instance Ey appears to summarise implicitly the period and people she viewed as important and express the suffering she endured under the Nazis and her opposition to the Nazi regime - both through the content of this text and the choice of an author who as a ‘degenerate’ artist, socialist and Jew had been forced to emigrate.

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Ey’s mention of Uzarski in the context of her 1936 memoirs again refers to an individual who, depending on the source, was already or later became regarded as ‘degenerate’. Barth writes that Uzarski was: ‘Ab 1933 als “entartet” verfeimt und verfolgt. Flucht nach Robertville, Belgien. Seine Bücher auf der Liste für “schädliches und unerwünschtes Schrifttum”. 1938 Rückkehr nach Deutschland. Arbeitsverbot und polizeiliche Überwachung, denen er sich durch häufigen Wohnungswechsel entzieht’ (1984, p. 112). *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 342 states that: ‘Kürschners Literaturkalender verzeichnet Uzarski zwar noch 1934 als Mitglied im Reichsverband deutscher Schriftsteller [...] einiger Jahre später jedoch werden nach Observierung durch die Gestapo sein Antrag auf Aufnahme in die Reichsschrifttumskammer (1939) sowie sein Antrag auf Aufnahme in die Reichskammer der bildenden Künste (1940) abgelehnt.’

<sup>217</sup> It could be argued that letters from Sureda and those of his wife (see pp. 119-142 of Ey’s memoirs) were also included as a testament to a loyal friend and as an escape into memories of a happier past. See: Letter, ‘Jetzt sitze ich mich in meinem Hause’, March (?) 1927 (p. 119f); Letter, ‘Dein Brief vom 14. August’, n.d. (p. 120f); Letter, 09/10/1932 (p. 122f); Letter, ‘Auf dem Wege zurück’, n.d. (p. 123); Letter, ‘Fabelhafte und phantastische Johanna Ey!’, n.d. (pp. 123-125); Letter 08/05/1927 (p. 126f); Letter, ‘Guten Tag, Du süsse Zitronel!’, n.d. (p. 128f); Letter, ‘Ey’chen, hast Du viel auf mich geschimpft’, n.d. (p. 130f); Letter, ‘Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe’, n.d. (p. 131f); Letter, ‘Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!’, n.d. (p. 133f); Letter, ‘Ich weiss es’, n.d. (pp. 135-137); Letter, ‘Zum Teufel mit dem Ey!’, n.d. (p. 137); Letter, ‘es ist nicht notwendig’, 1933 (p. 138f); Letter, ‘Ey, ich hatte mir gedacht’, n.d. (p. 139f); Letter, 06/06/1935 (p. 140); Letter, ‘Ich sende Ihnen’, 1935 (p. 141) and Letter, ‘Ich habe nicht mehr die Zeit’, 1935 (p. 141f). In one of these letters Sureda mentions being introduced to Picasso in Paris and going with him to a café called ‘Rodonde’ (Letter, 08/05/1927: Ey, 1936, p. 126). In another letter Sureda writes that Pablo Picasso and his wife and child are coming to visit him in southern France (Letter, ‘Zum Teufel mit dem Ey!’, n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 137). Thus references are again made to an artist who was not viewed favourably by the Nazis. Furthermore in Letter, ‘Guten Tag, Du süsse Zitronel!’, n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 129 Sureda writes: ‘Die Freundin in Düsseldorf hat allerlei seelische Krankheiten, ist ein reizendes Kind und ist tapfer wie ein Teufel. Ich kenne keinen Menschen, der so unbewusst tragisch innerlich zerissen ist, als sie ist, vollkommen kaputt.’ Sureda appears to referring to Ey here, and if this letter was written during the Nazi period could indicate the effect Nazi rule had on her. If this letter does date from the Third Reich, Ey may have deliberately omitted the date to hinder the Nazis making this link should her memoirs have been discovered.

For instance when this extract states that Ey: ‘trägt dem Geist der Zeit ein so warmes Interesse entgegen, dass es von Zeit zu Zeit scheinen mag, als habe sie jenen geheimen Ring gefunden, von dem Rückert sagt: Und dieser Ring besass die Kraft, vor Gott und vor den Menschen angenehm zu machen, den, der ihn trug’ (p. 118), the content of her preceding memoirs leaves no doubt that her ‘warmes Interesse’ for the ‘Geist der Zeit’ refers to the Weimar period. Moreover the appropriation of Wollheim’s description of her reflecting on a life ‘in welchem Freude und Leid sich abwechselten, wie Sonnenschein und Regen’ can be understood as reference to the negative effect the Nazis had on Ey. In the reproduction of the final lines of Wollheim’s text the impression is given that Ey was trying to portray herself as an opposing moral pole to the Nazi regime: ‘Sie ist pulsierendes Leben, ist offenbartes, urtiefstes, erfasstes Menschsein. Sie ist ein Mensch, ist Johanna Ey’ (p. 118).

Following the inclusion of correspondence from Sureda, the last page of Ey’s memoirs includes the statement: ‘so sollen diese Briefe, und der ganze Inhalt ein Beweis sein, das ich nur das Beste gewollt und erstrebt habe’ (p. 143), and this sentiment is echoed in the closing line: ‘Und so mögen alle, die diese Zeilen lesen, mir glauben, daß ich nie etwas gewollt habe, dessen ich mich schämen muß’ (p. 143). The suggestion here is that she intended her memoirs to show that she had neither regrets nor feelings of guilt and had conducted herself in a morally upstanding way. Indeed these statements could be interpreted as an attempt to convince the reader that her writings were meant to both distance herself from, and provide a contrast to, the Nazi period in which she was writing and the actions carried out in the name of National Socialism. Furthermore the following comment suggests that these memoirs represented a form of catharsis for Ey:

Die nettesten Erinnerungen kommen erst ja manchmal, wenn man sich das Schwerst was einem quält, heruntergesprochen oder geschrieben hat. Und so ist es nicht ausgeschlossen, wenn es mir gesundheitlich und wirtschaftlich etwas etträglicher wird, dass ich die kleinen nettesten Erinnerungen nachhole (p. 143).

The implication here is that she was waiting for the coming of a new age since logically only when the Nazis were no longer in power would she have the

opportunity to improve her difficult financial situation. Her reference to the ‘nicest memories’ that she might then be able to write down could also allude to the absence of friends such as Schwesig from her memoirs due to the risks involved in such associations during the Third Reich. In conjunction with the statement that she could have written much, much more this could be interpreted as her acknowledgement of the gaps and ‘enforced’ silences present in her memoirs and which are characteristic of the literature of the ‘inner emigration’.

In summary, on the basis of the content of Ey’s 1936 memoirs revealed in this close reading, to suggest Ey seriously wanted to try to publish her memoirs in Germany during the Nazi period as Baumeister suggests, would imply Ey possessed a political naivety which does not correlate with the closure of her gallery in 1934 and her knowledge of what had happened to friends and acquaintances, elucidated in further detail in the following chapter, since this would not have been published. I would instead argue that Ey was writing *für die Schublade* - a therapeutic process which offered her a place of refuge from Nazi society in which she could reminisce about happier times, record her story for potentially more sympathetic future generations and document her treatment at the hands of the Düsseldorf authorities. When one considers that the favoured medium of expression for ‘inner emigration’ authors who did not intend to publish was the diary and other autobiographical writings Ey’s decision to write an autobiographical memoir certainly has similarities with these preferences. Indeed Gerhard Nebel’s statement that ‘the diary was the last weapon remaining to an individual defending his freedom’ (Nebel, 1948: Schäfer, 2003, p. 65) and Schäfer’s comment that: ‘the widely shared retreat into privacy explains why [...the] fashion for the diary reached broad and non-literary groups in Germany’ (Schäfer, 2003, p. 66) clearly apply to Ey’s memoirs.

Some commentators may ask why, if she was writing *für die Schublade*, she did not refer to the NSDAP by name and why there was no explicit criticism of them - particularly in regard to the closure of her gallery and the torture and persecution of friends of hers. This however can be explained as caution and self-censorship on her part which displays her political sensitivity, in case her memoirs were discovered by the *Gestapo* or leaked by a third party. This would also explain her use of articles to express her thoughts on particular events indirectly and her not mentioning Heymann

or Straus-Ernst as the authors of articles she cites. Through Ey's comments that she spent her money rather than saving it, and the inclusion of articles which use vocabulary which could be perceived as having Nazi connotations to portray her in conformist terms, she also appears to have protested against her eviction by demonstrating that she, in part, possessed certain traits valued by the National Socialists. This suggests a degree of *Anpassung* to limit the impact of the topics she had covered and the individuals she had mentioned had her memoirs been discovered.

This would also offer an explanation for the absence of certain figures from her memoirs who would not have been approved of by the Nazis. Jewish art dealers Julius Stern and Max Weinberg, as well as artist Schwesig who was a member of the KPD and had been tortured by the SA in 1933 (Barth, 1984, p. 61) are for instance absent from her 1936 memoirs despite their mention in her 1930 autobiographical text.<sup>218</sup> Moreover the Jewish art dealer Flechtheim is not mentioned despite reference to him in her 1929 and 1930 articles,<sup>219</sup> and the Jewish artist Kaufmann<sup>220</sup> is not present in the edited version of Heymann's article (Heymann, 1931) or in her typed memoirs despite him being mentioned in other autobiographical texts.<sup>221</sup> This is also true of the version of the report 'Eröffnung des neuen Heimes der Mutter Ey' (Dr Jcks, 1930) reproduced in Ey's 1936 memoirs, where instead of mentioning Kaufmann 'als Sprecher der Rheingruppe' as is in the original, Ey writes of 'Ein Maler aus der Rheingruppe' (Ey, 1936, p. 66). Jewish artists Adler and Levin and half-Jewish Monjau<sup>222</sup> who were linked to the ASSO<sup>223</sup> and Lauterbach,<sup>224</sup> Barz and Peter

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<sup>218</sup> Baumeister drew my attention to the absence of these individuals (Baumeister, 1999, p. 52). Weinberg is mentioned in Ey, 1930, p. 78, Stern in Ey, 1930, p. 82 and Schwesig, in Ey, 1930, p. 79. For example one would expect Weinberg to be mentioned in Ey, 1936, p. 19 but instead Ey states: 'Ein bekannter Kunsthändler kaufte sie für 300 Mark [...] Ich hätte den Kunsthändler beinahe aufgesucht und ihm gesagt, er hätte mir zu viel gegeben.'

<sup>219</sup> See Ey, 1929, p. 22 and Ey, 1930, p. 81.

<sup>220</sup> Kaufmann was sacked from his post as head of the *Städtische Schule für dekorative Kunst* in Düsseldorf in 1933 for anti-Semitic reasons. He then emigrated to Holland where he carried out anti-fascist work before moving to the USA in 1936 (Barth, 1984, p. 94 and *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 329).

<sup>221</sup> See Ey, 1929, p. 22 and Ey, 1930, p. 77/ p. 83.

<sup>222</sup> Adler emigrated in 1933 to Paris. He lived from 1935-36 in Poland. 1936-37 he travelled to Italy, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the USSR. He lived in Paris from 1937-38 and then moved to Cagnes-sur-Mer where he stayed until the outbreak of war. In 1939 (Barth, 1984, p. 72) or 1940 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 312) he volunteered for the Polish army that had formed in France. In June 1940 he was transferred with the Polish units to Scotland and released from duty for health reasons in January 1941. From then on he lived in Kirkcudbright before moving to Aldbourne near London in 1943. He lived there until his death on 25/04/1949 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 312). Levin was arrested in 1933 and imprisoned in the course of the *Kommunistenverfolgung*. He was obliged to do forced labour and received a *Mal- und Ausstellungsverbot*. From 1936-1938 he was active as a drawing teacher at the

Ludwigs<sup>225</sup> who although not Jewish were also members of this group (Barth, 1984, p. 57/ p. 61) are also not mentioned in her 1936 memoirs, although they were acquainted with Ey.

In conclusion, Ey's memoirs give the impression of an individual whose thoughts and language move between *Anpassung* and opposition - a characteristic of 'inner emigration' texts. Her *Anpassung* is suggested through the possible acts of self-censorship in the absence of certain controversial figures and by mentioning, both directly and through newspaper articles, attributes which could be interpreted as complementing Nazi ideology, to limit the damage to herself and others had her memoirs been discovered. Primarily however an underlying impression of opposition emerges through the description of Ey's role in the promotion of 'modern' art in Düsseldorf, of her friendship with and promotion of 'degenerate' artists, as well as through explicit and implicit mention of other individuals whose political, religious and cultural backgrounds did not comply with Nazi ideals or who had fallen foul of the regime. Momentarily her open defiance is also apparent in the reproduction of the telephone transcript with National Socialist *Direktor* Gerlach regarding her eviction (Transcript, 1934: Ey, 1936, p. 104). Viewed in this light Ey's behaviour can be interpreted as her remaining loyal to these individuals and to 'her' artists and never renouncing her 'fight' for 'modern' art, to the extent of placing herself and others in danger by underlining these links.

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Jewish school in Düsseldorf and from 1938-41 at Jewish schools in Berlin. After the closure of these schools by the Nazis he worked for the *Jüdische Gemeinde* alongside forced labour for the SA and SS. On 7 May 1943 he was arrested again and deported to Auschwitz where he was murdered (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 333). Monjau was arrested in 1933 and imprisoned briefly during the *Kommunistenverfolgung* along with his wife. He had trained to become an art teacher but as a 'half-Jew' was sacked from his *Schuldienst*. Furthermore he was regarded as a 'degenerate' artist and received a *Mal- und Ausstellungsverbot*. In 1939 he was mobilised as a technical draftsman. In 1944 he was arrested again and deported to KZ Buchenwald where he died on 28/02/1945. Information from Barth, 1984, p. 99 and *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 335.

<sup>223</sup> ASSO is the abbreviation of *Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler Deutschlands*. This group was founded in 1928 in Berlin and had close links to the KPD (Barth, 1985, p. 57).

<sup>224</sup> In 1933 works were taken from Lauterbach's studio (Barth, 1984, p. 96) and a picture by him entitled *Straße im Regen* was removed from an exhibition in 1937. Though he was able to continue displaying works at official exhibitions until the end of the Second World War in secret he produced drawings with socio-critical content and helped his persecuted friends by offering them his studio as a hiding place (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 333).

<sup>225</sup> Ludwigs became a member of the KPD in 1922 and was a founding member of the Düsseldorf wing of the ASSO in 1929. In 1937 he was arrested but later released and in 1938 he lived near Lake Constance. In 1942 he worked on the illegal magazines *Der Friedenskämpfer* and *Freiheit*. In 1943 he was arrested again and died on 2 July in Düsseldorf remand centre *Ulmer Höhe* (Barth, 1984, p. 97).



When Ey writes of the inevitability of her eviction by the Nazis, however, her defiant stance gives way to the image of a broken individual who can only contemplate a return to her previous status after the end of the Nazi regime. Here the notion of certain 'inner emigration' authors waiting for external forces to change their situation is suggested, and similarities are again evident when she recounts her son's involvement in the First World War and appears to use this historical event to issue a veiled warning about the dangers of nationalism. A retreat from the Nazi present into her memories, another feature of 'inner emigration' literature, can also be discerned from descriptions of her gallery and her trips to Spain. Indeed Ey's decision not to refer directly to the Nazis and her use of newspaper articles to allude to the political reasons behind her eviction and her views on this matter have parallels with the indirect style of many 'inner emigration' authors. Ey's memoirs therefore provide an insight into the complex mixture of feelings German opponents to the Nazi regime experienced during this period and demonstrate the limitations of viewing individuals in the narrow categories of 'opponents' and *Mitläufer*.

## ‘Mist ist überall’<sup>226</sup>: A reading of Ey’s correspondence from 1933-1947

In the previous chapter knowledge of the notion of ‘inner emigration’ and the political situation during the Third Reich formed the basis of an investigation into Ey’s stance towards the Nazis through a close analysis of the presentation of her life in her 1936 memoirs. In this chapter the same criteria are used to explore further Ey’s attitude to National Socialism and to examine whether this is consistent with the underlying impression of opposition encountered in her memoirs, in the first critical appraisal of her available correspondence from 1933 to 1947.<sup>227</sup> This study cannot provide a complete overview of her letters since many have not survived and those which have are not always available in their complete form. Moreover, whilst her letters were not intended for publication and were thus not concerned with her public presentation for posterity, they nonetheless only serve as a limited guide to Ey’s thoughts and feelings since those written during the Third Reich were formulated in the knowledge that they could be read by the Nazi censors or could be found during a house search or arrest. These letters are also shaped by the way she wished to portray herself to her correspondent and are influenced by the nature of the correspondents themselves. With the latter point clearly in mind it is therefore essential to provide detailed information about the identity of her addressees and who is mentioned in her letters in order to give the reader a broader understanding of Ey’s portrayal of herself in these letters and - by extension - her conduct during this period. This information is imparted in the main text and footnotes and if an individual has already been mentioned in some detail this has been restricted to an overview of what happened to them during the Third Reich.

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<sup>226</sup> Letter, 29/07/1938 from Ey to Dr Flora Scherer.

<sup>227</sup> This refers to Ey’s correspondence in published sources and unpublished correspondence from the S.D.A.

The majority of the letters in this study are from Ey to private individuals and incorporate correspondence she wrote before and after her eviction from Postamt 8 on 6 April 1934<sup>228</sup> (after which she lived in Düsseldorf in the Stockkampstrasse 40),<sup>229</sup> those sent whilst visiting her daughter Maria Schneider-Ey in Lübeck<sup>230</sup> and those penned during a stay in Kottenheim in the Eifel.<sup>231</sup> Furthermore it provides an analysis of her correspondence after the bombing of her flat on 11-12 June 1943 (Letter, 25(?) / 07 / 1943) and her subsequent move to Reinbek near Hamburg in June 1943,<sup>232</sup> as well as the letters she received on her return to Düsseldorf on 21 March 1946.<sup>233</sup> Through this investigation an impression is gained of how Nazi society and the closure of her gallery impacted on her life, finances and psychological well-being, and the coping mechanisms Ey employed to deal with the financial problems, loneliness and depression this socio-political change caused - ranging from an escape into memory and fantasy to possible thoughts of emigration and opposition to the Nazi regime.

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<sup>228</sup> Letter, 28/03/1934 from *Obergerichtsvollzieher* Ferdinand Gerlings to Ey, gives the date for her eviction as 6 April 1934.

<sup>229</sup> Ey is said to have been registered at this address from 18 May 1934 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 40).

<sup>230</sup> Ey appears to have spent time in Lübeck in 1937 and 1941-42. The city is given as the place of writing in Letter, 19/07/1937 and also in Postcard, 16/08/1937. In Letter, 23/08/1937 Ey writes: 'ich war 4 Wochen in Lübeck bei meiner Tochter Maria... Jetzt bin ich schon den 3ten Tag hier in Düsseldorf'. On Postcard, 08/11/1941 the address is again given as Lübeck: 'Ey z.Z. Lübeck bei Schneider Johannisstr. 43' and Ey refers to this visit in Letter, 17/02/1942: 'In 2 Monaten nach Lübeck und zurück'.

<sup>231</sup> In Letter, early 1943 (?) Ey writes: 'Jetzt bin ich schon 8 Tage hier in der Eifel' and notes that she was staying in 'Kottenheim bei Mayen'.

<sup>232</sup> In Letter, 25(?) / 07 / 1943 Ey writes that after she had been bombed out 'Der Kastelan von der Schule [...] kam und holte mich in seine Wohnung. Lisbet [Ey's daughter Elisabeth] brachte mich dann nach Unterrath zu Bekannten und Maria, früher in Lübeck, dort auch alles verloren, die bei ihre[r] Tochter Irene war und in Reinbek bei Hamburg verheiratet ist, kam nach Düsseldorf und so bin ich jetzt hier in Reinbek bei Hamburg seit 5 Wochen'. The exact address is given as 'Ey b. Schneider in Reinbek b. Hamburg - Reinbek Hamburgerstr. 41' in Letter, 08/08/1943.

<sup>233</sup> See Letter, 23/03/1946 from Ey to Karl Leyendecker, in which Ey states: 'Ich bin seit vorgestern hier'. Leyendecker was approached by Ey to help her publish her memoirs after the Second World War (see *Vollmacht*, 12/10/1946). No biographical summary about him could be found but Letter, 1944 (?) to Leyendecker from Ey reveals that he had a wife, son and mother who were still alive. He also appears to have had contact with Pudlich, since in the same letter Ey asks: 'Wie mag es Pudlich nahe bei Eupen gehen?' During Ey's stay in Reinbek she asked Leyendecker to supply her with a 'Schreiben' to acquire a 'Raucherkarte' because she had bought tobacco products from him for many years (Letter, 28/02/1944). In response he sent her this 'Schreiben' or a *Raucherkarte* in conjunction with an unnamed item (Letter, after 04/03/1944). Ey also refers to him sending her something - possibly a *Raucherkarte* - in Letter, 10/06/1944 and could well be asking him for another in Letter, 1944 (?). This is certainly the case in Letter, 10/06/1944. Ey intended to pay for these goods with works from her collection - presumably either those she had with her or those in Kottenheim (Letter, 1944 (?)). See also Letter, after 04/03/1944 and Letter, 10/06/1944.

In the body of Ey's correspondence the repercussions of her gallery closure and eviction by the Nazis in 1934 can be seen to manifest themselves in numerous ways. For instance she indicates the financial hardship this and the constraints Nazi art policy caused in correspondence with Dr Flora Scherer,<sup>234</sup> who in the source material available receives most letters from Ey: 'Es ist schade, daß ich meine Bilder nicht heraus bekommen kann, dann lebte ich nicht so erbärmlich traurig wie jetzt' (Letter, 17/10/1937). Ey also notes to the same correspondent: 'Immer nichts zu haben ist schrecklich' (Letter, 1938 (?)). Furthermore in a letter to 'Krause' (a.k.a Jean Paul Schmitz) her second most frequent correspondent, who accompanied her on her first trip to Majorca in 1927 and continued to work as an artist during the Third Reich before serving in the *Zollgrenzschutz* in Elsaß,<sup>235</sup> she states: 'Du bist ja wenigstens alle Sorgen etwas los, die meinen begleiten mich wohl bis ich in der Erde liege. Früher hatte ich ja mal viel, mal weniger Geld ich war immer zufrieden und nahm das Leben wie es kam. Doch heute muß ich sagen bin ich fast mutlos, weil ich doch des Kampfes um mein bißchen Leben mal müde werde' (Letter, 03/03/1938). This impression is emphasised in a further letter to Scherer: 'tage- und wochenlang nichts zu sehen wie Telefon- und Lichtrechnung und kein Einkommen, die erste Rechnung gestundet und noch nicht bezahlt, die zweite ist schon da u.s.w., ich war so mutlos, daß ich überhaupt immer froh war, wenn ein Tag um war. Dies kann man einige Wochen mitmachen doch nicht lange' (Letter, 09/03/1938, Ey's emphasis).

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<sup>234</sup> The majority of the available correspondence between Ey and Scherer was first published in *Am Anfang*, 1985, pp. 123-125. No other information about Scherer could be found but it is likely Ey is referring to Scherer in Letter, 28/02/1937 to 'Krause': 'einer meiner Bekannten, die in München Arztpraxis jetzt haben, wollen in 2-3 Jahren bei Rom in der Champagne sich ein kleines Haus bauen lassen, 2 große Räume - und wenn ich noch etwas lebe, werde ich als erster Gast dort wohnen.' This could imply Scherer was planning to build a holiday home or intended to have a place to escape to, or possibly emigrate to, if necessary. That Ey implies she will be the first to be invited can be seen as a measure of their friendship. Further biographical information about Scherer is provided in Ey's letters to her: Letter, 17/10/1937 refers to Scherer and her husband travelling to Paris in October; Letter, 09/03/1938 suggests Scherer was about to give birth and Letter, 27/09/1940 implies Scherer had visited Düsseldorf although it is not stated that this was during the Third Reich. Ey also writes: 'Wie Sie mir zuletzt schrieben, sind Sie im Haus Hubertus in Dettendorf und etwas in Sicherheit' (Letter, early 1943 (?)) and states that she herself had to flee Düsseldorf to go to Kottenheim in the Eifel because of 'Schießerei'. Ey's reference appears to be to air raids and it therefore seems likely Scherer being relatively 'safe' refers to these bombings and not to a potential threat from the Nazis.

<sup>235</sup> J.P. Schmitz (\*Wesseling near Bonn, 04/03/1899 - †Singen, 13/07/1970): '1934 Heirat und Übersiedlung nach Berlin [...] 1936 Rompreis und Aufenthalt in der Villa Massimo. 1937-1938 Olevano-Stipendium mit Aufenthalt in der Serpentara. 1939-1940 in Griechenland während eines einjährigen "Wehrurlaubs". 1941 Wegzug von Berlin in den Hotzenwald bei Säckingen, später nach Schwörstadt am Oberrhein. 1942-45 Kriegsdienst beim Zollgrenzschutz im Elsaß. Verlust vieler Arbeiten aus Griechenland in der Galerie Buchholz, Berlin' (Zimmermann, 1994, p. 440). Correspondence from Ey to Schmitz mentions that he has a daughter (Letter, 14/12/1943) and that he sent Ey a sum of money in 1943 (Letter, 14/12/1943).

Ey's gallery closure also appears to have affected her mental health by taking away the place where she used to meet people, removing her 'purpose' in life and stigmatising her within the community. In letters to Scherer, for example, she indirectly links the depressive mood she is experiencing to the impact the closure of her gallery had on her social life: 'es kommt wohl, daß man mit zu wenig Menschen in Berührung kommt, so bald ich nicht allein bin, ist die Stimmung besser' (Letter, 01/11/1938) and complains bitterly about the effect her unemployment has had on her psychological well being: 'es fehlt mir die Tätigkeit und diese Untätigkeit macht mich krank und in dieser unheimlichen Stille kann ich nie gesund werden, es ist Nervensache' (Letter, 12/07/1939).<sup>236</sup> Moreover a letter to 'Krause' implies that the respect she had once commanded had waned and her friendships deteriorated as a result of this closure: 'Ich war glücklich bei meinen jungen lieben Freunden, die mich Alte doch alle so sehr verehrten. Und jetzt.....? Ach schweigen wir darüber' (Letter, 03/03/1938, Ey's emphasis).

Indeed her use of stage imagery in a letter to Scherer: 'Man sieht immer mehr, daß Leben eine Bühne ist, wo die Schauspieler immer wechseln' (Letter, 01/11/1938) could refer to how her 'cast' of friends changed during this period. This 'change' may be attributable in part to the emigration or imprisonment of particular individuals, or their attempt to maintain a low profile because of persecution. Others may simply have wanted to distance themselves from her due to the associations she held or may have shunned her because she was no longer able to provide an official outlet for their art. Ey's daughter Elisabeth Ey suggests this was the case when she states in an article by Hans Stöcker (occupation unknown): 'nach 1933 noch kaum einer wagte, sich zu der verfemten Mutter Ey zu bekennen' (Stöcker, 1968, p. 139). Certainly the praise Ey reserves for those who remained loyal to her implies that the social life she had enjoyed in the Weimar period was not replicated in the Third Reich.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> In post-war letters to Kyser, Ey appears to reflect on the psychological effects caused by her gallery closure and the Nazi period in general when she writes: 'einen kleinen Nervenzusammenbruch haben wir Erwachsenen wohl alle gehabt, es blieb bei diesem furchtbaren Durcheinander auch wohl nicht anders aus, es kommt bloß darauf an, ob man es abschütteln will' (Letter, 05/12/1945) and notes: 'meine Gedanken sind seit 1934 oft fast durcheinander gewesen von all meinen bösen Erlebnissen' (Letter, 30/01/1946).

<sup>237</sup> In Letter, 30/07/1933 to Sureda, Ey appears to address the theme of loyalty directly: 'Ja mein liebster Jacobo, ich werde es nie vergessen, daß Deine Freundschaft und Anhänglichkeit zu mir von Niemanden beeinflußt werden kann'. In Letter, 04/11/1940 from Ey to Wever this is also evident: 'Ich

This sense of loneliness and despair is apparent before the closure of her gallery when in a letter to Sureda,<sup>238</sup> she states: ‘Was verstehen viele Menschen von Freundschaft [...] Ich sitze hier einsam, es kommen ja sehr viele Menschen zu mir, die ich mag und die ich nicht mag, doch alles wirkliche Schaffen und Leben ist vorbei’ (Letter, 30/07/1933). This theme is then revisited in her correspondence throughout the Third Reich. For instance in a letter to artist Heinz Wever, an old friend of hers who was a veteran of the First World War and served in the German army during the Second World War, she writes: ‘Denn Letzteres [Einsamkeit] nimmt mir alles weg vom Leben. Ich kann nicht so einsam sein. Es ist meine ganze Krankheit. Da staunst Du, und doch ist es Wahrheit’ (Letter, Wever, 25/11/1940).<sup>239</sup> Indeed in a letter to Pankok, who had received an *Arbeitsverbot* from 1936 onwards but who continued to work in secret, in constant fear of *Hausdurchsuchungen* and *Polizeikontrollen* (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 336), she states: ‘Ich sitze hier einsam und verlassen und das bekommt mir auch nicht’ (Letter, 11/05/1944).

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war ja wieder tief gerührt über Deine Anhänglichkeit. Unsere Freundschaft, die ja alle erdenklichen Schicksalswege durchmachte, ist ja immer dieselbe geblieben.’ Indeed in Letter, 19/04/1941 to ‘Krause’ this impression is underlined when Ey writes that artist Heinz Wever (biographical information follows shortly) is: ‘der Einzige der immer schreibt’ (the original of this letter was not available to check whether this is Ey’s emphasis). Ey also seems touched by Kyser’s efforts to contact her, which could suggest that social contact of this sort was not regular. She mentions this in Letter, 09/11/1937 to Scherer: ‘Ist es nicht wunderschön, wenn sich ein alter Freund solche Mühe gibt, es sind so herrliche lichte Augenblicke.’

<sup>238</sup> In regard to Sureda’s activities in the Third Reich: Letter, 03/04/1936 to ‘Krause’ from Ey, states that three years ago Sureda (who was ill with tuberculosis) was in a sanatorium in ‘Montzerry’ (?) near Barcelona but came to meet her in Palma, Majorca when she made her second visit to the island (Ey began this journey on 3 March, 1933. Ey, 1936, p. 87). Ey writes that Sureda had been in an American-Spanish Sanatorium in Madrid for two years, and once he had realised he was terminally ill had arranged to be brought to Genova. In Letter, 30/07/1933 from Ey to Sureda the impression is also given that Sureda was either in, had been to or was thinking of going to the Black Forest: ‘Fein ist es daß Du überzeugt bist, daß es dir besser geht, der Schwarzwald ist ja herrlich für Dich, besonders auch im Winter; die Sonne hoch oben und die herrliche Luft schaffen Dir schon Besserung und Jacobo - solide, solide sein’. Sureda died in 1935 in Palma de Mallorca.

<sup>239</sup> Heinz Wever (\*31.12.1890 Herscheid - †15.8.1966 Herscheid. Baumeister, 1999, p. 228). Barth implies Wever was a member of the ‘circle’ of artists surrounding Ey when he states that the exhibition *Johanna Ey und Ihr Künstlerkreis* (*Galerie Remmert und Barth*, 1984) does not include the work of certain artists who belonged to this ‘circle’ and names Wever among them (Barth, 1984, p. 13). Wever was one of Ey’s oldest friends (Klapheck, 1958, p. 18 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 16) and appears to have served in the German army in the Second World War since Ey writes in Letter, 04/11/1940 to him: ‘Lieber, verehrter Herr Leutnant [sic] Wever, bleiben Sie gesund daß wir uns recht bald wiedersehen, ich möchte so gern ein Frontbild von Dir haben (ein Herzenswunsch) aus dem Weltkrieg und eine Privataufnahme ist im Album.’ Wever sent Ey *Feldpostpaketen* during this period which included food and drink (see Letter, 04/11/1940, Letter, Wever 25/11/1940 and Letter, 11/12/1940). In a letter to ‘Krause’ Ey writes: ‘Wever [...] ist von Frankreich im Weitemarsch nach Serbien, er ist Oberleutnant und wird demnächst Hauptmann’ (Letter, 19/04/1941). In Letter, 25(?)07/1943 to Pankok, Ey states Wever had been released from the army due to rheumatism and sciatica. He is said to have been living ‘in der Wäsche’ a street in Herscheid, Westfalen, where Hundt was also resident.

An examination of her correspondence as a whole, however, reveals that the loneliness she experienced was not solely attributable to the repercussions of the political climate but was also due to her own behaviour, and indeed she was not always as isolated as she suggests. A letter to Scherer (Letter, 09/11/1937) for instance mentions her having received a letter from Kyser<sup>240</sup> in which he wrote that he had tried for several years without success to find out her new address, suggesting that she had not informed all her friends of a change of abode. In a letter to 'Krause' she also notes that she had been invited three times to 'zum Karl' (an artists' pub)<sup>241</sup> but did not go on any occasion and states: 'ich bin auch noch keinen Schritt gegangen, um jemand zu sehen; ja lieber Krause, ich bin alt geworden' (Letter, 03/03/1938).

Similarly in regard to Pudlich, an artist who did not receive an *Arbeitsverbot* and was able to carry on working,<sup>242</sup> Ey explains that she had been invited to many exhibitions where works of his were exhibited but did not go because: 'ich habe dann immer so ein Gefühl, als ob ich etwas haben wollte' (Letter, 18/11/1940). Moreover she writes in a letter to Scherer in 1938 referring to what appears to be an exhibition in the *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* in which works by Pudlich were shown: 'ich schäme mich, dieselbe zu besuchen (Verkaufsaustellung)' (Letter, 01/11/1938). It is not clear whether this refers to her inability to afford works, or to the way she was viewed by Nazi officials and certain sections of the public, or to some other factor. Her uncertain statement: 'Wer mich gerne hat, muß auch Zeit finden, nach Stockkampstr. zu

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<sup>240</sup> Biographical information about Kyser is available in the previous chapter and also follows shortly.

<sup>241</sup> This is likely to be the 'Schifferkneipe' *Karl Müller* on the Akademiestraße, Düsseldorf (*Freies Volk*, 25/03/1949, n.pn.).

<sup>242</sup> In regard to Pudlich's biography during the Third Reich: 1934 he had his first exhibition at *Galerie Alex Vömel* and from then on had a close relationship with the art dealer. 1935-1937 he travelled with his wife Ma Pudlich to France, Italy [see Letter, 09/11/1937 from Ey to Scherer] and Yugoslavia. In 1937 he took part in the *International Exhibition of Paintings* at the *Carnegie Institute* in Pittsburgh [Letter, 01/11/1938 implies that Pudlich made another trip to Italy with his wife]. In 1939 he received the *Corneliuspreis* from the Düsseldorf authorities [Letter, 16/01/1939 suggests he planned another trip to Italy early in 1939. Letter, 08/08/1943 states that his atelier and all of his work stored in the cellar of the art dealer Vömel (over 300 drawings, watercolours and pictures) was destroyed in a bombing raid]. 1942-1946 he lived and worked at *Schloß Libermé* in Kettenis near Eupen at the invitation of Alex Vömel - during this period Pudlich published lithographs and book illustrations himself in close co-operation with the printer Peter Marliani. Information not in square brackets from Barth/Pfeil, 1991, p. 3 and Barth, 1984, p. 104.

kommen. Ist dies richtig?' (Letter, 18/11/1940) also suggests that she expected her friends to make contact with her rather than taking the initiative herself.<sup>243</sup>

Furthermore the body of correspondence examined in this chapter demonstrates that whilst her social life may have declined in comparison to the Weimar era she continued to have numerous contacts.<sup>244</sup> In letters to Scherer she mentions that she had been out: 'Den letzten Freitag war ich im "Pitterstübchen" und habe bis 4 Uhr Morgens dort gefeiert, es waren nette Leute dort und ich habe mich wieder etwas verwöhnen lassen. 38 rote wunderschöne Rosen bekam ich geschenkt' (Letter, 19/07/1937) and writes: 'Pudlich kommt heute Abend zu mir und Freitag gehe ich in die Pitterstube' (Letter, 23/08/1937). Artist Gertrude Heyden, who usefully provides a perspective on events other than Ey's, also suggests she continued to visit Ey during the Nazi period: 'Als sie [Ey] 1934 den Hindenburgwall verlassen mußte, besuchte ich sie noch oft in der Stockkampstraße 40, wo sie ein großes Atelier nebst Wohnung innehatte' ('Erinnerungen an Mutter Ey', 10/10/1964, n.pn.).

In light of the difficult financial and psychological situation the closure of her gallery caused together with her deteriorating physical health, which she suggests made her a prisoner in her own home,<sup>245</sup> a letter to Scherer implies Ey wished her life away and that her thoughts had turned to death: 'Morgens wünsche ich es wäre Abend und Abends rufe ich den Tag herbei. Hoffentlich [sic] komme ich bald aus diesem schönen, so doch verflixten Atelier. Die gegenüberliegende Kirche kommt mir wie

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<sup>243</sup> See also Letter, 10/08/1939 from Ey to Scherer: 'Ich war auch vorgestern das erste Mal seit Jahren im Atelier von B.M. Hundt.'

<sup>244</sup> Examples of individuals continuing to have social contact with Ey include: Ey noting receipt of correspondence from artist Curt Beckmann, Hans Busch, and the Baus in Letter, 19/02/1944 to 'Krause'; Letter, 03/03/1938 from Ey to 'Krause': 'Mir machte es besonders Freude, wie mich Weihnachten Schumacher-Salig begrüßte [...artist] Macketanz besucht mich schon mal'; reference in Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to 'Krause' to approximately twice yearly visits from Pankok; Ey stating in Letter, 02/01/1941 to Scherer that Curt Beckmann and his wife had visited her; Postcard, 16/08/1937 from Ey to Pudlich: 'Heute Nachmittag fahre ich über Hamburg nach Hause. Melde mich gleich bei Euch'; Letter, 23/08/1937 from Ey to Scherer: 'Pudlich kommt heute Abend zu mir'; Letter, 03/03/1938 from Ey to 'Krause': 'Morgen am 4. März wird wohl Pudlich für einen Moment hereinkommen'; Letter, 10/08/1939 from Ey to Scherer: 'Nach ganz langer Zeit war gestern, Sonntag, Pudlich hier'; Letter, 1938 (?) from Ey to Scherer: 'Hundt und ein Architekt besuchten mich gestern' and Letter, 22/05/1947 from Ey to Wever, which notes that the ex-wife of banker F. Wohltat (forename could not be established) and his daughter had visited her: 'Seine [Wohltats] Frau, die von ihm geschieden war, war mit ihrer 12jährigen Tochter in der Stockkampstr. bei mir'. Biographical details about these individuals, in so far as they are available or have not already been mentioned, appear later in this chapter.

<sup>245</sup> This impression is also given in Letter, 18/11/1940 from Ey to Wever: 'was soll ich Dir noch von allen Bekannten schreiben? Ich komme ja kaum noch aus meiner Bude heraus.'



ein Totenkeller vor, hier im Atelier kein Sonnenstrahl, laufen kann ich nicht besonders' (Letter, 17/10/1937).<sup>246</sup> Other letters however suggest she employed alternative means to deal with these financial, social and psychological problems. For instance she adopts the approach of certain 'inner emigration' authors by retreating into her memories as a means of sheltering from the present<sup>247</sup> when she writes in a letter to 'Krause': 'Die Erinnerung, auch die Hoffnung ist das Paradies für einsame Menschen und dazu gehöre ich' (Letter, 28/02/1937)<sup>248</sup> and notes in a another letter to the same correspondent:

wenn ich mich innerlich so darnach [sic] sehne, alle meine alten Bekannte und Freunde noch mal zu sehen oder doch bald mal wieder zu sehen, so ist dies doch eine natürliche Wunsch und man denkt und denkt, was gewesen ist und war und an alle die guten Menschen und Freunde denkt dann wird es einer alten Frau doch schwer, sich in allem zu fügen, doch das Muß ist ja eine harte Nuß (Letter, 19/02/1944).

This retreat into the past is also suggested by her nostalgic recollection of particular memories. For instance in a letter to 'Krause' Ey writes wistfully about her trips to Spain: 'Was ist es fein gewesen, daß ich mir damals noch zwei Mal die schöne Spanienreise geleistet habe [...] die Erinnerung beglückt mich heute in meinen alten Tagen noch' (Letter, 28/02/1940).<sup>249</sup> Reflecting on her time as an art dealer she also reminisces: 'Krause, wenn ich an die armen Zeiten von früher denke, bei einer Tasse Kaffee und Cigarette, wo wir uns über ein kleines nettes Stündchen bei lieben geistreichen Künstlern des Zusammenseins freuten' (Letter, 12/03/1936).<sup>250</sup> The same

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<sup>246</sup> See also Letter, 09/03/1938 from to Scherer: 'Ich war so mutlos, daß ich überhaupt immer froh war, wenn ein Tag um war.'

<sup>247</sup> Letter, 29/07/1938 from Ey to Scherer: 'Leben an und für sich bringt Schönes und Gutes, daß man um gesund zu bleiben, das nehmen soll, was einem Freude macht und sich nicht um das andere kümmern soll'.

<sup>248</sup> See also Letter, 17/02/1942 from Ey to Scherer: 'Für mich kommen nur die Erinnerungen in Betracht, es sind die schönsten Erlebnisse in meinem Leben.'

<sup>249</sup> See also Letter, 12/03/1936 from Ey to 'Krause': 'diese erste spanische Reise ist ja auch die schönste, allerliebste Erinnerung meines ganzen Lebens' and Letter, 17/10/1937 from Ey to Scherer: 'Jetzt kommen erst die Erinnerungen von Paris und dies ist ja immer das Beste'. Ey visited the French capital on the way to and from Spain during her two trips to Majorca.

<sup>250</sup> See also the following letters from Ey to 'Krause': Letter, 19/02/1944: 'Was hatte ich doch früher feine Menschen bei mir und jetzt hat man alles eingebüßt' (the original of this letter was not available to check whether this is Ey's emphasis), Letter, 28/02/1937: 'Ich denke noch so oft an die Tage, wo Du morgens mit ein paar Brödchen [sic] bei mir Kaffee trankst' and Letter, 03/03/1938: 'Ich denke ja

letter also mentions her working on her 1936 memoirs, again suggesting her taking refuge in her memories (Letter, 12/03/1936).

A letter to Pankok in 1943 implies that objects aided this retreat into memory and that the loss of pictures from her collection in the bombing raids and ‘tausend andere Erinnerungen und Andenken [...] es sind alles Sachen, die ich brauchte als Erinnerung’ would make this more difficult (Letter, 25(?) / 07 / 1943). Yet in other correspondence it is suggested that memories of her existence before the Nazi period were particularly valuable precisely because they could not be confiscated or physically destroyed. This notion is expressed in a letter to ‘Krause’: ‘die schönen Erinnerungen und meine schönen Reisen bleiben mir. Nehmt doch beide das Leben wie es kommt, was ihr weg habt, kann Euch keiner nehmen’ (Letter, 03/03/1938).<sup>251</sup> Indeed Ey utilises religious motifs in a letter to ‘Krause’ to refer indirectly to the unjust way in which she has been treated by the Nazis and suggests that memory is all she has been left with: ‘Ja das frühere Leben war für mich ein Paradies und jetzt bin ich wie Adam und Eva ausgewiesen, trotzdem ich nicht gesündigt habe; es bleibt nur die Erinnerung’ (Letter, 19/04/1941).

Aside from seeking refuge in memory Ey employs other techniques to escape from her situation. In a letter to Scherer for instance alcohol and light entertainment appear to be used as a distraction: ‘Ich möchte jetzt z.B. mich mal einen ansäuseln aus Verzweiflung oder Langeweile oder man weiß selbst nicht warum. Jedenfalls verschwinde ich gerade heute Nachmittag mal ins Kino: ‘Husaren heraus’ [...] ich will mich mal amüsieren über Quatsch’ (Letter, 28/09/1937).<sup>252</sup> Moreover another letter implies she temporarily removed herself from her predicament by imagining the exploits of Scherer in Paris: ‘In Gedanken bin ich ja mitgefahren’ (Letter, 17/10/1937). In a letter to Scherer fantasy is again used as a coping mechanism, when

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immer und immer wieder an Jacobo und an alle die alten Freunde. Sie alle sind für mich der Inbegriff meines Lebens geworden.’

<sup>251</sup> See also Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘Du hast schöne Reisen hinter Dir mit Deiner Frau, lieber Krause und darüber sei froh. Was Du weg hast, kann Dir keiner nehmen; auch meine Spanien- und Pariser Reise sind meine gute Erinnerungen, wie glücklich, daß ich mir dieselben damals nahm.’ Moreover Letter, 30/07/1933 from Ey to Sureda: ‘Nochmals Jacob vergiß nie, daß meine Gedanken immer bei Dir sind und alle Erinnerungen in mir leben.’

<sup>252</sup> Ey also describes her visit to a pub called the ‘Pitterstübchen’ where she partied until four in the morning in Letter, 19/07/1937 to Scherer. She intended to go there again according to Letter, 23/08/1937 from Ey to Scherer.

Ey dreams about the city needing her and working in another gallery free from Nazi interference: ‘Um auf die Stadt Düsseldorf zurückzukommen, sie hat so viele Tätigungsmöglichkeiten für mich, z.B. ein kleiner Laden im Mittelpunkt der Stadt, wo hiesige Künstler ausstellen dürfen, wo aber der Verkäufer, ein junger Parteigenosse der Arbeitsfront nie anzutreffen ist, wie würde ich da so gerne tätig sein’ (Letter, 12/07/1939). This is also apparent when she fantasises in another letter to Scherer about opening a new gallery in this period. Though she acknowledges that such plans had no chance of being realised, the implication is that the process itself was therapeutic: ‘Ich träume noch immer von einem langen oder Dreieckbau für 2-3 Räume, jeder für sich mit an den Wänden breiten gepolsterten Bänken, in den Ecken [sic] an jeder Seite eine Schlafgelegenheit. Träume sind ja auch schön und Erinnerungen und phantastische Wünsche, wenn auch alles gelogen ist, doch man lebt nicht stur dahin’ (Letter, 28/09/1937).

In Ey’s correspondence there is also the suggestion that she not only fled Nazi society in her thoughts but may have toyed with the idea of a physical emigration. This could be what is intended when she writes in a letter to ‘Krause’: ‘mein Wunsch ist noch immer “reisen”’ (Letter, 28/02/1937). Indeed one could speculate that her comment in the same letter that ‘eine meiner Bekannten [this seems to refer to the Scherers], die in München Ärzepaxis jetzt haben, wollen in 2-3 Jahren bei Rom in der Champagne sich ein kleines Haus bauen lassen, [...] und wenn ich noch etwas lebe, werde ich als erster Gast dort wohnen’ could reflect a long-term plan to emigrate. When in a letter to Scherer, Ey follows her remark, ‘der Deutsche kann von dem Franzosen wirklich eine Portion Höflichkeit lernen’ with: ‘Ach ich wollte, ich könnte reisen’ (Letter, 17/10/1937) this too could be interpreted as a reference to the negative treatment she had received under the Nazis and her desire to leave Germany. Certainly in the context of reminiscing about her trips to Spain in another letter to Scherer a desire to travel is evident which could suggest she might have liked to leave the country for a short time at least: ‘Meine Sehnsucht ist ja immer “reisen, reisen”’ (Letter, 28/02/1940). The impression given in the aforementioned letter is however that any such undertaking would have been hampered by her ill-health: ‘doch was will ich machen. Jetzt nach diesem Kranksein fühle ich, daß ich alt geworden bin, nicht innerlich doch äußerlich’.

When in a letter to ‘Krause’ Ey writes: ‘Heimat ist Heimat, doch man weiß es nur, wenn man weit weg ist. Stimmt dieses nicht [?]’ (Letter, 03/03/1938) the implication could be that although such trips away from Germany may have been tempting, she, like many of those who partook in ‘inner emigration’, was too attached to her homeland to consider this option seriously. Although she fantasises about opening a gallery in Holland: ‘Am liebsten möchte ich in Amsterdam sitzen und Bilder verkaufen, das einzige, was mich noch interessiert’ (Ey to unknown recipient, 17/05/1944) the closest she appears to have come to this was a temporary migration within the borders of Germany to Lübeck in 1937, 1940-41 and the Eifel possibly in early 1943.<sup>253</sup> The visit to the Eifel is referred to in a letter to Scherer and the suggestion is that she would like to have extended this stay:

Jetzt bin ich schon 8 Tage hier in der Eifel, ich konnte zu Hause nicht bleiben wegen der Schießerei und bin nach Kottenheim bei Mayen in der Eifel geflüchtet [...] Ich wollte ich hätte hier meine Bilder in Sicherheit und könnte den Sommer über hier bleiben und in Ruhe etwas Sonne haben (Letter, early 1943 (?)).

Aside from her flight into memory and fantasy and possible thoughts about emigration, Ey can also be seen to react to the rise of the National Socialists by expressing oppositional sentiment. Some of these comments are easily identifiable as such, whilst others are more subtle, employ a double meaning or are simply ambiguous. An oppositional stance is for instance implied by Ey’s mention of artists who were regarded as ‘degenerate’ by the Nazis or who were persecuted for their racial background or religious or political beliefs, since here she associates herself with a style of art and individuals not regarded favourably by the Nazis. In a letter to Scherer for example she notes that following a request from the Louvre for ‘ein paar Clischés’ she sent them photos of “‘der Verwundete’ von Wollheim<sup>254</sup> und “die Eltern” von Otto Dix<sup>255</sup> (Letter, 17/10/1937) and mentions that she had exhibited

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<sup>253</sup> Ey also appears to have planned a visit to Munich in the summer of 1937. In Letter, 28/02/1937 to ‘Krause’ she writes: ‘Nach München wo ich noch nicht war komme ich auch diesen Sommer.’ The timing of this trip could signal her intent to visit the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition which opened in July 1937. No record could be found of Ey having undertaken this journey.

<sup>254</sup> See also direct reference to Wollheim in: Letter, 30/07/1933; Letter, 15/11/1933; Letter, 28/09/1937; Letter, 17/10/1937; Letter, 19/04/1941 and Letter, 14/12/1943.

<sup>255</sup> See also reference to Dix in Letter, 30/07/1933, Letter, 15/11/1933 and Letter, 22/05/1939.

pictures by Max Ernst in her gallery (Letter, 02/12/1940).<sup>256</sup> In other correspondence she also refers to ‘degenerate’ artists Barz, Feigler, Gilles, Heckroth, Peter Janssen,<sup>257</sup> Kokoschka,<sup>258</sup> Kyser, Ulrich Leman, Ludwigs, Nauen,<sup>259</sup> Nolde,<sup>260</sup> Pankok<sup>261</sup> and sculptor Jupp RübSam.<sup>262</sup> In certain cases Ey even describes how some of these individuals had been mistreated by the Nazis and in doing so illustrates the effects of the *Gleichschaltung*. The way this information is imparted suggests that her sympathies lay with the victims of the Nazis, but she does not go into detail about who was behind these measures and limits herself to the result of these actions. Indeed, at no stage in her correspondence during the Third Reich does she name the National Socialists explicitly as the perpetrators, in what could be understood as an act of self-censorship. Her descriptions of what occurred vary from the more general to the more specific. An example of the former is provided in a letter to Scherer:

Hier sind auch viele Änderungen in der Kunst erfolgt, man möchte fast sagen, die besten und intelligentesten Künstler werden abgehängt. 5

<sup>256</sup> See also reference to Ernst in: Letter, 19/07/1937; Letter, 17/10/1937; Letter, 09/11/1937; Letter, 22/05/1939; Letter, 27/09/1940; Letter, 11/12/1940 and Letter, 25(?)07/1943.

<sup>257</sup> See reference to: Barz in Letter, 12/03/1936 and Letter, 25(/)07/1943; Feigler in Letter, 03/04/1936; Gilles in Letter, 03/03/1938; Heckroth in Letter, 15/11/1933 and Letter, 19/04/1941 and Peter Janssen in Letter, 03/03/1938 and Letter, 16/01/1939.

<sup>258</sup> In regard to Kokoschka: ‘Die Nationalsozialisten konfiszierten 417 Werke von Oskar Kokoschka aus öffentlichen Sammlungen in Deutschland, und neun Gemälde, eine Mappe mit sechs Zeichnungen, ein Aquarell und ein Plakat wurden 1937 in der Ausstellung “Entartete Kunst” gezeigt’ (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 285). See reference to Kokoschka in Letter, 29/07/1938.

<sup>259</sup> See reference to Kyser in: Letter, 09/11/1937; Letter, 19/04/1941; Letter, 08/08/1943; Letter, 14/12/1943; Letter, 18/11/1940 and Letter, 25(/)07/1943. See reference to Leman in Letter, 03/03/1938, Ludwigs in Letter, 08/08/1943, and Nauen in Letter, 19/04/1941 and Letter, 02/12/1940.

<sup>260</sup> In regard to Nolde: ‘Zwangweise wurden [...] Werke Noldes [...] aus einer Münchner Ausstellung zeitgenössischer Kunst 1935 abgezogen. Ein Jahr später wurde Nolde jede Ausübung einer privaten oder öffentlichen künstlerischen Tätigkeit wegen kulturell unverantwortlichen Verhaltens untersagt [...] Die überwältigende Gesamtzahl von 1.052 Noldeschen Werken wurde 1937 aus deutschen Museen konfisziert, 48 Arbeiten in “Entartete Kunst” vorgeführt’ (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 319). See mention of Nolde in Letter, 29/07/1938 from Ey to Scherer. Klapheck writes without reference to a source that: ‘Mitten in der Nazizeit schreibt sie [Ey] über Nolde-Bilder, die sie selbst nur gelegentlich verkauft hat, daß sie sie “sehr, sehr und immer geschätzt habe, er war mit einer der besten der Brücke-Leute”’ (1958, p. 12).

<sup>261</sup> See reference to Pankok in: Letter, 30/07/1933; Letter, 12/03/1936; Letter, 28/02/1937; Letter, 09/11/1937; Letter, 02/12/1940; Letter, 19/04/1941; Letter, 25(?)07/1943 and Letter, 14/12/1943.

<sup>262</sup> In regard to Jupp RübSam: ‘1926/27 39er Denkmal “Innere Festigung”: [...] wurde 1933 von den Nationalsozialisten demontiert, RübSam erhielt Berufsverbot’ (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 337). RübSam had a photo of this work displayed in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 57). See reference to RübSam in Letter, 25(/)07/1943 and Letter, 1944 (?). In an unreferenced source (possibly a letter) cited by Klapheck, Ey is also said to have stated in regard to the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition that “es sollen sehr gute Klees und Campendonks dort sein” (1958, p. 12). In reference to these two artists Barth notes: ‘Die fortschrittlichen Professoren der Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie werden 1933 entlassen: [...] Campendonk, der 1931 berufene Paul Klee’ (1984, p. 62). Both Campendonk and Klee had works included in *Entartete Kunst*, 1937 (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, pp. 213-215/ pp. 279-284). Klee was represented with 17 works (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 279).

Professoren sollen den blauen Brief bekommen haben, darüber schreibe ich einen extra Brief (Letter, 23/08/1937).

An example of the latter is evident in a letter to Sureda, who at this stage was suffering from terminal tuberculosis. Here Ey writes that certain individuals had been removed from their positions and left Germany either temporarily or with the intention of staying away for a long period: ‘Wollheim schrieb aus Askona, Dix ist abgebaut als Prof. in der Dresdener Akademie. Hein Heckroth ist mit der Tanzgruppe “Ballett Hans Joost” [...] nach New York gegangen [...] Er [...] ist glücklich mal endlich aus Essen an der Ruhr zu sein [...] ich wünsche, daß er dort festen Fuß fassen kann, er verdient es sicher’ (Letter, 15/11/1933). She also mentions in a letter to ‘Krause’ that professors Nauen and Albrecht had lost their positions at the *Düsseldorf Akademie* (Letter, 19/04/1941)<sup>263</sup> and refers to those who had emigrated in a letter to Sureda: ‘Wollheim ist in Paris, ebenso viele andere’ (Letter, 30/07/1933). Furthermore in correspondence to ‘Krause’ she writes: ‘Pitter Jansen war vor einem halben Jahr in Amerika ist aber nach einigen Monaten zurückgekommen und in Paris geblieben’ (Letter, 03/03/1938).<sup>264</sup>

Ey also addresses the harm, death or potential death of individuals at the hands of the Nazis in an elusive way without comment as to how this occurred. For instance in a letter to ‘Krause’ in which her long-standing friend Karl Kyser<sup>265</sup> is referred to as ‘der beste Schauspieler von der Louise Dumont’ she notes in regard to this theatre troupe that ‘alle haben ein tragisches Geschick’ (Letter, 08/08/1943). This ambiguous reference could refer to a fate they suffered during the Second World War and prior to this at the hands of the Nazis or in the course of fighting in the war, or to the

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<sup>263</sup> Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘Prof. Nauen und Prof. Albrecht, früher Akademie auch abgebaut waren sind vor 14 Tagen gestorben.’ No information about Albrecht or the circumstances surrounding his death could be found. However Ey is mistaken about Nauen ‘dying 14 days ago’. He died on 26/11/1940 in Kalkar according to *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 335. His death appears to have been from natural causes. She correctly refers to the time of his death in Letter, 02/12/1940 to ‘Krause’.

<sup>264</sup> In Letter, 17/10/1937 from Ey to Scherer, Ey could also be referring to the emigration of an art collector: ‘Ein Direktor Schwab von der Rheinischen Bahngesellschaft hat dieselben [pictures by Wollheim] bei mir gekauft im Jahre 1925. Nun ist derselbe weggezogen und hat nur seinen alten Bilder mitgenommen und einige kleine Moderne.’ No further information about Schwab could be found. In the same letter Ey could be indicating the poor conditions under which those emigrating were forced to sell: ‘Für eine Frau mit Buch hat er damals 1250 M. bezahlt, die Frau auf Leinen 1600 Mark, jetzt werden dieselben für die Hälfte in 3 Raten verkauft. Wissen Sie jemand dafür?’

<sup>265</sup> See Letter, 08/08/1943 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘ich bin doch seine alte Liebe’ and Letter, 05/12/1945 from Ey to Kyser: ‘nun möchte ich doch so gerne wissen, wie es meinem guten, lieben Freund geht’ (Letter, 05/12/1945).

destruction caused by the bombing raids. No clarification is offered, perhaps because ‘Krause’ would have understood what was meant. Moreover in the same letter she writes of Kyser that: ‘der arme Kerl ist augenblicklich in einem Krankenhause zur Beobachtung seines Gehirns!’ which may refer to a nervous breakdown because of the stress endured during the Nazi period or to the after-effects of ill-treatment by the Nazis. In another letter to ‘Krause’ Kyser’s health is again referred to: ‘er ist ein armer, lieber Kerl [...] heute schrieb er mir ein paar Zeilen, daß seine Hände ihm sehr schmerzen’ (Letter, 14/12/1943) but once more she does not elaborate on what caused this pain.<sup>266</sup> Since Kyser was arrested by the Nazis and spent time as a *Zwangsarbeiter* it is certainly possible he was harmed, physically, mentally or both during this period. The *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie* states that the ‘dabei erlittene gesundheitliche Schäden erlaubten ihm [Kyser] nach 1945 nur noch Gastauftritte am Josefstädter Theater und der Renaissancebühne in Wien’ (*Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie*, 1999, vol. 6, p. 185). Indeed when Ey writes to Kyser ‘[ich] möchte so gerne wissen, was Du noch leisten kannst’ (Letter, 05/12/1945) she could be inquiring into the severity of his condition.

Further elusive references to the fate of certain individuals include Ey writing to ‘Krause’ of Nauen: ‘In der Zeitung sah ich dieser Tage die Todesanzeige von Heinrich Nauen, der ist seelisch zu Grunde gegangen’ (Letter, 02/12/1940), which could refer to the psychological effects of the Nazi period in general and his dismissal from the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* in particular. She also describes in the vaguest of terms in another letter to ‘Krause’ (Letter, 08/08/1943) that Heinz Tapper and Ludwigs had died: ‘Peter Ludwig[s] ist auch vor 2 Monaten gestorben.’ No

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<sup>266</sup> Ey’s attempts to help Kyser and her sensitivity for his condition are apparent when she writes to ‘Krause’: ‘Schreibe ihm doch einmal einen netten Brief, erwähne nichts von seiner Krankheit und schreibe ihm, Du hättest von mir die Adresse Karl Kyser, Wien, Werderthorgasse 17 II’ (Letter, 08/08/1943) and ‘[Kyser] bittet mich in jedem Brief, ihm wieder von den Malern zu schreiben; er korrespondiert immer noch mit Pankok, nach Schmitz fragt er immer wieder. Magst Du ihm nicht mal schreiben: K. Kyser WienI [sic], Werdertorgasse 17, II. Stock; er ist doch ein armer Kerl, der auch nichts dafür kann’ (Letter, 14/12/1943). After the Second World War Ey’s concern for Kyser’s health is also evident and she fears his death (Kyser however died in 1951), when she writes in a letter to Busch: ‘Von Karl Kyser (Schauspieler) habe ich lange nichts gehört, er hat sich alles alles so zu Herzen genommen, daß ich Angst habe, ihm zu schreiben, ich meine, ich höre schon sagen: er ist todt’ (Letter, 28/11/1945. Ey’s emphasis). See also Letter, 05/12/1945 from Ey to Kyser: ‘M.I. Karl Kyser! Jetzt da ich wieder an Deine Adr. schreiben kann, versuche ich noch einmal, ein Lebenszeichen von Dir zu hören [...] Nun möchte ich doch gerne wissen, wie es Euch allen gesundheitlich geht, Du [...] hast ja auch vieles durchgemacht [...] schreibe mir doch, sobald wie möglich, daß ich wenigstens Weihnachten erleben kann mit dem winzigsten Wunsch, Euch alle so weit gesund zu wissen’. This letter was returned to sender.

information on ‘Tapper’ could be found,<sup>267</sup> but in Ludwig’s case his death occurred whilst in police custody (Barth, 1984, p. 63). Either Ey did not know the circumstances of his death or did not want to disclose this for fear of possible repercussions for herself or the recipient of her letter had this been read by a third party. Mention of his name alone would however have been dangerous. This economy with words is also apparent when in further correspondence with ‘Krause’ Ey states that: ‘G. Wollheim - Bell und alle sollen todt [sic] sein’ (Letter, 14/12/1943). Here the implication could be that she had heard rumours that Wollheim had died at the hands of the Nazis following his imprisonment in France, and as such could be understood as a veiled reference to Nazi brutality. Given that Wollheim was a close friend, such a short reference to his ‘death’ certainly suggests she was reluctant to mention such potentially dangerous subject matter in detail.

Aside from these allusions to Nazi oppression Ey’s correspondence also suggests that certain artists she knew were able to continue working and experienced success. She names three artists in particular in this regard: Pudlich,<sup>268</sup> Pieper (forename unknown),<sup>269</sup> and Curt Beckmann.<sup>270</sup> The success of these artists is contrasted on

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<sup>267</sup> It is possible that artist Heinz Tappeser is meant. He died in 1942 so this would fit with the date of Ey’s letter. There is no mention that this was at the hands of the Nazis (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 341). Tappeser represented Ey in negotiations with the local authorities requesting she be allowed to move into Postamt 8 (Baumeister, 1999, p. 27). Heinz Tappeser (\*1888, Kirspel-Waldniel - †1942 Hinsbeck) was an autodidact, who from 1926 was a member of the *Junge Rheinland*. He undertook study trips to Spain, Holland, Belgium and in 1930 travelled with Schwesig to the South of France. He lived in Düsseldorf, but in the 1930’s retreated to Hinsbeck near Lobberich (Barth, 1984, p. 110).

<sup>268</sup> See: Letter, 15/11/1933 from Ey to Sureda: ‘Pudlich hat sehr viel Erfolg für seine Malerei, doch fast kein Verkauf’; Letter, 01/11/1938 from Ey to Scherer: ‘Pudlich ist mit seiner Frau nach Italien, er hat Preise bekommen und auch gut bei Vömel (Ausstellung) verkauft. Hier in der Kunsthalle ist eine Ausstellung’; Letter, 16/01/1939 from Ey to Scherer: ‘Pudlich hat in Köln viele Erfolge im Kunstverein’; Letter, 19/07/1939 from Ey to Pudlich: ‘Gestern Abend im Rundfunk und heute früh durch die Zeitung hörte ich von Deiner großen Ehrung’; Letter, 18/11/1940 from Ey to Wever: ‘Pudlich sehe ich wenig; er beschickt überall Ausstellungen’ and Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘Pieper und Pudlich sind anscheinend die Favoriten, die Ausstellungen überall im Osten machen und die noch nicht zum Akademie-Prof. kommen können.’

<sup>269</sup> For example in Letter, 17/10/1937 from Ey to Scherer, Ey refers to the artist Pieper having received the third prize of 500 Dollars in an American art competition. In Letter, 09/11/1937 from Ey to Scherer this is revealed as the *Carnegiegesellschaft*, Pittsburgh. Furthermore in Letter, 28/02/1937 from Ey to ‘Krause’, Ey states that Pieper had won the first prize in a German competition which was worth 2,500 Marks and a trip to Rome with 6 months’ free use of an atelier there. It is mentioned that Pieper’s place of residence in Rome was ‘Akademia de Teska’ and that he would be there from October, 1937. Little other information about this artist could be found although it is apparent that Pieper accompanied Schwesig, Gilles and Tappeser on a study trip to the South of France (Le Brusce) in 1930 (Barth, 1984, p. 107). In Letter, 10/12/1930 to family Schramm Ey appears to refer to this trip.

<sup>270</sup> For example Beckmann is mentioned as having won the *Corneliuspreis* (Letter, 02/01/1941). Curt Beckmann (\*1901 Solingen - †1972 Düsseldorf) studied sculpture from 1923-25 at the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie*, was a member of *Das Junge Rheinland* and made study trips to Italy and France (*Am*



numerous occasions with her own dire situation and thus their diverging careers are emphasised. For instance in a letter to Scherer, Ey writes:

Er [Pudlich] hat den Corneliuspreis (3 000 Mark) bekommen dieses Jahr, heute Abend ist Ehrung in der Stadt. Tonhalle. Ich war früher bei solchen Gelegenheiten immer die Erste und heute bin ich ausgeschaltet. Ich bin nie eitel gewesen, sondern sehr bescheiden und man muß solche Sachen erst verdauen, doch sie sind schon erledigt (Letter, 10/08/1939).<sup>271</sup>

This stark contrast of individual fortunes continues in comparisons between certain artists. For instance Ey summarises the general situation for artists during the Third Reich in a letter to Scherer: 'Mit den Künstlern hier ist es überall nicht so gut. Die [sic] einen, die Verbindung haben, sind geholfen, die anderen guten müssten sich mehr durchringen, als wie der Kampf der Moderne war. Künstler dürfen nicht getrennt sein und werden' (Letter, 28/09/1937), then gives a concrete example of this when she contrasts Pieper's success with Pankok's persecution in a letter to 'Krause': 'Für viele Künstler ist ja das Leben besser geworden, [...] Josef Pieper hat den Staatspreis bekommen, [...] Pieper hat ja bekanntlich schon einige Preise bekommen und hat [ein] Bankkonto [...] Pankok war vorige Woche hier, ein Buch die "Passion" ist verboten und wirtschaftlich wird er sehr geschädigt' (Letter, 28/02/1937).<sup>272</sup>

As this previous letter makes clear, Ey not only referred to 'degenerate' artists in her correspondence but also states therein that she continued to meet with them in what can be viewed as a further act of opposition. In a letter to Sureda for instance Dix is mentioned as having met her in 1933: 'Otto Dix, der Prof. an der Dresdener

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*Anfang*, 1985, p. 313). He married a paediatrician (Letter, 18/11/1940) and lived from 1936 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313) in Nierendorf near Hamburg (Letter, 19/02/1944). He served in the German army from 1940-45 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 313). This could what Ey is referring to in Postcard, 08/11/1941 to 'Krause': 'Beckmann liegt hier in Lübeck bei den Soldaten. Ich habe ihm Deine Adresse gegeben, hoffentlich schreibt er Dir.'

<sup>271</sup> See also Letter, 03/04/1936 from Ey to 'Krause': 'Hier in Düsseldorf ist noch immer dasselbe. Bei mir wird es immer noch erbärmlicher [...] Pudlich war soeben hier er hat 5 Bilder bei Vömel verkauft, keine große, und die Carnegie-Gesellschaft hat ihn eingeladen in Pittsburg auszustellen [...] Beckmann macht sich ja auch bemerkbar, er bekommt Preise und Aufträge'. In Letter, 28/09/1937 from Ey to Scherer, Ey's reference to the film *Husaren heraus* also contrasts the descent of her career in the Nazi period with the relative ascent of the careers of individuals she knew when she writes that Jupp Hüssel the star of the film was: 'ein Maler, den ich früher nicht bei mir ausstellen ließ, als Husarenleutnant ein netter amüsanter Kerl, in den weiß Gott viele Mädchen verliebt sind'.

<sup>272</sup> The original of this letter was not available to check whether this is Ey's emphasis.

Akademie war heute Morgen bei mir, er will hier in Düsseldorf bleiben, doch was will er hier er kann sich hier noch weniger bewegen wie dort' (Letter, 30/07/1933) and Ey notes in a letter to 'Krause' in 1941 that Pankok had recently visited her and that he came perhaps twice a year (Letter, 19/04/1941). In correspondence to 'Krause' she also mentions that the artists Goller,<sup>273</sup> Ferdinand Macketanz,<sup>274</sup> Pankok and Barz visited her (Letter, 12/03/1936), when both Pankok and Barz were not viewed favourably by the Nazis.<sup>275</sup> Moreover it is apparent that Ey corresponded with Pankok intermittently at least despite his *Arbeitsverbot*,<sup>276</sup> received a letter from Wollheim mentioned in a correspondence to Sureda (Letter, 15/11/1933) and was in regular written contact with Kyser.<sup>277</sup>

An oppositional stance on Ey's part is also suggested by explicit and implicit criticism of the situation in Germany during the Third Reich. In a letter to 'Krause' for instance Ey openly compares the Weimar period to the Nazi period and states: 'es war eigentlich mehr Gemeinschaftsgefühl wie heute, wo der Kampf ums Leben und Dasein so schwer ist und mehr Nieder hat wie jemals. Hier ist alles organisiert wie überall, für mich das Leben ärmer wie jemals' (Letter, 12/03/1936). In the same letter she also contrasts the notion of community that the Nazis sought to promote and the treatment she had received, and the suggestion is clear that she believed the closure of

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<sup>273</sup> Bruno Goller (\*1901 Gummersbach - †1998 Düsseldorf) became a member of *Das Junge Rheinland* in 1927, travelled to Italy with Ernst Schumacher[-Salig] and was part of the 'circle' around Johanna Ey. In 1936 he had a solo exhibition at *Galerie Stuckert*, Düsseldorf and from 1940-1945 served in the German army (Barth, 1984, p. 88).

<sup>274</sup> Ferdinand Macketanz (\*1902 Wyganow, Poland - †1970 Laas, Bozen, South Tirol) studied at the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie*, travelled to Holland and Italy. Exhibited at *Das Junge Rheinland* exhibition in 1928 (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 334). Barth notes in regard to Macketanz: 'Am 11. Juli 1933 wird Karl Schwesig von der SA verhaftet und im "Getreidehaus" der Schlegelbrauerei in der Bismarckstraße [Düsseldorf] gefoltert - konfrontiert mit eigenen Bildern, die aus seinem Atelier herbeigeschleppt worden waren. Im "Getreidehaus" wohnen in den oberen Etagen die Künstler Heinz May, Ferdinand Macketanz und andere, während sich im Keller die SA eingerichtet hat, in dem von ihr sogenannten "Schlegelkeller", in dem die Verhafteten "verhört" werden' (1984, p. 61f). Barth writes that almost all of the pre-war work belonging to Macketanz was destroyed during bombing raids which hit his studio (2007, p. 77). Ey uses the nickname 'Meci' for Macketanz in Letter, 12/03/1936.

<sup>275</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>276</sup> See Letter, 25(?)07/1943 and Letter, 11/05/1944. Letter, 02/12/1940 from Ey to 'Krause' also refers to Pankok having sent her notification of his father's death.

<sup>277</sup> See Letter, 09/11/1937 from Ey to Scherer where Ey cites having received correspondence from Kyser, and Letter, 18/11/1940 from Ey to Wever: 'Karl Kyser der Schauspieler ist noch in Wien und schreibt mir auch immer nette Briefe.' In Letter, 25(?)07/1943 from Ey to Pankok, the implication is also that Kyser remained in contact with Ey and that he also had contact with Pankok, since she states that Kyser gave her Pankok's address. This is confirmed in Letter, 08/08/1943 from Ey to 'Krause': 'Karl Kyser schreibt mir noch immer' and when in a letter to the same recipient she remarks that Kyser has written to her and that he 'bittet mich in jedem Brief, ihm doch immer wieder von den Malern zu schreiben; er korrespondiert immer noch mit Otto Pankok' (Letter, 14/12/1943).

her gallery was not attributable to reasons of finance alone: ‘Die Stadt hat so viele, viele Räume leer und doch einer Frau einen Raum für ihr Unterkommen zu geben, so viel Gemeinschaftsgefühl besitzt sie nicht’ (Letter, 12/03/1936).

The financial difficulties Ey experienced are often at the heart of her explicit criticism of the authorities during the Nazi period. In a letter to Scherer Ey openly criticises the difference between the privileged life of those in positions of power and the way she lived: ‘ich wollte, der Oberbürgermeister und Gauleiter Florian müßten ½ Jahr so leben wie ich, ohne Aussicht auf das Schöne, was sie immer haben’ (Letter, 16/01/1939). Then in another letter to the same correspondent she places the blame on the local authorities for the dire financial situation she experienced following the closure of her gallery: ‘wenn die Stadt mir ein Monatsgehalt von 100 Mark geben würde, wäre ich aus aller Sorge, doch nein’. She suggests that their attitude was one of superficial respect that masked their desire to distance themselves from her: ‘ich bin das rote Tuch für die Beamten der Stadt Düsseldorf, weil sie alle bald in die Hose was machen, wenn mein Name genannt wird, wohl machen sie Verbeugungen bis auf die Erde, wenn sie mich sehen, doch sie sind froh, wenn ich sie nicht anrede’ (Letter, 12/07/1939).

In the same letter she also openly states that she feels that both the National Socialists (although she does not name them explicitly) and their predecessors had exploited her: ‘Deshalb bin ich gegen Behörden auch ganz zurückhaltend, noch mehr wie früher, aber ausgenutzt haben sie mich alle nach Strich und Faden.’ This could be an expression of her belief that the Nazis’ closure of her gallery was a symbolic act designed to demonstrate their cultural purge of the Weimar era. She certainly appears to dream of telling the Nazis what she really thought of them: ‘Ach ich wollte, ich könnte mal dazwischen fahren und mal sagen, wie es mir ums Herz ist, es wäre nicht das erste Mal, ich hoffe, es ist nicht das letzte Mal gewesen’ (Letter, 12/07/1939) and a letter to ‘Krause’ in February 1944 suggests she came close to doing just that. In the aforementioned correspondence she complains vociferously about how she has still not received any money for the bomb damage caused to her flat, openly criticises the officials and implies that if she had not needed this money she would have complained directly in no uncertain terms. This is expressed indirectly by means of

reference to a quote from Goethe which implies the authorities can ‘Leck mich am Arsch’:

Wenn ich es nicht so nötig hätte, möchte ich etwas sagen, wie “Götz von Berlichingen”, man muß ja wie ein Bettler fast bitten, Stadtbeamten, Du weißt ja, wie ich die ins Herz geschlossen habe, wenn ich schon den Namen Stadt oder Staatsbeamter höre, wird es mir übel, doch je höher der Beamte ist, desto feinere Kerls sind darunter, nur bekommt man jetzt als Bombengeschädigte nicht damit zu tun (Letter, 19/02/1944).<sup>278</sup>

Her disdain for the Nazi regime is also made apparent in her description of the financial difficulties Hundt experienced - a long-standing friend of Ey’s who had known her since 1910 and been associated with the ‘circle’ of artists surrounding her since 1922.<sup>279</sup> In a letter to Scherer she states that the artist who was able to continue working during the Third Reich had taken part in the exhibition *Schaffendes Volk* and exhibited a fountain there, but that instead of buying it at this exhibition which would have been a good advertisement for him, the Düsseldorf authorities bought it a year later. Ey explicitly criticises this approach and expands it into a general attack on their

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<sup>278</sup> Letter, 09/05/1944 from Ey to Hundt, shows that the Nazi authorities in Düsseldorf finally gave her this compensation: ‘Von der Stadt Düsseldorf habe ich vor einigen Wochen 2000 Mark bekommen, außer 250 Mark bei meinem Abgang von Düsseldorf und mal 375 Mark für Pension hier.’ Ey however does not appear satisfied since this did not incorporate works which were considered ‘degenerate’: ‘Der Hauswirt Cronenberg [forename unknown], Stockkampstr hatte eine Aufrechnung für mich gemacht für 935 oo [sic] Mark mit alten Bildern, die in der Wohnung und bei Beyer-Meyer lagerten[,] ausgeschlossen waren die entarteten, die ja so nicht in Frage kamen’ (Letter, 09/05/1944).

<sup>279</sup> To summarise Hundt’s activities during the Third Reich: in 1933 he took part in the *Rheingruppe* exhibition in the *Kunstverein Düsseldorf* and the *Rheinische Sezession* exhibition in the *Kunsthalle Düsseldorf*. His work *Frau Ey auf Sofa* was taken from Ey’s collection as security for her loan from the *Sparkasse*. This was then confiscated by the *Willrich-Kommission* from the art collection of the city of Düsseldorf in 1937. Hundt exhibited works at: *Westfront 1936* in Essen; *Schaffendes Volk* in Düsseldorf (1937); *Herbstausstellung Düsseldorf* (1939) (where the city of Düsseldorf bought one of his works); *Das Kind* in the *Kunstverein Düsseldorf* (1940); *Frühjahrsausstellung Düsseldorf* (1940); *Herbstausstellung Düsseldorf* (1940 and 1941); *Düsseldorfer Kunstausstellung* in the *Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museum* in Braunschweig (1942); *Düsseldorfer Kunst der Gegenwart in Florenz* (1943) and *Frühjahrsausstellung Düsseldorfer Künstler* (1944). There was also an exhibition of his works in Duisburg (1943) and four works entered the collection of the Duisburg museum. Information from Barth, 1984, p. 90 and Goebbels, 1993. In a letter to Wever in November 1940 Ey notes that Hundt had been in the Sauerland for 3-4 months and had been painting portraits (Letter, 18/11/1940. See also Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to ‘Krause’). In Letter, 08/08/1943 from Ey to ‘Krause’ Ey reveals Hundt: ‘hat in Mülheim a. d. Ruhr sein Haus verloren, sein Atelier in Düsseldorf ist beschädigt, seine Mutter ist vergangenes Jahr gestorben [...] er selbst lebt in [...] Herscheid b. Klettenberg Wäsche No. 1’. Furthermore in Letter, 19/02/1944 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘[Hundt] hat sich wieder verheiratet mit einer 20 jährigen Fabrikantentochter aus Herscheid [...] er ist sehr viel mit Hauptmann Heinrich Wevers zusammen, der [...] auch in Herscheid ist, die Einzigen unter den vielen, die mir noch schreiben’.

attitude to finance when she comments: ‘an der einen Seite will die alles geschenkt bekommen und an der anderen Seite wird das Geld fortgeworfen’ (Letter, 1938 (?)). Her defiant tone continues in another letter to Scherer (Letter, 02/01/1941) which documents the occasion when Ey was awarded the golden *Mutterkreuz*. This appears to be an attempt by the Nazis to promote their family policies by partially rehabilitating Ey and was something she could ill afford to reject given the atmosphere at the time. Nevertheless she appears to express her contempt for the Nazis and their attempts to use her as a political pawn when she comments: ‘Das goldene Mutterkreuz ist mir auch gebracht worden, ich hätte lieber ein Hörrohr vom Führer bekommen, denn ich habe etwas Hörbeschwerden. Denken Sie und stellen sich Frau Ey mit dem Hörrohr vor, einfach zum malen.’

In other letters however her comments are less explicit and could be interpreted as an expression of opposition and criticism of the Nazi regime or as a reference to her old age and bouts of illness, or a combination of both. For instance in a letter to ‘Krause’ in 1936 she writes: ‘Doch ich habe ja ein gesunde[s] Fell und bin so leicht nicht zum Sterben zu kriegen. Johanna geht und immer kommt sie wieder’ (Letter, 12/03/1936) and in another letter to the same correspondent in early 1937 notes: ‘Na stark im Willen bin ich ja noch und unterkriegen ist ganz ausgeschlossen, ich lebe weiter und bin jetzt wieder gesund’ (Letter, 28/02/1937). In the same year however this resistance appears to falter when she writes to an unknown recipient: ‘Ich fühle mich tatsächlich alt werden. Die Lebendigkeit und der Kampf fehlt und alle die Menschen, die es wert waren, daß man den Kampf führte’ (Letter, 27/07/1937). This defiant tone then returns in 1938 when in a letter to ‘Krause’ she writes: ‘Doch ich stem[m]e mich weiter gegen Alles das, was mich drückt’ (Letter, 03/03/1938) and in a letter to Scherer notes: ‘ich gehe nicht unter, dafür habe ich doch noch zuviel Kraft in mir’ (Letter, 1938 (?)). In another letter to Scherer Ey suggests this resistance experienced a ‘re-birth’ in 1942: ‘O käme doch bald der Frühling, ein kleiner Hoffnungsschimmer wäre es für mich, vielleicht eine neue Auferstehung [...] Mein Leben soll nicht abgetan sein; dafür habe ich noch zu viel Groll in mir’ (Letter, 17/02/1942).<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> See also Letter, 09/05/1944 from Ey to Hundt when she describes herself as the ‘alte[...] unverwüstliche[...] wenn auch sorgenvolle[...] alte[...] Ey.’

Ey's opposition to the rise of the Nazis could also be implied in a letter to Sureda describing her second trip to Majorca in March 1933 when she writes: 'Meine zweite Spanienreise war anders wie meine erste. Ich war deprimiert von tausend Mißgeschicken und war innerlich krank und zerfallen, doch Schluß damit, es ändert nichts' (Letter, 30/07/1933). Moreover her lament in a letter to 'Krause' that: 'die schönen gemeinsamen Stunden mit netten, anständigen und geistreichen Menschen kommen für mich nie mehr wieder' (Letter, 28/02/1937) could suggest the absence of such decent and profound individuals in the Nazi era. Ey's suggestion in a letter to Scherer that it was a joy to be able to find a like-minded person during this period could also be considered indicative of an oppositional stance on her part: 'Wie kann man zufrieden sein, wenn man mit einem gleichgesinnten Menschen einige Stunden plaudern kann, auch wenn es nur Quatsch ist; doch schöner Quatsch' (Letter, 28/09/1937).

The inability to speak one's mind during the Third Reich certainly appears to be what Ey is referring to in another letter to Scherer: 'Nur eines fehlt mir die Gesellschaft von lieben Menschen, wo man sich einmal alles von der Seele reden kann. Kommt jemand hierhin und kann dann wieder richtig reden, wird es mir leichter und ich bin wieder die alte EY [sic] und ich bleibe so' (Letter, 28/02/1940). The absence of 'liebe[...] Menschen' she mentions here again seems to be a criticism of the moral state of Nazi society, whilst her suggestion that she would feel better and become the 'old' Ey if someone was able to speak to her 'properly' i.e. freely, could imply that she would emerge from this 'inner emigration' should such a situation occur. She may also be hinting at a period after the Nazis' fall from power when she states in the same letter: 'Ich glaube, wenn wir wieder in geregelten Verhältnissen kommen, fängt auch der Mut zum Leben wieder an'. Parallels with the notion of 'inner emigration' and 'inner' resistance raised in the previous letter are also evident in another letter to Scherer when Ey writes of her situation: 'Kann man etwas daran ändern. Ich bin ja alt und wehre mich mit allen Kräften gegen mein Schicksal, ich wehre mich aber nur innerlich, es ist auch das Beste, und bin abends froh, daß ich mal wieder einen Tag um habe' (Letter, 01/11/1938).<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> See also Letter, 11/12/1940 from Ey to Wever thanking him for a parcel: 'Vielen inneren Dank.' Her choice of the word 'inneren' here and the emphasis she places on it through her underlining could

Instances in Ey's correspondence in which her oppositional stance to the Nazi regime is suggested are also apparent in her attitude to Nazi art policy. In a letter to Sureda for instance her disdain for the Nazis' infringement of this area of cultural life is evident when in reference to the *Kampfbund* being part of the jury at a *Secession* exhibition she states ironically that there is: 'Tolle Propoganda überall' and voices hopes for an improvement of the situation for her and 'her' artists: 'Hoffen wir, daß es besser wird d.h. auch für die Künstler also auch für mich' (Letter, 15/11/1933). In a letter to 'Krause' she is also critical of the type of art exhibited in the Third Reich: 'In Essen, nicht in Düsseldorf ist die Ausstellung von der Westfront, sowie Düsseldorf eigentlich doch etwas rückständig geworden' (Letter, 03/04/1936).

Although in a letter to Scherer (Letter, 11/05/1937) Ey implies she may have been prepared to visit a Nazi approved exhibition in the *Stockumer Akademie* - this is identified as the *Schaffendes Volk* exhibition (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123) - her subsequent remark that she could not afford a 'Dauerkarte' seems to refer to the difficult financial situation she was in because of the closure of her gallery. Ey instead describes how she bought: 'eine Jahreskarte für den zoologischen Garten [...] dort glaube ich, passe ich auch viel besser bei guten oder auch bösen Tieren, sie sind ungefährlicher wie die Menschen und natürlicher.' This statement suggests that she felt an outsider in Nazi society, whilst her mention that the company of wild animals was preferable to that of humans could offer a veiled criticism of the conduct of people during the Third Reich and the danger they posed.

In another letter to Scherer Ey then addresses the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition in Munich in 1937 but makes no direct criticism at this stage. Instead she asks Scherer whether she had visited the recently opened exhibition and is fascinated to find out whether pictures she had once owned were on display there: 'Es interessierte mich ganz außerordentlich wenn Sie sich die Ausstellung "Entartete Kunst" in der Galerienstraße ansehen. Es könnte ja möglich sein, daß aus Düsseldorf auch das Bild von Max Ernst "La belle Jardinière" und vom Kölner Wallraf-Richartz-Museum die "Heimsuchung" dort ausgestellt sind' (Letter, 19/07/1937). Ey was correct in regard

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be interpreted as reference to the idea of an 'inner' existence in Nazi society. It could however be a humorous remark referring to the edible contents of the parcel.

to *La belle Jardinière* - this was included along with an oil painting on canvas from circa 1928 entitled *Muschelblumen* (*Entartete Kunst*, 1992, p. 232). Interest in the theme of this exhibition is also apparent in a letter to (Günter) Grote in which she reminds him to bring ‘das Buch’ *Entartete Kunst* with him on his next visit, which possibly refers to the catalogue of this exhibition.<sup>282</sup> Moreover she refers to this event again in another letter to Scherer: ‘Die “Entarteten” in München betrachten Sie wohl jetzt auch mit anderen Augen, nachdem Sie die Modernen in Paris kennen’ (Letter, 17/10/1937).

In reference to the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition in Düsseldorf in 1938, which opened on 18 June and closed on 7 August 1938 (Alberg, 1987, p. 87/ p. 90), however a far more critical tone is evident. Ey makes no attempt to disguise her opposition to the Nazis in this regard in a letter to Scherer: ‘Seit zwei Wochen ist auch hier in Düsseldorf “Entartete Kunst” zu sehen. Ich kann nicht hingehen, es ist besser so, denn wenn ich die Schmähdreden hörte, würde ich mehr Ärger wie Interesse haben, da sind meine Freunde zu lieb zu’ (Letter, 07/07/1938). In another letter to the same correspondent she notes that although this exhibition has been open for four weeks she has still not brought herself to pay a visit, and she may well be referring to the Nazis when she writes of ‘üble Macher’ in this context:

ich bin nicht dort gewesen. Der Grund: ich will mich nicht ärgern, wenn ich dort gute Bilder von Nolde, Kokoschka u.s.w. sehe. Mist ist überall, sowie es auch menschlich feine und üble Macher gibt. Es geht im Leben ja immer so unterschiedlich. Das Leben an und für sich bringt Schönes und Gutes, daß man um gesund zu bleiben, das nehmen soll, was einem Freude macht und sich nicht um das andere kümmern soll (Letter, 29/07/1938).<sup>283</sup>

Ey’s opposition to Nazi cultural policy is also suggested through mention of her continued possession of ‘degenerate’ art and literature. For example in a letter to

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<sup>282</sup> Ey: ‘Bitte das Buch “Entartete Kunst” nicht vergessen’ (Letter, 28/10/1937). No biographical information about Günter Grote could be found. It is possible this book was owned by Ey or loaned to her, and came from Scherer, since in a letter to her in August 1937 Ey writes: ‘aufrichtigen Dank für die Zusendung der beiden Kataloge’ (Letter, 23/08/1937).

<sup>283</sup> See also Klapheck’s citation of Ey from an unreferenced source, which may or may not refer to this exhibition in Düsseldorf: ‘Sie “möchte heulen”, wenn sie an die Ausstellung “Entartete Kunst” denkt’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 12).



Scherer (Letter, 16/01/1939) she reveals that she continued to own works which were likely to have been considered ‘degenerate’ such as a portrait of Ey by ‘Pitter Jansen’;<sup>284</sup> ‘den roten Akt’ presumably by Max Ernst<sup>285</sup> and ‘den schönen Adler und noch so viele andere’ and defiantly emphasises the value she believed they had in contrast to the official political view: ‘Sie verlieren nicht, immer wenn ich sie sehe, bleiben es die guten Bilder’.<sup>286</sup> In a letter to ‘degenerate’ artist Pankok she not only writes about his art works that had been destroyed when her flat was bombed - thereby indicating that they had remained in her possession - but also mentions that she had sent pictures and books to Kottenheim in the Eifel before this occurred and that several of Pankok’s books were amongst them, including the banned *Die Passion* (Letter, 25(?)07/1943).

In this context she comments that his books are ‘erfreulicherweise gerettet’ and clearly shows herself to be fond of this banned literature. Moreover mention in post-war correspondence to the Wevers of having lost many works by Ernst during the bombing raids again emphasises the fact that she had continued to own ‘degenerate’ works during the Nazi period: ‘Die Franzosen, darunter auch Max Ernst sind wichtig; es ist schade, daß ich die vielen Max Ernst durch den Brand verloren habe. Das “Rendezvous der Freunde” habe ich noch und zwei kleinere, sie sind ein Vermögen’ (Letter, 06/01/1947).<sup>287</sup> Goebbels notes that this work was kept in the art collection of Dr Bau’s employer, the German cigarette factory owner and art collector Reemtsma (presumably Philipp F. Reemtsma) from 8 December 1941 (2000, p. 20). That Ey continued to own ‘degenerate’ art is also implied by mention in a letter to Hundt that the compensation she received from the local authorities for bomb damage did not include the ‘degenerate’ works.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> It seems likely that Ey is referring to Peter Janssen’s, *Johanna Ey schlafend*, 1929 (Fig. 53).

<sup>285</sup> The way in which Letter, 19/07/1937 from Ey to Scherer is formulated suggests this picture may have been by Ernst: ‘Es könnte ja möglich sein, daß aus Düsseldorf auch das Bild von Max Ernst “La belle Jardinière” und vom Kölner Wallraf-Richartz-Museum die “Heimsuchung” dort ausgestellt sind; und Sie wollen trotzdem den roten Akt haben?’

<sup>286</sup> See also Letter, end of February 1946 from Ey to Leyendecker after the Second World War which reveals that she had stored paintings at an architect’s office in Leverkusen: ‘Gott sei Dank auch von einer anderen Stelle (Architekten) in Leverkusen auch noch 5 große Bilder heil sind’. This could refer to her continued ownership of ‘degenerate’ works during this period and the willingness of certain individuals to help her despite the risks involved.

<sup>287</sup> In Letter, 28/11/1945 from Ey to Busch: ‘Das große Max Ernst Bild “Rendezvous des Gacons [sic]” was schon Jahre lang bei Dr. Bau stand, ist auch gerettet’.

<sup>288</sup> Ey: ‘ausgeschlossen waren die entarteten die ja nicht so in Frage kamen’ (Letter, 09/05/1944).

Although clearly motivated by her dire financial situation an oppositional stance is also suggested through her continued, albeit limited<sup>289</sup> dealing in ‘modern’ art without a licence.<sup>290</sup> This is apparent in a letter to Scherer when she writes: ‘Fatty war noch immer nicht hier, ich wollte den Halbakt von Macketanz holen lassen um denselben jemand anzubieten, da hat er 50 Mark a conto nochmals geschickt und wird denselben jedenfalls behalten’ (Letter, 11/05/1937). Here Ey uses only a nickname when referring to the individual who was supposed to collect the picture from her and sell it on her behalf and does not mention the name of the potential buyer. This approach could be attributed to the fact that although membership of the *Reichskammer für bildende Künstler* was required in order to deal in paintings, on the basis of the evidence available Ey was not a member. Thus, to act as an intermediary for her and to buy works from her would have been viewed negatively by the Nazis, and Ey may have omitted their real names to protect them from reprisals if the letter had been discovered.<sup>291</sup> Equally however, ‘Fatty’ may have been a longstanding nickname familiar to her correspondent and her omission of the name of the possible buyer may be because she did not know who this was. The latter seems more likely when one considers an article ‘Alte und neue Düsseldorfer Kneipen’ in the *Freies Volk* (*Freies Volk*, 25/03/1949, n.pn.), which refers to a landlord by the name of Fatty Lemke who opened a pub in the Hunsrückenstrasse in 1936. Indeed if this is the person whose absence was referred to by Ey, this could be explained by his arrest by the Gestapo and several months of imprisonment following a house search which revealed caricatures he had drawn of Hitler from before 1933.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> For instance in Letter, 11/05/1937 from Ey to Scherer the impression is given that she was not able to sell many paintings and that the situation was worsening: ‘Wenn ich bloß jeden Monat etwas verkaufte, brauchte ich ja nicht zu verzweifeln, doch es geht doch alles sein ureigen, traurigen Gang.’

<sup>290</sup> Baumeister: ‘[Ey] hätte Mitglied der Reichskammer der bildenden Künste werden müssen, um als Kunsthändlerin tätig sein zu können. Es ist nicht bekannt, daß sie einen Versuch in diese Richtung unternommen hätte’ (1999, p. 40).

<sup>291</sup> Letter, 27/09/1940 from Ey to Scherer, in which Ey misguidedly appears to think that attitudes to ‘modern’ art might be changing on the basis of interest from a Berlin art dealer in works by Ernst: ‘Ich glaube, daß demnächst wieder die ganz modernen in Frage kommen; ich habe von einem Berliner Kunsthändler schon Angebote für Max Ernst bekommen (St. Cäcilie)’, also provides interesting information about art dealing in the Third Reich. Not only does this suggest that a market continued to exist for certain ‘degenerate’ artists in Germany, possibly with the view of selling them abroad in countries such as Switzerland but also shows that individuals knew that she still had such pictures in her possession. That she does not mention the name of this dealer could again imply she did not want to endanger those who continued to deal in such works, however this could of course be coincidental.

<sup>292</sup> ‘Im Dritten Reich kamen fortschrittliche Menschen, soweit sie sich auf freiem Fuß befanden, in der Öffentlichkeit nur sehr behutsam zusammen. Erst 1936 gab es wieder zwei Künstlerlokale. Das eine “Karl Müller” an der Akademiestraße, war als Schifferkneipe aufgemacht. Trotzdem der Akkordeonspieler, wenn die Luft rein war, unter dem stummen Beifall ermutigender Blicke wagte, “Die

In a subsequent letter to Wever she is more forthright in naming art collectors when she mentions a three day visit that paediatricians Dr Bau and his wife paid to her in Düsseldorf. She explains that they were old friends who had often bought works from her whilst students in the city and states that after the Baus (both medical doctors - forenames unknown) had married they had taken 'ein paar Bilder und sind mir treugeblieben so daß ich laufend eine monatliche Zahlung von 40 - 50 M habe, also die Miete' (Letter, 11/12/1940). The implication therefore is that they were interested in contemporary art - although there is no insinuation in this letter that this was 'degenerate' in nature - and continued to support Ey financially throughout the Nazi period despite her associations.<sup>293</sup> That she names the Baus as benefactors demonstrates a lack of care, since this would have presented any third party with information which could have been used against them.<sup>294</sup> However that she does not

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Männer von Jonen" vorzutragen, die noch immer die alten geblieben waren, blieb den Gästen das unangenehme Gefühl des Beobachtetseins. Bald danach eröffnete Fatty Lemke, seines Zeichens Pressekarikaturist, sein "Atelier" in der Hunsrückstraße. Dort schuf der Wirt, selbst mit Humor und Gesellschaftssinn begabt, eine echte Atelieratmosphäre, ein Montmartre am Rhein. Er blieb nicht lange unbehelligt. Eine Haussuchung der Gestapo förderte eine vor 1933 gezeichnete Hitler-Karikatur Fattys zutage. Das war Anlaß genug, den famoson Künstlerwirt ein paar Monate einzusperren. Als einflußreiche Freunde seine Freilassung erwirkten und eine drohende Konzessionsentziehung mit Mühe abgewendet war, blieb diese Künstlerkneipe dennoch beschattet. Bei allen Luftangriffen blieb "Fattys Atelier", trotzdem es die Hausnummer 13 führt, erhalten, und heute noch ist es der Treffpunkt der Künstler von Pinsel und Meißel, von Bühne und Presse' (*Freies Volk*, 25/03/1949, n.pn.).

<sup>293</sup> Biographical information about the Baus: in Letter, 05/12/1945 from Ey to Kyser, she mentions that the Baus had married in 1937 and had three sons. Ey refers to having received correspondence from them during the Third Reich in Letter, 03/03/1938 and Letter, 19/02/1944. She also mentions in Letter, 02/12/1940 to 'Krause' that: 'Dr. Bau aus Hamburg, ehemaliger Student an den städt. Krankenanstalten und seine Frau, die Kinderärztin ist, werden mich auch in acht Tagen besuchen.' This is the visit she refers to in Letter, 11/12/1940 to Wever. In the same letter Ey writes that the Baus had settled in Hamburg: 'ich besuchte sie auf dem Wege, wenn ich nach Lübeck zu Maria reiste immer für ein oder 2 Tage.' Further information is provided in Letter, 19/02/1944 from Ey to 'Krause': 'Dr. Bau's [sic] schreiben mir auch noch, seine Praxis in Altona ist abgebrannt und jetzt ist er in Russland an der Front, Ärzte brauchen sie ja jetzt dort überall.' Alongside the regular financial support Ey appears to have received from the Baus, Ey's own children also seem to have helped her. This is suggested when Ey writes in Letter, 28/02/1940 to Scherer: 'Zudem, wenn man von Kindern unterstützt wird, ist man nicht sein eigener Herr [...] Ich will über alles verfügen können, wie ich will. Ich habe ja auch mein Leben danach einrichten müssen. Jetzt muß ich alles entbehren.'

<sup>294</sup> Another example of Ey mentioning her contact with individuals, which could have proved damaging to those concerned had her letters been discovered, is apparent in Letter, 02/12/1940 to 'Krause'. Here she refers to her associations with F. Wohltat: 'Dann erinnerst Du Dich noch eines Herrn. F. Wohltat, der auf dem Hindenburgwall Sonntags Morgens mich immer besuchte. Er war Bankmensch, ging für 2 Jahre nach Amerika gerade zu der Zeit, wo wir nach Mallorca fahren und gab mir 3 Scheine jedes ein amerikanisches Phundt also etwas über 60 Mark für Zehrgeld unterwegs; ich schrieb ihm von Spanien nach Amerika, ich bekam verschiedene Ansichten von New York, dann kam er bei A. H. [Adolf Hitler?] unter [...] nach Berlin an der Reichsregierung für [...] und Felle [should read 'Oele und Fette'. See Letter, 22/05/1947]. Von da schrieb er mir noch einen Brief nach Hindenburgwall und vor kurzer Zeit stand hier in den Nachrichten mit Bild, daß er Kommissar bei den Niederländischen Bank in Amsterdam ist. Ich habe mich so sehr gefreut, daß ich nach einigen Tagen ein kleines Kärtchen im Couvert ihm schickte mit folgendem Inhalt: Sehr geehrter Herr Wohltat! Ich

name a second benefactor in the same letter: ‘Noch ein Bildabnehmer bezahlt mir 20 Mark, so daß ich Telefon und ein Teil des Lichtes habe’ could imply caution on her part because this individual’s race, religion, political or sexual persuasion may have posed a more significant danger to her or to the person involved (Letter, 11/12/1940).

Although Ey does not link the Baus directly to the possession of ‘degenerate’ art in the correspondence available, she does implicate Scherer. This occurs in a letter to Scherer referring to the opening of the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition in Munich in 1937 when Ey implies Scherer’s desire to possess a work by Max Ernst: ‘Es könnte ja möglich sein, daß aus Düsseldorf auch das Bild von Max Ernst “La belle Jardinière”, und vom Kölner Wallraf-Richartz-Museum die “Heimsuchung” dort ausgestellt sind; und Sie wollen trotzdem den roten Akt haben?’ (Letter, 19/07/1937). In a letter to Scherer (Letter, 11/05/1937) Ey also declares her intention to send her the portrait ‘Rembrandt Ey’,<sup>295</sup> which seems likely to refer to a work by Wollheim (Wollheim, 1993) (Fig. 54). In the latter instance however Ey gives no clue as to who this work was by, and in neither case is reference made to payment. Thus Ey could not have been accused of ‘dealing’ in these instances, and in regard to the picture by Wollheim a third party would have required specialist knowledge to realise that reference to a ‘degenerate’ artist was being made.

A letter to Scherer transcribed here for the first time does however reveal that Ey was directly involved in the sale of art during the Nazi period without a mediator. Again it cannot be determined whether these works were ‘degenerate’ in nature as the titles and artists are not mentioned, however the sale of works without official approval would clearly not have been viewed favourably by the Nazis. In this instance Ey again shows a potentially dangerous lack of discretion when she names the buyer: ‘Dann

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freue mich in den Düsseldorfer Nachrichten ihr Bild zu finden und freue mich über Ihre Beförderung. Ergebenst grüßt Frau Ey vom Hindenburgwall, jetzt Stockkampstr. 40[.] Nach 4 Tagen kam aus “Den Haag” ein Antwortschreiben: Sehr verehrte Frau Ey Ihr Gruß von 8. Juni d.J. hat mich außerordentlich erfreut. Ich hoffe, daß Sie sich wohlbefinden, sende Ihnen die herzlichsten Grüße und bleibe Ihr H. Wohltat. Da siehst Du l. Krause, je hoher der Titel, desto einfacher und netter sind die Menschen, er war im Weltkriege Hauptmann und Max Ernst war ein Künstler bei ihm. Er sah damals Bilder von Max Ernst im Fenster und dadurch kam er in den Laden und freute sich immer, wenn ich von den Künstlern redete.’

<sup>295</sup> In my opinion this portrait may refer to a costume she wore to a *Maskenfest* mentioned in an article by Kyser: ‘Einmal gingen wir auf ein Maskenfest: sie [Ey] machte sich die Haare auf, die gelockt auf die Schultern fielen, zeichnete einen kleinen Schnurrbart auf die Oberlippe und setzte einen mächtigen Kalabreser auf, und da war....Rembrandt! So sah sie aus’ (*Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn.).

wollte ich auch nicht um etwas Geld bitten und wendete mich an Fräulein Dr. Botzien um einen kleinen Kauf<sup>296</sup> and then proceeds to state openly that she intends to offer more works for sale: ‘jetzt will ich an alle meine Bekannten schreiben und anbieten. Ich mache wirklich so billige Preise, daß ich erstaune wie andere Künstler diese tollen Preise bekommen’ (Letter, 09/03/1938). A lack of caution is also evident in a letter to Scherer when Ey contemplates alleviating her financial problems by selling some of her art in Switzerland. However, no record could be found of her having pursued this idea:

Vielleicht fahre ich September mal hin (Schaffhausen), es könnte ja möglich sein, daß ich Verbindungen nach Zürich bekäme für meine Bilder [...] es wäre ja schön, wenn ich mal was größeres dort verkaufen könnte. Max Ernst sollen sehr gesucht dort sein und Otto Dix machte gute Geschäfte dort. Er soll viele Devisen nach Deutschland herein bringen, er wohnt an der Schweizer Grenze (Letter, 22/05/1939).

Apart from continuing to own and possibly selling works by ‘degenerate’ artists a continued desire to acquire such works in opposition to Nazi policy is also apparent in Ey’s correspondence. For instance in a letter to Scherer Ey writes: ‘Ich schicke Ihnen hiermit zugleich Zeit 2 Fotos von Wollheim Bilder bei. Ich soll dieselben eintauschen gegen Bilder von mir und muß für jedes Bild 200 Mark zuzahlen’ (Letter, 17/10/1937). Then in a letter to Scherer dated the following month (Letter, 09/11/1937) Ey mentions that she now owns these pictures. She uses only the initial of the ‘degenerate’ artist’s surname and the first letter of the word ‘Bilder’ in this confirmation. This could be understood as an attempt to confuse any third party but seems likely to be a time-saving device given that in the same letter she acknowledges having ‘degenerate’ art in her possession: ‘das dieselben mir nicht weggeholt wurden, habe ich mir G. [Geld] geliehen und 3 von meinen Bildern gegeben. Max Ernst - Hundt, Pankok.’

It is not mentioned who Ey borrowed the money for these Wollheim pictures from, perhaps in an attempt to protect the identity of a benefactor. Ey also does not

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<sup>296</sup> No information about Fräulein Dr Botzien could be found.

elaborate on the institution or individual from whom she is trying to protect these newly acquired Wollheim pictures and whether this is the same person or institution to whom she gave the pictures by Ernst, Hundt and Pankok. If she is referring to the local Nazi authorities trying to obtain these Wollheim pictures and her paying them off with money and works by Ernst and Pankok (Hundt was not regarded as ‘degenerate’), this could offer an example of the Nazis’ practice of jettisoning ‘degenerate’ art domestically and yet seeking to acquire such works to sell abroad for substantial profit. Indeed following her reference to parting with these works Ey mentions that Ernst had several art studios and was almost a millionaire. This may be intended to emphasise the value of the painting she has decided to exchange but at a price she was unable to realise in Germany and contrast her meagre existence with the luxurious lifestyle of an artist whose career she helped to launch.<sup>297</sup> Certainly in correspondence after the Second World War, in which she demands the return of pictures taken from her collection, the sense is given that she believed she had received unfair financial treatment from the Nazi authorities and that the ‘Stadt’/Düsseldorf *Sparkasse* had sold works that she had owned in Switzerland. For instance in a letter to Kyser Ey writes ‘Ich habe ja alles verloren’, goes on to reveal the extent of what the authorities took and makes the first critical remarks in her correspondence which explicitly name the National Socialists.<sup>298</sup>

Ein Rechtsanwalt [Karl] Siemsen aus Düsseldorf ist jetzt dabei mit Düsseldorf zu verhandeln, um Bilder, von Prof. Kötschau taxiert der Stadt wieder abzunehmen. Die Stadt hat nämlich in Wiesbaden, wo die letzte Ausstellung meiner Bilder stattfand, sich für ein Darlehen von 4000 Mark für über 30,000 Mark Bilder als Pfand aus der Ausstellung zunehmen und hat dieselben teilweise für vieles Geld in der Schweiz verkauft; dann hat die Stadt in meiner Wohnung für ungefähr 10,000 Mark genommen für die

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<sup>297</sup> See also Ey’s reference to Wollheim and Ernst’s success in Letter, 17/10/1937 from Ey to Scherer: ‘Wollheim hatte vor einigen Jahren einen Preis von etwa 4½ deutsche Reichsmark, seitdem stellt und verkauft er viel in Amerika und London. Ebenso ist Max Ernst in London sehr beliebt und bekannt. Es ist schade, daß ich meine Bilder nicht heraus bekommen kann, dann lebte ich nicht so erbärmlich traurig wie jetzt.’

<sup>298</sup> See also Letter, 30/01/1946 from Ey to Kyser: ‘Ich habe ja viel Zeit jetzt und meine Gedanken sind seit 1934 oft fast durcheinander gewesen von all meinen bösen Erlebnissen. Nachdem die Nazi-Regierung mich aus dem schönen Ladenlokal an der Ecke durch Zwang mich heraussetzen ließ’.

Miete Hindenburgwall, wo ich doch mietfrei wohnte. Doch die verfluchten Nazi[s] durften ja alles (Letter, 05/12/1945, Ey's emphasis).<sup>299</sup>

Although the way in which Ey addresses the theme of war in her correspondence does not express direct opposition to the Nazis' actions, a distinct lack of enthusiasm for the war they started is tangible. For instance her statement in a letter to Wever: 'Ich habe jetzt schon 3 Kriege steigen sehen' followed by her description of the Second World War as 'der allerscheußlichste [...] wo ich doch noch gerne das Ende sähe' (Letter, 04/11/1940) clearly implies this lack of appetite.<sup>300</sup> This sentiment is then reiterated in letters to Scherer when Ey writes: 'Es ist nicht mehr schön jetzt und alles so hoffnungslos. Der Krieg ist schrecklich und noch kein Ende' (Letter, Scherer, 25/11/1940) and 'Wer möchte nicht gerne, daß der Krieg zu Ende ist. Hier in Düsseldorf finde ich fast alle Menschen mutlos; der unselige Krieg. Wann wird er zu Ende sein' (Letter, 17/02/1942).

A letter to 'Krause' even appears to go as far as to speculate that the war would be over by her next birthday which could have led to accusations of defeatism had this been read by the authorities: 'Übrigens hoffe ich dann meinen 80sten Geburtstage noch zu erleben, doch nicht im Kriegsjahre, der dann wohl zu Ende sein wird. Ich möchte doch gerne meine alte Heimat [...] wiedersehen.' Indeed mention of her wanting to see her 'alte Heimat' in this context could refer to a return to Düsseldorf but could also refer to a Germany without the Nazis, and when she writes in the same letter: 'Mein lieber Krause, bleibe gesund und hoffen wir das Beste. Du bist im

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<sup>299</sup> In Letter, 28/11/1945 from Ey to Busch, she writes: 'sterben will ich noch nicht, ich will noch erst meine Bilder wiederhaben, die die Stadt Düsseldorf mir abgenommen hat'. In a further letter to the same correspondent she then describes her attempts through a lawyer to reclaim her 'beschlagnahmten Bilder' taken as rent arrears and in regard to a loan from the *Sparkasse*. Here she again highlights the unfair treatment she felt she had received: 'Erstens hatte die Stadtparkasse Düsseldorf für ein Darlehen von 4000 Mark für 22000 M. Bilder beschlagnahmt aus der Ausstellung in Wiesbaden und die Bilder teilweise in der Schweiz verkauft' (Letter, 14/12/1945). As Chapter 1 of the present study demonstrates her valuation of the pictures taken by the *Sparkasse* and the Düsseldorf authorities varies. In a letter to Leyendecker Ey again states that she wants to get her pictures back from the Düsseldorf authorities and appears confident of her success: 'die von der Stadt genommenen Bilder prosesire [sic] ich, doch ich nehme an, daß ich dieselben auch ohne Prozeß herausbekomme' (Letter, end of February 1946, Ey's emphasis). Baumeister however states that this did not occur: 'Johanna Eys Hauptanliegen bestand darin, für die von der Stadt und der Stadtparkasse beschlagnahmten Bilder finanziell entschädigt zu werden. Das gelang ihr nicht. Statt dessen beschloß die Stadtverordnetenversammlung im Oktober 1946, Frau Ey zur Ehrenbürgerin zu ernennen' (1999, p. 49).

<sup>300</sup> See also Letter, 14/12/1943 from Ey to 'Krause': 'bald werde ich 80 und Du 40 Jahre, ich werde bei Zeiten daran denken und wenn wir Frieden hätten und noch gesund sind, wäre ich glücklich'.

schönsten Mannesalter und kannst wieder anfangen, es wird wohl auch mal wieder anders and nochmals, hoffen wir auf ein gutes Ende des Krieges bald' this too could be a reference to life after the Third Reich and her hope that the Nazis will soon be defeated (Letter, 08/08/1943).

These instances aside however Ey's political sympathies are not made readily apparent in descriptions of the war and are perhaps left deliberately obscure. In a letter to Wever for instance Ey laments the situation in Germany but no blame is attributed to the Nazis or the Allies: 'Früher bekam ich von meinen Freunden immer Briefe mit lustigen Zeichnungen, wenn auch die Zeiten arm waren, doch jetzt sind sie tragisch und wie Du im vorigen Briefe ersiehst, verliere ich auch nicht meinen Humor, dies ist das Einzige was mich noch aufrecht hält, denn das Innere sieht manchmal mies aus' (Letter, 18/11/1940). It is also not clear what Ey means here when she states that 'das Innere sieht manchmal mies aus.' This could either be a signal that her 'inner' existence was not impervious to the negative effects of outside events, or reference to her physical health or to the effects of war inside Germany. A letter to Scherer in which Ey mentions her resilience and an 'inner and outer fight' is similarly ambiguous and could relate to her opposition to the Nazis, to the bombing raids by the Allies within Germany's borders, to the fighting outside of Germany, to her ill health, or to a combination of these factors: 'Kampf, ja Kampf überall, im Inneren und Äußeren. Doch mir kann nichts mehr imponieren, ganz in die Brüche gehe und will ich nicht gehen. Alles hat sein Ende' (Letter, 28/02/1940).

Moreover although she writes to Wever with palpable anger about the British air raids: 'Die Tommys soll der Kukuk holen, fast jede Nacht sind sie da. Lisbet [Ey's daughter Elisabeth] läuft wie ein gefangene Maus herum' no reference is made here to them as the *Feind* and she states that the 'Kukuk' should get them rather than German forces (Letter, 04/11/1940). This is also the case in her correspondence with Wever where she again writes about the British raids - which began on 15 May 1940 (Mauer, accessed 20/11/2010) - without describing them as the enemy or their saviours: 'Jetzt erlebe ich ja nicht viel hier nur die Schießerei von den Tommys' (Letter, Wever,



25/11/1940).<sup>301</sup> It is also notable that her letters concentrate on documenting the preparations for the bombing raids and their effects on the physical environment and the civilian population rather than on the political reasons behind them. In a letter to Scherer for instance she describes the building of shelters in Düsseldorf and a previous air attack on the city: ‘Vergangene Woche war abends um 8 Uhr Alarm 1½ Stunde darauf Entwarnung und bis morgens um 6 Uhr wurde geschossen. Die Leute hier sind alle krank und nervös. Wann wird das Ende sein?’ (Letter, Scherer, 25/11/1940). Thus, whilst criticism of the allied bombing is implicit, the implication is that this was a general expression of exasperation rather than support for the Nazis.<sup>302</sup>

This style continues in a letter to Pankok in mid 1943 (Letter, 25(?)07/1943) in which she describes the effect the air raid on Düsseldorf during the night of 11-12 June 1943 had on her, her friends and family<sup>303</sup> and details the destruction of her flat and her subsequent move to Reinbek near Hamburg. Benedikt Mauer notes that this raid lasted from 1.15 am to 2.35 am, involved the dropping of 1,300 high explosive bombs and approximately 225,000 fire bombs, affected an area of 40 square kilometers, which included the centre, Düsseldorf-Derendorf and the Düsseldorf-Südstadt and resulted in approximately 9,000 fires, 600 deaths and 3,000 injuries (Mauer, accessed 20/11/2010). In Ey’s description of this event she suggests she thought she would be safe so close to the English church: ‘Ich ging *nie* im Keller, ich habe mir gedacht in der Nähe der englischen Kirche die am Atelier nebenan fast anschließt bin ich sicher, 4 bis 5 Angriffe hatte ich überstanden, wenn auch die Schlafcouch bebte, bis Lisbet solange anhielt doch im Keller zu gehen.’ She then proceeds to outline their escape from the burning building with the ‘furchtbaren Einschlägen der Bomben über uns’.

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<sup>301</sup> See also Letter, 11/12/1940 from Ey to Wever: ‘Ich bin seit 14 Tagen nicht auf dem Damm wie es heißt, es sind Nerven und auch mit 77 Jahren kann man sich in der Einsamkeit noch nicht zurechtfinden; dann die verd. Tommy’s [sic]. Jede Nacht ist hier was los.’

<sup>302</sup> In the face of these bombing raids Ey’s attitude initially appears fatalistic and suggests no great desire to carry on living. For example in Letter, 04/11/1940 from Ey to Wever: ‘die Schießerei geht manchmal los, bevor der Alarm angekündigt ist und wir müssen doch über den Hof; ich bleibe ruhig im Bett, was kommen soll, kommt doch.’ Moreover in Letter, 19/04/1941 from Ey to ‘Krause’: ‘Die Flieger besuchen uns sehr fleißig hier; ich bleibe im Bett, höre schießen und Bomben fallen und schlafe wieder ein. Alles wird man gewohnt, sagt der Fuchs, da zogen sie ihm das Fell über die Ohren; alles geht seinen Weg.’ Yet in a later letter from Ey to Scherer an interest in self-preservation is evident: ‘Jetzt bin ich schon 8 Tage hier in der Eifel, ich könnte zu Hause nicht mehr bleiben wegen der Schießerei und bin nach Kottenheim bei Mayen in der Eifel geflüchtet’ (Letter, early 1943 (?)).

<sup>303</sup> She mentions for instance that her daughter Lisbet and her sons Paul and Hermann had been made homeless and mentions that Barz and Rüksam had lost everything.

Clearly this description again reflects badly on the Allies, but once more no mention is made here of them as the enemy. Instead this ordeal is related factually and is followed by an expression of her and her family's amazement at having survived<sup>304</sup> and a reiteration of the scale of the destruction: 'kurz *die ganze Stadt brannte*'.<sup>305</sup>

Ey also describes the devastation caused by the bombing raids in Hamburg in her correspondence. Here the horror of war and huge loss of life - which the *Brockhaus* (2006, Band 29, p. 700) places at 30,000 dead during raids between 24 and 30 July 1943 - is emphasised. Once again however Ey does not align herself to a particular 'side'. In a letter to 'Krause' for instance she includes information which appears to be from Dr Bau: 'Hamburg ist wie Düsseldorf nur noch ein Trümmerhaufen. [...] Die zigtausende von Leichen sind sofort in Massengräbern zu bestatten, über den Straßen lagen sie mehr wie auf dem Schlachtfelde, wurden auf Wagen geladen und abtransportiert, ohne daß gefragt wurde, wer es sei, weil bei der übergroßen Hitze Seuchengefahr bestand' (Letter, 08/08/1943). In a letter to Pankok she gives a first-hand account of the terrible state of the refugees fleeing to Reinbek where she was staying: 'Ganze Lastwagen mit todmüden Menschen besetzt, denen die Angst und Verzweiflung noch im Gesichte steht, fahren hier vorbei' (Letter, 25(?) / 07/1943). In a letter to 'Krause' (Letter, 08/08/1943) she continues: 'Eine Frau, die hier ankam, hatte noch ein todes [sic] Kind im Arm; ein Mann, den ich sprach kam müde und gebückt und seine Frau und beiden Kinder waren nicht mehr aus dem Keller gekommen, so kann man tausende hören, dasselbe wie in Düsseldorf, nur in größeren Formen'.<sup>306</sup> Although reference to the 'enemy' is made in this letter when she writes: 'selbst Soldaten, die vor dem Feind gestanden haben, sagen, hier die Bevölkerung macht mehr durch' the impression given here is that she was being loyal to Germany and its people rather than to the politics of their leaders.

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<sup>304</sup> Ey: 'Wir hatten im Munde und um den Kopf nasse Tücher, die Augen konnten wir kaum öffnen vor Dreck und Rauch [...] Es war 3 Uhr vorbei und wir konnten uns mal gegenseitig ansehen und uns wundern, daß wir noch alle da waren' (Letter, 25(?) / 07/1943).

<sup>305</sup> The original of this letter was not available to check whether this is Ey's emphasis. After the Second World War Ey reflects on these losses in Letter, 05/12/1945 to Kyser: 'meine schöne Wohnung mit Raritäten Stockkampstr. Möbel - Bilder und 10 Bilderkisten und Inhalt alles verbrannt, nur mein Leben konnte ich retten. Auch die Ausstellungsbilder mit Kisten bei Beyer-Meyer'. In another letter to Kyser in which she writes about what had been taken from her collection as payment for a loan and 'rent arrears', Ey gives a sense of how many works must have been destroyed at Beyer-Meyer where her 'Ausstellungsbilder' had been held. She writes of 12 crates in this regard and states: 'Ich hatte 148 Bilder und viele Plastik also sie nahmen mir 9 der größten und schönsten Bilder im Werte von gut 40.000 Mark, dann für die Miete von 1928 bis 1934 auch 9 Bilder' (Letter, 30/01/1946).

<sup>306</sup> The original of this letter was not available to check whether this is Ey's emphasis.

The implication that Ey was inherently ‘other’ to the Nazi regime is also suggested by the keen desire of the media and Düsseldorf authorities’ as well as those of groups and political parties who had opposed the Nazis to associate with her after the end of the Second World War. This is first evident in a letter to Hans Busch, an artist associated with Ey in the second half of the 1920’s,<sup>307</sup> in which Ey states: ‘in Hamburg viel Reklame wird für mich gemacht, ein großer Artikel stand in der Zeitung’ (Letter, 28/11/1945) and is also apparent in another letter to Busch when Ey mentions: ‘Am 2ten Weihnachtstage spreche ich im Hamburg Rundfunk. Zwei Herren, Dr. Seidel und Dr. Werner<sup>308</sup> [...] waren hier und kommen mich Morgen [sic] Montag früh hier abholen um ein Gespräch mit mir aufzunehmen, [...] Ich habe ein Gefühl, als wenn ich zum Zahnarzt muß’ (Letter, 14/12/1945).<sup>309</sup> This then continued on her return to Düsseldorf when she received a letter from Max Dahlhaus of the *Freier Verlag GmbH* expressing his hope that she would be able to contribute to the cultural reconstruction of the city.<sup>310</sup> Indeed a letter from the press office of Düsseldorf implies that the local authorities were also working in conjunction with local radio to publicise her return:

Der Nordwestdeutsche Rundfunk hat erfahren, daß Sie wieder in Düsseldorf sind und möchte Sie bitten, am Mikrophon doch einige Worte zu sagen, wie Sie Düsseldorf wiedergefunden haben und was Ihre Pläne sind [...] Am 13.4

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<sup>307</sup> Hans Busch-Alsen (\*20/12/1900 - †unknown, was still alive in 1984) was an artist who became a member of the ‘circle’ of artists surrounding Ey in the second half of the 1920’s and in 1927 became a member of *Das Junge Rheinland* (Barth, 1984, p. 80). In Letter, 19/02/1944 from Ey to ‘Krause’, the suggestion is that Busch was a German soldier at the front.

<sup>308</sup> The forenames and occupations of Seidel and Werner could not be located.

<sup>309</sup> See also a letter to Wever from Ey: ‘höre u. staune. Ein Schriftsteller schrieb mal einen Artikel über mich. Den alten Quatsch von.....Ein Düsseldorfer Dr. Seidel, der auch beim Hamburger Rundfunk ist und mich auch gekannt haben will, war mit einem Dr. Werner hier und ich mußte Weihnachtsabend im Rundfunk sprechen, d.h. ich wurde gefragt und mußte nur antworten, so habe ich jetzt wohl alle Ehren erreicht und möchte so gerne wieder in der Altstadt nach Düsseldorf’ (Letter, New Year 1945/46. Ey’s emphasis). See also Letter, 15/10/1946 from Ey to Hedwig Mommertz: ‘Durch eine Hamburger Zeitung wurde über “entartete Kunst” geschrieben, dadurch wurde ich mit einem Schriftsteller bekannt, durch ihn mit dem Rundfunk, dann wollte ich und kam nach Düsseldorf, alle Ehren und wenig in der Tasche’. I emailed the *Nord Deutscher Rundfunk* archive to ask whether a copy of this interview existed. Frau Kruger from the NDR archive replied: Leider ist das Interview von Johanna Ey nicht in unseren Archivbeständen. Wenn es überhaupt aufgezeichnet wurde, wurde es mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit noch in den 1940er Jahren gelöscht, weil damals Bandmaterial knapp war und gleich wieder für die nächste Produktion verwendet werden musste’ (Email, 03/11/2005//07/11/2005).

<sup>310</sup> Dahlhaus to Ey: ‘Auch wir begrüßen die Betreuerin der jungen, freischaffenden Künstler aus den Jahren nach dem ersten Welt Krieg und hoffen, dass Sie in bester Gesundheit mithelfen können, das Kulturleben in unserer schwergetroffenen Stadt Düsseldorf wieder zu en[t]falten’ (Letter, 01/04/1946).

machen wir zunächst eine Aufnahme bei dem Bau der neuen Rheinbrücke und anschliessend könnten wir zu Ihnen kommen, oder ziehen Sie es vor, irgendwo anders zu sprechen, evtl. im Malkasten gegen Mittag? In der Hinsicht können wir uns aber ganz nach Ihnen richten [...] Oder sollen wir Sie in Ihrer Wohnung abholen lassen? (Letter, 05/04/1946).<sup>311</sup>

Another significant indication that Ey held no National Socialist associations for the post-war Düsseldorf authorities and was considered integral to the city's attempts to culturally rebrand itself is the decision to make her the first *Ehrenbürgerin*<sup>312</sup> and award her an *Ehrensold* of 250 Reich Marks on a monthly basis.<sup>313</sup> In the letter announcing the latter Dr Hensel acknowledges her contribution to the city and the injustices she suffered at the hands of previous authorities and clearly places her in the role of the victim:

Mit der Ehrung stattet Ihnen die Stadt Düsseldorf ihren Dank ab für die treuen Dienste, die Sie in langen Jahren der Künstlerschaft geleistet haben. Durch Unverstand, Böswilligkeit und engen Bürokratismus wurden Sie aus Ihrer Arbeit, die Sie in uneigennütziger Weise zur Betreuung hiesiger Künstler und des hiesigen Kunstlebens auf sich genommen hatten, herausgerissen (Letter, Hensel, 04/03/1947).

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<sup>311</sup> See also Letter, 10/03/1947 and Letter, 12/03/1947 from the head of the *Presseamt* to Ey. This correspondence deals with another request for an interview with Ey, this time by Dr Ernst (*Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunk*) (no forename could be found, occupation unknown) and is concerned with trying to organise a time and a place for this interview to happen. Interestingly the intention of Dr Ernst is said to have been: 'Ihr früheres Verhältnis zu den Düsseldorfer Künstlern zu schildern und unter anderem auch darzulegen, wie Sie ja damals schon den aufstrebenden Talenten Brot und Nahrungsmittel für ihre Bilder vorgestreckt oder eingetauscht haben' (Letter, 10/03/1947). The treatment she received during the Nazi period is not mentioned as a topic of interest. I emailed the *Nord Deutscher Rundfunk* archive to ask whether a copy of either the 1946 or 1947 interviews with Ey exist but no recordings could be found (Email, 06/11/2009//09/11/2009).

<sup>312</sup> Ey in Letter, 15/10/1946 to Mommertz: 'am vergangenen Dienstag wurde ich in einer Stadtverordnetensitzung Ehrenbürgerin der Stadt also die erste Ehrenbürgerin von Oberbürgermeister Arnold ausgerufen' (Ey's emphasis). Letter, 19/10/1946 from the office of the director of the *Kunstakademie Düsseldorf* to Ey, congratulates her on the receipt of this *Ehrenbürgerin* title: 'Liebe und hochverehrte Mutter Ey! Die Staatliche Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf beglückwünscht von ganzem Herzen die Ehrenbürgerin, deren seltene Selbstlosigkeit und aufopferende Einsatzbereitschaft für das werdende jetzt eine verdiente Würdigung erfahren hat'.

<sup>313</sup> Ey writes to Busch: 'Die ganze hohe Verwaltung der Stadt war teils selbst hier, teils in Briefen [...] mit einem monatlichen Ehrensold rückwirkend vom 1. Januar' (Letter, Busch, 14/03/1947). In the same letter she states that she had been close to death: 'Doch der Düsseldorfer Stadtverwaltung zu Liebe habe ich alles überwunden.' This could imply she wanted to stay alive for longer to collect this 'Ehrensold' or that the authorities needed her for advertising purposes.

That Ey was not considered a Nazi sympathiser is also strongly suggested in a letter from the *Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands* which implies that members of their party had worked hard to help her after the Second World War.<sup>314</sup> Here the unfair treatment that she had experienced under the previous council is again acknowledged, and the KPD give the impression they are doing all they can to try and compensate for this.<sup>315</sup> There is however an open admission that this was with the dual aim of restoring Düsseldorf's reputation<sup>316</sup> (Letter, KPD, 04/03/1947). Ey responds enthusiastically to these efforts in a letter to *Beigeordneter* (Hanns) Kralik, *Kulturdezernent der Stadt Düsseldorf*, who was a member of the KPD. Indeed her sympathies for this party could be indicated when she writes: 'Ich weiß nicht, wo ich anfangen soll, Ihnen zu danken, für Alles, was Sie für mich gethan haben. Mein Wunsch ist, daß Sie noch recht lange das Geschick aller Düsseldorfer Künstler in Händen halten zu deren Wohle!' (Letter, Ey, 10/03/1947). However it is equally possible this was an expression of personal thanks to an individual who was himself an artist and who had been associated with artists who were part of 'her circle'.<sup>317</sup>

A letter from the *Synagogengemeinde Düsseldorf* wishing Ey well on the occasion of her birthday also offers a very strong indication that she held no Nazi associations: 'Mit grossem Interesse und grosser Freude habe ich von der Rüstigkeit, mit der Sie gesegnet sind, in der Presse gelesen und wünsche Ihnen auch im Namen meiner Gemeindemitglieder von Herzen, dass Sie noch viele Jahre sich als die so berühmte Düsseldorfer Künstlermutter in voller Frische betätigen können' (Letter,

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<sup>314</sup> *Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands*: 'wiederholt konnte unser Genosse Peter Waterkorte darüber berichten, wie er als Bürgermeister und Stadtverordneter im Kultur- und Finanzausschuß dafür eintrat, dem Willen seiner Partei für Ihre Interessen Geltung zu verschaffen' (Letter, KPD, 04/03/1947).

<sup>315</sup> *Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands*: 'der Kulturdezernent der Stadt Düsseldorf, Herr Beigordneter [Hanns] Kralik [ist] eifrig bemüht [...], das Unrecht, das Ihnen durch eine frühere Stadtverwaltung zugefügt worden ist, wieder gut zu machen [sic]' (Letter, KPD, 04/03/1947).

<sup>316</sup> *Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands*: 'Herr Beigeordneter Kralik und Herr Stadtverordneter Waterkorte werden mit Unterstützung aller fortgeschrittenen Politiker dieses Ziel weiter verfolgen, um Ihnen, Mutter Ey, einen ruhigen Lebensabend zu verschaffen und damit auch das Ansehen der Stadt in der Kulturwelt zu erhöhen' (Letter, KPD, 04/03/1947).

<sup>317</sup> Barth writes in regard to the early 1930s in Düsseldorf: 'Während Pudlich, Hundt, Bindel und andere sich dem heiteren Spiel um die Künstlermutter [Ey] hingeben, schließen sich andere Künstler des Ey-Kreises angesichts des bedrohlichen Erstarkens der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung zur Düsseldorf Sektion der "Asso" zusammen, der Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler Deutschlands, die 1928 in Berlin gegründet worden war und der KPD nahesteht. Die Düsseldorfer Asso-Mitglieder sind Mathias Barz, Hanns Kralik, Carl Lauterbach, Julio Levin, Peter Ludwigs und Karl Schwesig' (1984, p. 57).

*Synagogengemeinde*, 04/03/1947).<sup>318</sup> Moreover, correspondence presumably from Düsseldorf *Oberbürgermeister* Karl Arnold (Letter, *Oberbürgermeister*, 04/03/1947) also congratulates her on this occasion and praises her support of young artists which again suggests that the authorities were keen to rebuild their relationship with Ey: ‘Möge Ihnen nach den Jahren der Sorge und des Kummers noch ein schöner, zufriedener Lebensabend beschieden sein.’ Certainly this is the impression given when in a letter to ‘Krause’ Ey documents the fanfare she received on her return to Düsseldorf:

Die Stadt hat sich besonders nobel gezeigt. Außer einer Ehrenrente, solange ich lebe bekam ich so viele Besuche, daß meine kl. Wohnung, aus 1 Zimmer bestehend u. Maria’s [sic] [Schneider-Ey] Zimmer die Gäste alle kaum sitzen konnten. Das Schönste war die Rheinbahn-Kapelle 18 Musiker spielten vor der Haustür “Das ist der Tag des Herrn”. Die elektrischen Bahnen konnten nicht mehr fahren und im Augenblicke [...] hatten sich tausende vor der Haustüre aufgestellt. Wie die Altstädter sind, waren fast alle am Weinen; dann wurde eine große Rede gehalten von dem Vorsteher der Rheinbahngesellschaft, dann das Lied vom “alten Schloßturn” und alle alle [sic] schunkelten Arm in Arm als ob Fastnachten war (Letter, ‘Krause’, 14/03/1947).

In summary, a reading of Ey’s correspondence from 1933 to 1947 suggests that although she may have contemplated a physical emigration at several points, her letters demonstrate that she would have found it difficult to leave Germany for health reasons and because she regarded it as her home. Instead she appears to have dealt with the resulting financial hardship, loneliness and despair caused in great part by the Nazis’ decision to close her gallery by distancing herself from Nazi society and retreating into an ‘inner’ world of fantasy and fond memories about her gallery and her trips to Spain. Moreover, despite a degree of self-censorship in her focus on micro events rather than the wider political picture and the many factual descriptions which stop short of political comment or employ double meanings, vague references or

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<sup>318</sup> See also Letter, KPD, 04/03/1947 from the *Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, which sends Ey their birthday wishes: ‘Auch die Stadtkreisleitung der Kommunistischen Partei Düsseldorf will in dem großen Kreis der Gratulanten nicht fehlen’.

omissions - techniques similar to those encountered in her 1936 memoirs - Ey, as in her autobiographical text of 1936 appears to have adopted an oppositional stance as a reaction to the Third Reich. This impression emerges particularly when she mentions the difficult situation for artists in this period and refers to certain artists she knew who had had their works banned or who had been removed from their posts, emigrated or died due to the effects of Nazi policies. The extent of these associations - one is tempted in places to think in terms of networks of disaffected artists and collectors - becomes apparent when one begins to trace the identities of her correspondents and those mentioned in her letters, as I have attempted to do in the main text and footnotes in this chapter. Criticism of Nazi society is also implied through her comparisons with the cultural atmosphere of the Weimar Period and references which suggest a lack of freedom of speech. Furthermore she shows herself to be unenthusiastic about her receipt of the 'Mutter Kreuz' and offers explicit criticism of the Düsseldorf authorities in regard to their finance and art policies.

Her letters also demonstrate that she remained in contact with 'degenerate' artists in defiance of Nazi art policy and continued to possess and acquire 'degenerate' art works and to deal in art both directly and through intermediaries, despite not having a licence. In addition, despite being bombed out of her flat and her family and friends suffering similar fates, her accounts of the Second World War are largely politically neutral and imply an aversion to this conflict, with very few instances where support for the Nazi regime could be suggested. She focuses instead on the effects of the bombing raids on the civilian population and does not address the political reasons behind them. Thus her correspondence positions her as a victim of the Nazis who retreated into an 'inner' world, and who in her letters to similarly-minded correspondents adopted an oppositional stance towards the Nazi regime, often implied and sometimes explicit, which in certain instances would have caused problems for Ey, her correspondent or those she mentioned had it been read by a censor or discovered by other means. The positive responses after the Second World War of the media, the Düsseldorf authorities and groups which had been persecuted by the Nazis also suggest she is not to be viewed as a Nazi sympathiser. Indeed she appears to have been made an *Ehrenbürgerin* and awarded an *Ehrensold* partly because she was considered a victim of the Nazis and because the Düsseldorf authorities wanted to revive her status as a local and national celebrity untainted by the Nazi past to

demonstrate a 'new beginning'. The next chapter explores the extent and nature of this celebrity and Ey's own role in its creation, from its origins in the Weimar period through to her posthumous memorialisation.



## 6

# Ey's celebrity

‘die Presse muss ja erst bestätigen, wer was kann oder nicht kann’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22)

In *Das Buch von Köln Düsseldorf/Bonn* by H. v. Wedderkop, published in 1928 (Wedderkop, 1928, pp. 173-183), a vigorous art scene of competing styles and ideologies is described in which the contribution of the city's art dealers is singled out for praise. Flechtheim is heralded as the ‘erfrischender Frühjahrssturm’ (Wedderkop, 1928, p. 180) who shook up the old *Düsseldorfer Akademie*, and the influence and exploits of Ey are mentioned at length. That Ey was named at all, and the nature and extent of the passage - approximately three times longer than that about Flechtheim - suggest that at the time of publication she was a very popular and respected figure. Indeed Wedderkop describes how Ey had become a ‘grosse[...] und verehrte[...] Persönlichkeit’ through her ‘Kampf mit dem Alten’ (Wedderkop, 1928, p. 182).

The present chapter takes this observation as the starting point for a review of Ey's elevation to this level of public recognition during the Weimar Period, the decline of her celebrity in the Nazi era and its re-emergence and memorialisation after the Second World War. It discusses how these various phases were influenced by government policy and the attitude of the media, the public and the actions of ‘Ey's’ artists. Special attention is also paid to Ey's own role in the cultivation of her celebrity, prominent examples of which are evident in her autobiographical contributions in the press, which this chapter reveals began earlier than 1929, the *Sammlung Ey* exhibition and her attempts to get her 1936 memoirs (reviewed in detail in chapter 4 of the present study) published after the Second World War.

Already before her foray into art dealership Ey was well-known in the local community in her capacity as a shopkeeper and appears to have sold works by artists she knew as a sideline to her coffee shop business (*Rheinische Illustrierte*, 03/04/1929, n.pn.). However when she decided to become a full-time art dealer she

suggests she had ‘wenig Verbindung’ because she ‘ging zu Niemanden hin’ (Ey, 1930, p. 78) and because many of the artists she knew were no longer in Düsseldorf because of their involvement in the First World War. Thus her début as a fully-fledged art dealer which provided the foundations for her rise to celebrity can be attributed to Ey’s chance mention of this aim to district policeman Westerfeld and his initiative to speak to the picture restorer Spinnrath about her intentions (Ey, 1930, p. 78). This resulted in her being given works to sell on a commission basis (Ey, 1929, p. 21), and Westerfeld was therefore pivotal in providing her with the connections that enabled her to become an art dealer. By speaking to Spinnrath on Ey’s behalf one could also argue that he gave her added credibility which stemmed from his own standing in the community. Indeed when Ey suggests that her good reputation encouraged Spinnrath to give her works to sell: ‘Ich mußte wohl ein gutes Renomé [sic] haben’ (Ey, 1930, p. 78) this could in part be attributed to Westerfeld’s introduction.

This business relationship with Spinnrath represents the next important stage in the rise of her celebrity since it provided her with instant access to works by established ‘traditional’ artists from the Düsseldorf scene. The quality of this stock<sup>319</sup> and the reputation of the well-known picture restorer from whom these works stemmed, offers a plausible explanation for her rapid success as a dealer in ‘traditional’ art<sup>320</sup> and her acquisition of local renown. This standing is illustrated by other art dealers such as Max Weinberg who bought works from her (Ey, 1930, p. 78), and Ey herself noting that: ‘Ich war eine von den wenigen Vertrauenspersonen, die echte d.h. keine gefälschte Gebhardts verkauften’ (Ey, 1930. p. 81).

Artist Eduard von Gebhardt was himself to play a further part in increasing Ey’s status when, following a burglary at her gallery in the Ratinger Strasse, he gave her a picture as a present which provided the financial basis<sup>321</sup> for a move to Hindenburgwall 11, ‘ein besseres Ladenlokal’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22). This move helped raise her profile as an art dealer and again suggests that her success in this field and

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<sup>319</sup> See Chapter 1 for a list of these artists.

<sup>320</sup> Ey: ‘Mit der Zeit bekam ich immer größere Posten, manchmal hatte ich Werthe [sic] von 40-50tausend Mark in den kleinen Laden’ (Ey, 1930, p. 78).

<sup>321</sup> Ey: ‘ich hatte vor kurzer Zeit von Exellenz von Gebhardt [...] für meine damals gestohlenen Bilder ein kleines neues von Exellenz geschenkt bekommen für 7000 Mark verkauft und war dadurch in der Lage, meine neue Sache zu finanzieren’ (Ey, 1930, p. 81).

her local status was based on a combination of her good reputation and the factors which stemmed from this, namely the contacts she had in the Düsseldorf art world and the support and the quality of the work she received from them. Moreover given the apparent willingness of individuals to help her the implication is that her likeable personality may well have been a contributory factor. At this early stage however, based on the articles to hand, there appears to have been little interest in the promotion of Ey either from her point of view or that of the media, and the reputation of her gallery appears to have stemmed largely from word of mouth.

The visit of Pankok and Wollheim to her gallery, and their acceptance of her offer to exhibit their ‘modern’ art works,<sup>322</sup> marks in my opinion the departure from this low-key positive public image to one which was more high profile and less positive. This impression stems from Ey’s reports about crowds laughing and insulting their work which she displayed in the window of her gallery and suggests she had acquired notoriety on a local scale: ‘Die Wirkung war katastrophal. In Zeit von 10 Minuten konnte Niemand am Fenster vorbei, Trotoir [sic] versperrt, Ich hörte nur Lachen, Schimpfen, eine Menschenmenge, als ob jemand ermordet worden wäre [...] Das Ausstellfenster, sowie das ganze Haus war immer von einer großen Menschenmenge umlagert’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80). Given that ‘notoriety’ can be seen as a sub-branch of celebrity culture as it also achieves cultural impact albeit usually through ‘transgression, deviance and immorality’ (Rojek, 2001, p. 10/ p. 31) I would argue that Ey’s decision to exhibit this type of art heralded the beginning of her celebrity.

The furore that the exhibition of these ‘modern’ art works caused is presented by Ey as being unintentional: ‘Ich wollte etwas Lebendiges, Neues, Interessantes bieten-, dachte gar nicht an die Folgen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 22), and she implies she had severely underestimated the reaction this would cause: ‘Mir fiel der Disput im Kronprinzenpalais ein, und ich dachte auch, vielleicht gewöhnt sich das Publikum auch hier an moderne Kunst’ (Ey, 1936, p. 22) ‘ich hatte keine Ahnung, dass es bei mir zu Hause ebenso temperamentvoll zugehen sollte’ (Ey, 1936, p. 21). However, given that she had experienced at first-hand the negative reaction to the *Junge*

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<sup>322</sup> Ey: ‘Ich meinte, wenn es Ihnen Spaß macht, stellen Sie dieselben ins Fenster’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

*Rheinland* exhibition in the *Kronprinzenpalais*<sup>323</sup> there is reason to question her version of events since she could have expected a more severe reaction in ‘provincial’ Düsseldorf. Cyrus Overbeck and Oliver Müller go so far as to suggest cynical motives: ‘Ihr Instinkt sagte ihr, dass ein Skandal geschäftsfördernd sein konnte. Hier hatte sie die Chance, Mittelpunkt einer Kunstbewegung zu werden, während sie für Bilder der Düsseldorfer Schule, die sie auch nicht ganz aufgab, nur eine Händlerin (und eine vergleichsweise kleine) unter vielen war’ (Overbeck/Müller, 1995, p. 107).

On balance, however, such a view is not supported by the evidence. When Ey exhibited these works for the first time she may have expected a negative reaction but she could not have guessed that this would lead to her becoming the ‘centre’ of this movement - indeed it is disputable whether this was ever the case. The fact that ‘modern’ art was difficult to sell at the time and that she was a relatively successful dealer in ‘traditional’ art<sup>324</sup> also weakens the argument that she deliberately sought to create this scandal to exploit it for financial gain. It is more likely that Ey offered to exhibit Pankok and Wollheim’s pictures because she liked the artists<sup>325</sup> and had a genuine appreciation of their work,<sup>326</sup> and this was not a calculated move to promote her business. Indeed at this stage I am inclined to share Böll’s view: ‘Ey spekulierte nicht auf Ruhm’ (Böll, 1960, p. 59).

Initially, Ey suggests, she was amused by the crowds who gathered in front of her gallery,<sup>327</sup> however this impression soon gives way to feelings of anger: ‘Ich bekam Wut und dachte: nur dumme Menschen lachen über das, was sie nicht verstehen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 22). Importantly though she did not retract her decision to display ‘modern’ art in an attempt to avoid further controversy. Instead she compounded her notoriety

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<sup>323</sup> Ey: ‘Da hörte ich lautes Gerede, und es war ein grosser Disput im Gange, ein Für und Wider gegen die Moderne Malerei im rechten Flügel’ (Ey, 1936, p. 20f). Ey: ‘in den Nebenräumen großen Spektakel und zwei Parteien wurden handgreiflich, ich hörte: dieser Dreck sollen Bilder sein, Mist ekelhafter Mist weiter nichts, der andere: Halt blos die Fresse Idiot, strenge dein Gehirn an, dann verstehst du was’ (Ey, 1930, p. 79).

<sup>324</sup> Ey: ‘Inzwischen war ich für Herrn Spinnrath speziell Gebhardt Verkäuferin geworden und verdiente ganz gut dabei, sodass ich einfach bescheiden leben konnte’ (Ey, 1936, p. 21).

<sup>325</sup> This is suggested when in regard to her first meeting with Pankok and Wollheim after the First World War Ey writes that her ‘Groll war fort, ich war weich und gerührt’ after the artists left a signed photo of themselves dedicated to her on her table (Ey, 1930, p. 79).

<sup>326</sup> In reference to seeing Pankok and Wollheim’s works before they were exhibited for the first time in her gallery, Ey writes: ‘Ich sah ein Bild von Wollheim: Pankoks Porträt, von Pankok eine große Zeichnung: Wollheim spielt Geige. Beide gefielen mir, für mich war es etwas Interessantes, nichts Alltägliches’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

<sup>327</sup> Ey: ‘Ich musste lachen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 22).

further by defiantly continuing to exhibit ‘modern’ art: ‘Und so kam ein Entschluß in mir, jetzt gerade stelle ich von den Modernen aus’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80). This is despite being subjected to intimidation which appears to have extended to the smashing of her gallery windows.<sup>328</sup> Eventually she decided to display only this type of art on her premises,<sup>329</sup> a change of direction emphasised by the re-branding of her gallery as *Neue Kunst Frau Ey*. This decision could be interpreted as revealing an *Einzelkämpfer* mentality motivated by a desire to prove the public wrong and show solidarity with her newly-found friends. It could also be viewed as a case of ‘unfavourable celebrity’, which according to Rojek: ‘may be pursued as a strategy to expose a state of affairs in society perceived as unsatisfactory’ (2001, p. 159). In this sense Ey can be seen as an anti-hero ‘fighting’ against perceived injustices in line with her own values rather than those of the establishment, using the creation of her celebrity to criticise the state of society and to demand change.

Her initial notoriety can therefore be attributed to the public’s lack of familiarity with this type of art and the perceived threat that she and ‘her’ artists posed to the art establishment and bourgeois life in Düsseldorf as a whole. I would however argue that to attempt to gain celebrity status as a goal in its own right was not part of Ey’s agenda at this early stage and that the raising of her public profile was a by-product of her support for this movement. Indeed, although she was intent on promoting ‘modern’ art and championed artists who ‘fought’ to change the academy, she appears to have adopted a more passive role in comparison to that of ‘her’ artists. Klapheck suggests this when she writes that Ey ‘liebt den Kampf, sie braucht ihn, er macht sie glücklich, dennoch greift sie niemals aktiv ein’ (Klapheck, 1958, p. 32), and it is clear that it was ‘her’ artists and not Ey who were responsible for the production of magazines such as *Das Ey*<sup>330</sup> and *Das Junge Rheinland*, who organised their own

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<sup>328</sup> Beil: ‘Wir sahen oft von innen, wie sich Arbeiter lebhaft gestikulierend an die Scheibe drängten und geschneigelte Bürger höhnisch lächelnd vorübergingen’ (Beil, 08/05/1920, n.pn.). The *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten* (?): ‘Und an allem hat Mutter Ey mitgeholfen. Sie stand mit in vordesten Treffen - auch wenn man ihr die Schaufenster einschlug oder sich vor dem Erdgeschoß endlose Menschenketten bildeten die lebhaft für und kontra disputierten. Denn so wie vor Mutter Eys Laden über Kunst gesprochen worden ist, ist noch nie in Düsseldorf über Kunst disputiert worden’ (DN (?), 1929, n.pn.).

<sup>329</sup> Ey: ‘Es kam dann auch so, daß ich den ganzen Laden ausräumte mit meinen Verkaufsbildern und setzte mich zum Entsetzen aller abseits stehenden Maler nur für die neuzeitliche Kunst ein’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80).

<sup>330</sup> Ey: ‘Eine Zeitschrift “Das Ey” wurde gegründet. Otto Pankok, Gert Wollheim und Gert Schreiner zeichneten dafür verantwortlich’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22).

larger exhibitions such as the *I.Internationale Kunstausstellung Düsseldorf 1922*<sup>331</sup> and who faced criminal charges for outraging public decency.<sup>332</sup> Thus the overwhelming impression is that Ey was on the periphery of a spotlight which was focused largely on ‘her’ artists at this point.

That she appears not to have actively sought celebrity for celebrity’s sake at this stage does not of course imply she remained oblivious to the gains that could be made for the wider cause of ‘modern’ art and for her own business through the promotion of herself, ‘her’ artists and her gallery. Though it seems unlikely that she was deliberately manipulating public opinion for her own purposes in her initial decision to exhibit the works of Pankok and Wollheim, one could attest that once she had decided to dedicate her gallery to ‘modern’ art she realised the potential for scandal to facilitate her business and increase the momentum surrounding the ‘modern’ art debate. Adhering to the truism that all publicity is good publicity Ey certainly does not appear to have distanced herself from the controversial events of the time. It could even be suggested that she employed calculated strategies of performance to achieve gravitas in the public sphere (see Rojek, 2001, p. 122) and learnt from artists who distinguished themselves from competitors through the creation of a ‘spectacle’.

There are of course events in her career where it is not clear whether sensation was the intended result of her actions. Her acceptance of the *Verwundete* painting (Fig. 51) as a present from Wollheim for instance could be interpreted as her seeking to profit from the sensation surrounding this picture, or it could be attributed to her not wanting to offend Wollheim by declining his offer or to a genuine appreciation of this painting - or a combination of all three reasons.<sup>333</sup> Ey’s presence at Wollheim’s court

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<sup>331</sup> Ey: ‘Im Jahre 1923 [1922 is correct] arrangi[e]rten die Künstler Art[h]ur Kaufmann, Adolf Uzarski, G. Wollheim, Architekt Brink [no forename could be found] in dem Hause von Leonard Tietz Aktiengesellschaft [eine internationale Ausstellung...] Die Ausstellung war eine Sensation, nicht allein für Düsseldorf, sondern [auch] für Deutschland und Ausland’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22).

<sup>332</sup> For instance Ey writes: ‘Wollheim malte an einem Bilde mit dem Titel “Stück Festland passiert unter wehender Flagge den Raum von Omega”. Es wurde beschlagnahmt, und es gab einen Prozess. In der Anklageschrift hiess es: 30 000 sittliche Jünglinge und Jungfrauen nehmen Anstoss an dem Bild. Es kam zur Gerichtsverhandlung. Es wurden viele Zeugen und Sachverständige geladen [...] Das Bild wurde umstritten, doch es wurde für einwandfrei erklärt. Die Sache ging weiter vor das Reichsgericht in Leipzig, und das Bild wurde zur Ausstellung freigegeben’ (Ey, 1936, p. 26f). See Fig. 55. See also mention of Dix on trial for a picture displayed in Ey’s gallery (Kaufmann, 1970).

<sup>333</sup> Ey: ‘Es kam eine Ausstellung für Kriegsbeschädigte in der Kunsthalle, Wollheim stellte das Bild aus “Der Verwundete”. Er mußte es entfernen, weil es zu stark war und wechselte es aus gegen drei Zeichnungen, weil eventuell auch für 1000 Mark von jeden [sic] kriegsbeschädigten Künstler gekauft

appearance when he faced charges of indecency for displaying *Lenkbares Stück Festland passiert unter wehender Fahne den Raum von Omega* (Fig. 55) in the window of her gallery could also imply that she was attending an event which would heighten her public profile or equally could be interpreted as an attempt to offer her friend moral support, or both.<sup>334</sup> However if one believes that it was her suggestion that Wollheim should hold a lecture on ‘modern’ art this would offer an instance where she showed a keen sense for creating a sensationalist event that would guarantee cultural impact.<sup>335</sup> Furthermore her allowing the *Junge Rheinland* to be based in her gallery could be construed as a way of ensuring that the focus remained on her and her business.

Based on an idea by Behr<sup>336</sup> this concept could be extended further still, and it could be postulated that Ey deliberately sought to associate herself with the most explosive, eccentric and rebellious artists to guarantee the sensation which would encourage the success of her gallery and strengthen her ‘brand’. Yet this theory is challenged by the description of how Dix was ‘recruited’ to ‘her circle’ in her 1936 memoirs. Here it is implied that Ey was not solely involved in this initiative but that ‘her’ artists also played a role, with Pankok writing this invitation to Dix and Ey referring to ‘we’ in regard to this invitation.<sup>337</sup> This instance raises the notion that the artists themselves

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werden sollte. Das Bild “Der Verwundete” lagerte unterdessen in den Kellereien der Kunsthalle. Wollheim machte den Versuch es zu verschenken; Niemand nahm an. Beim Kaffee Nachmittags wurde diese Angelegenheit besprochen und Wollheim frug, zu mir sich wendend: Willst du das Bild haben, ich schenke es dir, du mußt es aber hier in diesem Zimmer aufhängen. Ich kannte das Bild nicht, alle andern Künstler sagten schon für mich ja ja, ich mußte mit zur Kunsthalle es ansehen und beim Ansehen des Bildes war ich so ergriffen, daß ich nichts sagen konnte’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80). Ey: ‘Auf die Frage: “Sollen wir es hinüberbringen?”, nickte ich nur mit dem Kopfe’ (Ey, 1936, p. 23). Ey: ‘ein Dutzend Hände nahmen das Bild und trugen es in meine Wohnung, es wurde über mein Bett gehängt. Ich wagte gar nicht, Abends [sic] mich ins Bett zu legen und schlief drei Nächte auf dem Bettzeug auf der Erde, um mich nach und nach daran zu gewöhnen. Dann wurde ein Vorhang über das Bild gehängt und bei Besichtigung der Vorhang weggezogen. Ich muß jetzt lachen bei der Erinnerung an diese Schwächen; denn mit der Zeit wurde ich sehender in der Beurtheilung [sic] der Werke’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80f). Ey: ‘Und heute, mit 78 Jahren, kann ich wohl sagen: es ist mein liebstes Bild’ (Ey, 1936, p. 23).

<sup>334</sup> Ey: ‘Morgens füllte sich der große Gerichtssaal und als der Vorsitzende vortrug, es soll nur für Sitzplätze der Saal freigegeben werden, auch oben die Leute stehen zu lassen alle wollten doch solchen interessanten Prozeß anhören [...] Kaufmann hatte vorgesorgt und so aßen wir gemütlich Eier und Butterbrode [sic], inzwischen gingen die Thüren [sic] zum Gerichtssaal auf und zu und man hörte feine Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Vorsitzenden und Angeklagten’ (Ey, 1930, p. 83).

<sup>335</sup> Ey: ‘Ich hatte eine Idee, Wollheim sollte [einen] Vortrag halten hier über neue Kunst’ (Ey, 1930, p. 81).

<sup>336</sup> Behr: ‘[Ey] encouraged the notion of spectacality [sic] by sponsoring artists who attracted official scandal’ (Behr, 1995, p. 102).

<sup>337</sup> Ey: ‘In dieser Zeit besuchte uns der bekannte Maler und Graphiker Felix Müller aus Klotzsche bei Dresden. Wir wurden auf den Maler Otto Dix aufmerksam gemacht der damals in der Dresdener Akademie ein Meisterschüler-Atelier hatte. P.[Pankok] schrieb an Dix, und wir luden ihn ein, nach

were interested in advancing their cause by assembling a ‘team’ whose talent and status would in turn raise their own and further their ‘modern’ art agenda. Indeed by attracting colleagues who through their existing reputations and subsequent importance increased Ey’s standing they can be seen to have played a key role in the creation of her celebrity. Schmidtsdorf certainly suggests this was the case when he writes:

Doch der Bädeler-Stern ging über Mutter Ey erst auf, als einige der einstigen Akademiker das, was man einen “Namen” nennt, bekamen, das heißt berühmt wurden, auf dem Kunstmarkt mit hohen Preisen gehandelt wurden: die Otto Dix, Gert Heinrich Wollheim, Heinrich Nauen, Joseph Bell, Hermann Baptist Hundt, Otto Pankok ... da zeigte sich, daß Mutter Ey wahre Schätze in ihrer Pfandkammer hatte (Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn.).

As argued in Chapter 2 of this thesis it appears that Ey’s Hindenburgwall gallery was divided in two, with the two rooms at the front being where *Junge Rheinland* exhibitions were held and where members were able to select artworks without being subject to a jury (Goebbels, 2000, p. 11). Thus the implication here too is that the artists played a considerable role in drawing attention to Ey’s gallery and in deciding what image was projected to the public.

If a report in the *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* is to be believed, Ey also suggests she owed her standing as an art dealer to ‘her’ artists: ‘Sie dagegen vertrat mir gegenüber, [...] den Standpunkt, sie verdanke alles ihren Malern, sie sei durch diese eine Kunstkennerin bester Klasse geworden’ (*DT*, 02/03/1929, n.pn.). However to view her status as an art dealer as the sole effort of ‘her’ artists would be to overlook her

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Düsseldorf zu kommen’ (Ey, 1936, p. 24). This account differs to Ey’s 1930 autobiographical text where Ey gives the impression that she invited Dix to Düsseldorf: ‘Von einer Reise nach München zurückkehrend, sagten Pankok und Wollheim, wir haben herrliche Zeichnungen und Bilder von einem [sic] Künstler in Dresden gesehen, Pankok war ganz entzückt von seinen geklebten und toll gemalten Bildern --- Wollheim von seinen fabelhaften Akten. Beide schrieben an Dix um Zusendung einiger Zeichnungen [...] ich bat Dix er möchte mir sein Foto schicken und da er mir auch gefiel, ein offenes, freches Gesicht hatte er, lud ich ihn ein uns 14 Tagen zu besuchen und unser Gast zu sein’ (Ey, 1930, p. 81).



own skill in identifying those who had talent and her role in building their careers.<sup>338</sup> For instance, although doctor, art dealer and collector Hans Koch was the first to exhibit works by Dix in Düsseldorf, Ey appears to have made significant sales of this artist's work (Barth, 1983, p. 24/ p. 28) and maintains: 'Ich kaufte hier in Düsseldorf die ersten Bilder von Dix, dann kauften Sammler, und Dix fing an, Karriere zu machen' (Ey, 1936, p. 26). Furthermore though Max Ernst is said to have come to her gallery on the basis of a lecture given by Wollheim in 1920 (Barth, 1984, p. 31), Goebbels states that Ey supported Ernst financially before he became famous,<sup>339</sup> and art historian Bernd Lasch gives the impression that she was of great importance for his career: 'Auch der in Paris lebende Max Ernst fand bei Frau Ey die erste günstige Aufnahme. Im Jahre 1924, als im Rheinland noch keiner etwas von ihm wissen wollte, nahm sie eine Kollektion von 18 seiner besten Bilder auf, verschickte sie in weitem Umkreise und ebnete dem Künstler seinen Weg' (Lasch, 1928, p. 450f). Indeed Krempel too suggests her role was pivotal when he notes: 'Bis 1928 blieb sie [Ey] seine [Ernst's] eigentliche Kunsthändlerin' (Krempel, 1985, p. 13).

In regard to Pankok and Wollheim one could also contend that Ey was partly responsible for establishing their reputation in Düsseldorf and helping them to acquire the status which allowed them to attract other talented artists. Voices in the Weimar press certainly felt her contribution was considerable. J. Brandes for instance writes: 'Darüber hinaus ist sie [Ey] allen Malern des Rheinlandes als die Frau bekannt, die [...] den jungen, damals noch völlig unbekanntem, modernen Malern der Düsseldorfer Akademie - darunter Wollheim, Dix, Pankok, Hundt, Pudlich, Max Ernst - durch Ausstellung ihrer Arbeiten und durch materielle Unterstützung den Weg in die Öffentlichkeit geebnet hat' (Brandes, 1930, n.pn. Forename and occupation

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<sup>338</sup> Lasch: 'In Sonderausstellungen, die ihren [Ey's] kleinen Kunstsalon oft zum Ziel allgemeiner Betrachtung von der Strasse her machten, brachte sie ihre Getreuen in die Öffentlichkeit. Dix, Wollheim, Feigler sind auf diesem Wege das geworden, was sie heute sind: bekannte und gesuchte Künstlerpersönlichkeiten' (Lasch, 1928, p. 450). Straus-Ernst: 'Viele Künstler, die heute einen angesehenen Namen haben und in prominenten Galerien ausstellen - wir nennen nur Otto Dix, Gert Heinrich Wollheim, Max Ernst, Fritz Feigler - haben in dem warmen Stübchen hinter Mutter Eys Laden angefangen, wo stets für ihr leibliches Wohl gesorgt war, und wo auch die ersten Verkäufe und Ausstellungen vorbereitet und abgeschlossen wurden' (Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn.).

<sup>339</sup> Goebbels: '1924 verkaufte sie das Bild [Otto Dix, *Meine Eltern*] an das Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 4000 Mark des Verkaufserlöses übergab sie Max Ernst, der mit seiner Geliebten Gala Eluard nach Indochina folgen wollte, wohin dieser sich abgesetzt hatte. Nach seiner Rückkehr schickte sie ihm noch fünf Jahre jeweils 300 Mark jeden Monat. Dafür überließ ihr Max Ernst seine gesamten Werke, darunter auch das Gruppenbild der Surrealisten "Rendezvous der Freunde"' (2000, p. 7).

unknown).<sup>340</sup> On this basis it appears that whilst ‘her’ artists clearly played their own role in promoting themselves and a considerable degree of luck was involved in creating the circumstances in which she was able to come into contact with ‘modern’ artists of such quality, it was her initiative as well as theirs which exploited these opportunities.<sup>341</sup> I would therefore argue that the relationship between Ey and ‘her’ artists can be defined as one of mutual promotion and benefit, illustrated by Pankok and Wollheim using her name for their group based in her gallery - Ey raised their profile and they in turn raised hers.

So far I have only considered Ey, ‘her’ artists and the public as agents in the creation of her notoriety. However, as is the case with modern-day celebrities, the media also played an instrumental role in the creation and dissemination of her public face in the visual and written sense. Here too I would argue that a mutual - but not always affectionate - relationship developed. Indeed, as public interest in Ey grew in the wake of the art and the artists she dealt in and the conflict with the art establishment, this interest appears to have been fanned by media reports which both provoked and satisfied the reader’s fascination. The notion that Ey was turned into a commodity by the media to promote their various agendas is for instance suggested in an article presumably by Stanhabe in the *Berliner Zeitung* in 1926 in which both Ey’s popularity and the mixed nature of these reports are implied: ‘Heute ist Mutter Ey eine der populärsten Erscheinungen im Rheinland. Nicht nur, weil Sie mit Düsseldorfs Ruf als Kunststadt eng verknüpft ist, besonders deshalb, weil sie zu allen Menschen lieb und nett ist, wie ein Elefant, zu dem man Onkel sagen möchte. Mutter Ey ist anekdotenreif’ (Stanhabe (?), 1926, n.pn. Forename and occupation unknown).

Böll takes a sceptical view of such media treatment: ‘Früh schon bekam sie zu spüren, was heutzutage den Berühmtheiten sozusagen zum Frühstück serviert wird: die

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<sup>340</sup> See also amongst others: ‘Wenn man einmal die Geschichte der jungen Malerei in Westdeutschland schreiben wird, wird man Mutter Ey nicht übersehen können. Sie hat für die neue Entwicklung mehr getan als mancher Kunstkritiker oder -sammler von Ruf’ (Schreiner, 1926, p. 49), ‘Wer sich erinnern kann, daß gerade Frau Ey manchem jungen, heute bekannten Künstler, - nur zwei Namen sollen genannt sein, Dix und Wollheim - zum ersten Bekanntwerden verhalf’ (Anon, 1930b, n.pn.) and ‘Ihr Bild kann nicht oft genug in die Kunstgeschichte eingehen, denn sie war die Henne, unter deren Flügeln die Küken der neuen sachlichen Zeit die ersten Stürme des Lebens überstanden haben, um später als stolze Professorengockel in die weite Welt hinauszustolzieren’ (Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.).

<sup>341</sup> Ginzel: ‘Zufälligkeiten haben ihren heutigen Lebensweg bestimmt, aber sie füllt ihn aus mit dem Einsatz aller menschlichen Kräfte, die ihr zu Gebote stehen’ (Ginzel, 25/06/1931, n.pn.).

Dummheit, die Hohlheit und Bitterkeit der Publicity’ (Böll, 1960, p. 77). Moreover Ey herself in her 1930 autobiographical article suggests that she generated media interest but that this was initially far from positive when she describes the reaction to her decision to display ‘modern’ art: ‘und so kamen ja auch die Presse mit der Zeit und schimpften’ (Ey, 1930, p. 80). However in the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* archive there are few articles from the early 1920s which refer to Ey, none of which portrays her in a negative light. Those which do mention her are either neutral or positive in their appraisal and only in two later articles can isolated derogatory references to her be found.<sup>342</sup> The potential absence of articles from this early period in the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* collection, largely collated by Ey’s friends and relatives, could suggest they were omitted because they were not complimentary. Certainly works by Barth and Goebbels, which cite articles from the period that refer to the art and artists she dealt in during the early 1920’s, give the impression that this type of art was not well received by sections of the media.<sup>343</sup>

Although Ey’s remark, quoted above, suggests she may not have always liked the nature of the coverage and the power the press wielded, she nonetheless appears to have realised the need for the exposure it offered and to have had a good understanding of the role it played in the ‘making and breaking’ of careers. This impression emerges from her statement that: ‘die Presse muss ja erst bestätigen, wer was kann oder nicht kann; meistens gehen sie ja daneben oder es spielen persönliche Beziehungen mit’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22). The fickle nature of the media system she identifies was also not always detrimental to her and in some instances she benefitted from the very weaknesses she scorned with her own personal acquaintances and friendships being played out in the press. Straus-Ernst for instance wrote positive

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<sup>342</sup> See: ‘Diese überaus rundliche, ja kugelige kleine Frau mit den [...?] kurzen Kinderärmchen [...?] ist Mutter Ey aus Düsseldorf’ (‘Die Künstlermama von Düsseldorf’, n.d., n.pn.) and ‘eine zwar nicht schöne Frau, aber doch liebenswert’ (‘Sammlung Ey’, *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 04/01/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>343</sup> For instance in regard to a *Junge Rheinland* exhibition in the *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* in 1921: ‘In dem Hause “Ey”, in dem sie bisher ihre Werke zur Schau stellten, hätten Wollheim, Schwesig und Pankok, um einige der peinlichsten Vertreter dieser jüngsten Manier zu nennen, bleiben sollen. Sie gehören nicht in die Gemeinschaft von Künstlern, die Verantwortungsgefühl haben’ (DN, 1921 (?), n.pn.: Barth, 1984, p. 32). Moreover Schreiner writes in regard to the *I. Internationale Kunstausstellung* (Düsseldorf, 1922): ‘Wie oft ist das Gelingen dieser Kunstausstellung bezweifelt, wie oft ist sie bespöttelt worden. Sie hatte alle gegen sich. Den offiziellen Propogandaapparat, die öffentliche Meinung, die bürgerliche Presse, den Geschmack der überwiegenden Mehrzahl’ (*Volkszeitung Düsseldorf*, 31/05/1922, n.pn.: Goebbels, 2000, p. 9f).

articles about her,<sup>344</sup> and the actor Karl Kyser lent the endorsement of his celebrity to the promotion of her *Sammlung Ey* exhibition in a report in the *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung* (1932, n.pn.). Moreover it is notable that the available press depictions of Ey after 1925 following the decline of the conflict with the art establishment and the departure of controversial figures such as Wollheim and Pankok from Düsseldorf are largely positive.

This apparent change could be attributed to the increasing acceptance of ‘modern’ art in Germany as a whole. Heymann certainly suggests this when he writes: ‘Die Feuerköpfe von damals sind heute berühmte Leute, Professoren gar’ and names artists Kurt Laus, Fritz Burmann, Feigler, Wollheim and Dix in this context (Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.). Indeed, through her art dealership and the exhibitions and lectures she and ‘her’ artists were involved in, Ey actively participated in the campaign to change the perception of ‘modern’ art on a local and national level, creating the conditions in which such articles could be written. She gives the impression that the *I. Internationale Kunstausstellung* (Düsseldorf, 1922) was instrumental in this regard: ‘Von dieser Zeit an war für die Düsseldorfer jungen Künstler vieles gewonnen [...Die] Presse stellte sich zu Gunsten der fortschrittlichen Künstler um’ (Ey, 1929, p. 22) and it could be argued that the cumulative pressure of such endeavours channelled through the media contributed to a shift in societal taste which created a ‘taste culture’ for ‘modern’ art and enabled Ey and ‘her’ artists to be elevated to greater levels of celebrity. Thus her transition from an ‘outsider’ to an ‘insider’ exemplifies Guy Debord’s theory that counter-culture inevitably becomes part of celebrity culture:

The struggle between tradition and innovation, which is the basic principle of the internal development of the culture of historical societies, is predicated entirely on the permanent victory of innovation. Cultural innovation is impelled solely, however, by that total historical movement which, by becoming conscious of its totality, tends toward the transcendence of its own cultural presuppositions - and hence toward the suppression of all separations (Debord, 1967, p. 130f).

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<sup>344</sup> See: Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn., Luise Straus-Ernst, April 1929, n.pn. and Luise Straus-Ernst, 1930, n.pn. The suggestion that Straus-Ernst and Ey were acquaintances is made by Klapheck when she states: ‘Auch Journalisten, Kunsthistoriker und Freunde der Kunst gehen im “Ey” nun aus und ein’ and names Straus-Ernst in the ensuing list (1958, p. 34).

On the basis of the corpus to hand the articles after 1925 are not only largely positive in their representation of Ey but their frequency is also greater. This could be due to the fact that the absence of significant artists from Düsseldorf created a void in press reporting which needed to be filled. Certainly Baumeister gives this impression when she states: 'Erst nachdem die Vereinigung *Das Junge Rheinland* an Bedeutung verloren hatte, konnte die "Kunsthandlung Ey" zum Begriff werden' ('Die Düsseldorfer Kunsthändlerin', 1993, p. 163). However another possible explanation is Richard Dyer's statement that stars 'might even seem to be the ultimate example of media hype, foisted on us by the media's constant need to manipulate our attention' (Dyer, 1986, p. 15). Viewed in this context it could be argued Ey benefitted from the media's need to constantly re-invent individuals to satisfy market forces and align themselves with new trends and had chosen her as a symbol of the wider acceptance of 'modern' art.

Furthermore P. David Marshall asserts that 'the emergence of the celebrity is connected to both the emergence of the modern mass as a threatening entity and the strategies employed by various institutions to contain the threat and irrationality of the mass' (Marshall, 1997, p. 37). One could therefore maintain that Ey's popularity in the press of the Weimar Period and the positive descriptions she received were attempts by these governing bodies to 'contain the public - in effect, to represent the public' (Marshall, 1997, p. 242). Indeed Marshall's argument, that the 'extratextual discourse [...] charting the private lives of the stars provided a public discourse on intimacy and a constructed narrative or morality tale that implicitly expressed where the normative center of that discourse should be' (Marshall, 1997, p. 106), suggests Ey may have been used as a role model by the press to offer comfort and continuity to its readership during turbulent times.

Certainly frequent presentation in newspaper articles of Ey as a working-class woman who had achieved a higher social status 'accentuate[s] the possibility and potential for individuals to shape themselves unfettered by the constraints of the hierarchical society [...] and] reinforce[s] the conception that there are no barriers in contemporary culture that the individual cannot overcome' (Marshall, 1997, p. 246), a message constantly reiterated by the emergence of celebrities. Moreover, when one

contemplates Edgar Morin's statement that film stars offer their audience 'not only information but *formation*, not only incitation but *initiation*' (Morin, 1960, p. 143, Morin's emphasis), it could be argued that the promotion of Ey's celebrity in the press in the Weimar period was in part intended to encourage emulation amongst the lower classes and demonstrate the chances offered by the democratic system. A report in the *Neue Mannheimer Zeitung* certainly seems to hint at this: 'So ist "Mutter Ey" schon ein fester Begriff geworden, eine seltsame Erscheinung in unserem sonst so ruhelosen Dasein, vielleicht auch ein Vorbild, ein Beispiel, wie sich aus der großen bunten Masse des Volkes der Wille zur seelischen Schönheit emporhebt' (*Neue Mannheimer Zeitung*, 17-18/09/1932, n.pn.).

Ey's role in stimulating this media attention should however not be underestimated. No longer overshadowed by 'her' artists' endeavours she had more space in the media to develop her own public image and seems to have grasped this opportunity through participation in events attractive to the press such as her flight to Hamburg in March 1931<sup>345</sup> and by co-operating with the press as demonstrated in a letter to Pudlich in 1928: 'In Essen war nichts jetzt lasse ich Bilder von vielen meinen Künstlern in New York veröffentlichen. Heute Morgen war ein Ehepaar aus New York hier, die Frau ist Journalistin schreibt einen Artikel über den Betrieb Hindenburgwall und veröffentlicht verschiedene Foto's [sic]' (Letter, 06/08/1928). She also courted interest in the form of autobiographical articles. The earliest of these reports is cited as being from December 1929, however three articles have been identified in this study for the first time which contain significant autobiographical information and pre-date this, suggesting the process began much earlier.

The first report to make this claim is 'Die Mama der Rheinland-Maler' from 1925: 'Allmählich warm geworden beginnt Frau Ey aus ihrem Leben zu erzählen' (Helene, 1925, n.pn.). The second is an article dated 28 February 1929, presumably from the *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten*, entitled 'Sie erzählt aus ihrem Leben! Mutter Ey wird 65 Jahre' (*DN* (?), 1929, n.pn.) in which Ey explains at length how she came to be a 'modern' art dealer and what this entailed, and mentions some of the artists she had dealt with and what they had achieved: 'Und neben dem kleinen Dauerbrenner sitzt

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<sup>345</sup> See mention of this in Anon, 1931, n.pn., Heymann, 1931, n.pn. and *DN*, 19/02/1931, n.pn.

Mutter Ey, Zigarette zwischen den Fingern und erzählt. Erzählt vor all dem wie es kam, daß Sie - eben Mutter Ey wurde'. The third article is in the *Rheinische Illustrierte* entitled "'Mutter Ey" in Düsseldorf' and provides details of how she came to the city, her coffee shop, her sale of pictures before she officially became an art dealer and how her premises became the headquarters of the young artists in Düsseldorf (*Rheinische Illustrierte*, 03/04/1929, n.pn.). This media 'offensive' by Ey could be a response to the demand of a more welcoming public for information about her but may also have stemmed from her realisation that she needed to cultivate her own celebrity to maintain the momentum behind her gallery in the face of the exodus of significant artists from the Düsseldorf scene. This certainly seems likely in light of Ey's statement about Feigler, Wollheim and Dix leaving Düsseldorf: 'Die besten Pferde waren aus dem Stalle "Ey" und hatten ihr Rennen gemacht' (Ey, 1930, p. 84).<sup>346</sup>

The high frequency of positive articles about Ey after 1925 suggests she had become a stalwart of Düsseldorf's cultural scene. Indeed Ey appears to have made the transition from a notorious figure to a celebrity viewed in a positive light<sup>347</sup> and in her own words began to feel accepted: 'ich war unterdessen auch arriviert und gehörte zu den Prominenten, d.h.: mich lachten die Leute nicht mehr aus wie früher, ich wurde hochgeehrt, verehrt und geschätzt' (Ey, 1936, p. 29). The growth of her celebrity is exemplified by numerous reports which bestow on her the status of a local, national and international figure.<sup>348</sup> Moreover her gallery is mentioned in the *Baedeker* travel

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<sup>346</sup> See also Ey: 'Es wurde still bei mir. Die besten Pferde waren aus dem Rennstalle Ey. Die geistigen Führer und Anreger fehlten' (Ey, 1936, p. 29).

<sup>347</sup> Stanhabe (?): 'Heute ist Ey eine der populärsten Erscheinungen im Rheinland' (Stanhabe (?), 1926, n.pn.).

<sup>348</sup> Reference to her local celebrity is made when Ey is described as: 'die bekannteste Persönlichkeit der deutschen Kunstmetropole am Rhein' ('Besuch bei der Düsseldorfer Künstlermama', n.d., n.pn.). Moreover her national celebrity is inferred when Sprüngli states: "'Mutter Ey" ist nicht nur die populärste Frau Düsseldorfs - in der ganzen deutschen Kunstwelt sind ihre Verdienste bekannt' (Sprüngli, 1930, n.pn.) and the *Kölner Zeitung* writes about the: 'in ganz Deutschland bekanntgewordenen Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey' (*Kölner Zeitung*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.). Her international celebrity is also implied by Sternheim: 'Sie ist bereits über die Grenzen Deutschlands hinaus bekannt' (Sternheim, 1928, n.pn.) and the *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten* (?): "'Neue Kunst, Frau Ey". Diese wenigen Worte haben es über den ganzen Erdball bekannt gemacht. Denn überall, in Tokio oder in London, in Mallorca, in Rom oder in Berlin, in Schwabing, auf dem Montparnaß oder in New York, wo junge Künstler zusammenkommen, ist auch die Rede von Düsseldorf, von dem kleinen Häuschen auf dem Hindenburgwall Nr.11 und von - Mutter Ey' (*DN* (?), 1929, n.pn.). Furthermore in regard to the eviction process against Ey the *Kölner Stadtanzeiger* writes: 'Von Düsseldorf wird gemeldet: [...] einen neuen negativen Erfolg ihrer Kunstpolitik mit einer Räumungsklage gegen die, wegen ihrer Förderung junger Künstler unter dem Namen "Mutter Ey" in ganz Deutschland und

guide for the Rhineland.<sup>349</sup> The factors involved in this elevation from Ey's status as a local Düsseldorf celebrity to that of someone known on a national and even international level therefore stem in my view from the dynamic between Ey, 'her' artists, the media and the public. Indeed her 'achieved' and 'attributed' celebrity (Rojek, 2001, p. 17) generated by her successes as a 'modern' art dealer and those of 'her' artists, coupled with the press reports which accompanied this, provided the basis from which her public image could evolve.

In my estimation however these factors were not significant enough in themselves to warrant this transition, and I would argue it took several other key developments for Ey to achieve this standing. One of the most important of these was her preoccupation with commissioning portraits of herself and those 'her' artists drew of their own volition.<sup>350</sup> The potential reasons for this fascination with self-portraiture are numerous. It could be seen to reflect her vanity and her desire to support those artists she felt merited it, or could be viewed as an honour for 'her' artists that revealed their fascination with her face and figure (Klapheck, 1958, p. 56). It could also be interpreted as 'repayment' of her support: 'Sie kreditiert. Und offenbar gerührt von solchem Kredit, hat man sie dann verewigt in tausend Bildern, Karikaturen, Krizeleien' (*Kölnische Illustrierte Zeitung*, 04/05/1929, p. 581), or as a rite of passage of sorts and a demonstration that the artists belonged to the 'Ey circle'.

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darüber hinaus bekannt gewordenen Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey für sich buchen' (*Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, 03/01/1933, n.pn.). Indeed Heymann implies that her eviction would interest the world's media and suggests that articles about her had appeared all over the globe: 'Wie hat sich das Rathaus eigentlich den Exodus der Frau Ey vorgestellt? Ist nicht bedacht worden, daß als dann die Saturday Evening Post, The Graphic, L'Illustration und El ABC prompt zwei Photographien bringen werden: links Mutter Ey, die arme Vertriebene, und rechts Dr. Lehr, den Mann, der sie ins Elend stieß. So glänzend die Glorifizierung der Johanna Ey durch die Stadt Düsseldorf in den Zeitungen aller Welt gelungen ist, so sicher erfolgt dann auch die Gegenüberstellung der beiden Bilder [...] Wenn dieses Bild, auf das sich die Pressephotographen aller Art bereits spitzen, die Runde durch die Länder macht - wozu braucht man noch einen Fremdenverkehrsverein?' (Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn.).

<sup>349</sup> Heymann writes that Ey received three stars in the *Baedeker* (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). He does not state which edition this is, and no other publication offers this information. I have identified mention of Ey in publisher and travel guide writer Karl Baedeker's *Die Rheinlande: Von der elsässischen bis zur holländischen Grenze* - Rheinpfalz und Saargebiet, Rhein.-Westfälisches Industriegebiet (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1931, p. 371). However this entry only refers to the name and address of her gallery and no star rating is given.

<sup>350</sup> Heymann: 'In allen Farben, die die Palette kennt, in allen Gestalten, die eines Malers Herz entflammen können, [...] strahlte sie aus den Rahmen, allen künftigen Geschlechtern überliefert von der Hand Gert Wollheims, Pankoks, H. B. Hundts, Bindels, Pudlichs und der anderen' (Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn.).



Whatever the impetus may have been, these portraits, many of which were put up for sale or publicly exhibited, undoubtedly served as a form of advertising for Ey, her gallery and the artist concerned. In effect, they provided a form of product placement for the Ey 'brand' which disseminated diverse images of her and offered her fans the chance to buy a memento of her celebrity in a similar way to a film star's autograph. For the press the abundance of these portraits provided a unique angle for stories about her which in certain cases were accompanied by a selection of these portraits. This 'high concept' i.e. the reduction 'of aesthetic and narrative content to the lowest economic denominator of the market place' (Rojek, 2001, p. 140), alongside her unusual status as a female art dealer led to her being promoted as the most portrayed woman in Düsseldorf, Germany, Europe and in some cases the world and the twentieth century.<sup>351</sup>

As early as October 1923 Heinrich Wilhelm Keim, art historian and teacher for stage design at the *Düsseldorfer Kunstakademie*, writes in the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung* that an exhibition of Ey portraits took place and states that there is no one in Düsseldorf who has been portrayed as often and diversely as she.<sup>352</sup> However the first mention of her as the 'meistgemalte Frau Deutschlands' in the sources available is by an anonymous author in an article entitled 'Jubiläumsausstellung 1925: II. Die Düsseldorfer Kunst' in the same newspaper, dated 27 June 1925 (*Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 27/06/1925, n.pn). This is closely followed by reference to her in the edition of *Der Cicerone* from the first half of July 1925 as the 'meistgemalte Frau

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<sup>351</sup> She is described as the most portrayed woman without qualification in the *Kölnische Illustrierte Zeitung*, 04/05/1929, 'Die Künstlermama von Düsseldorf', n.d., n.pn. and 'Sammlung Ey in Wiesbaden', n.d., n.pn. Moreover the *Kölnische Zeitung* states: 'wenige Frauen sind so oft gezeichnet und gemalt worden wie sie' (*Kölnische Zeitung*, 25/06/1931, n.pn.). In regard to Düsseldorf, Keim writes: 'Es gibt gewiß in Düsseldorf keinen Menschen, der so oft und verschieden dargestellt ist wie sie' (Keim, 20/10/1923, n.pn.). She is referred to as the most portrayed woman in Germany in: 'Mutter Ey - Tysklands', n.d., n.pn.; 'En Konstens', n.d., p. 181; Keim, 1925, p. 812; *Berliner Illustrierte*, 1930, n.pn.; 'Begegnung', December 1931, n.pn.; *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn. and Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn. She is described as the most portrayed woman in Europe in *DT*, 02/03/1929, n.pn. and Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn., and as the most portrayed woman in the world by Sternheim, 1928, n.pn. Furthermore Heymann describes her as: 'die meistgemalte Frau ihres Jahrhunderts' (Heymann, 1931, n.pn.).

<sup>352</sup> Keim states that the *Junge Rheinland* displayed portraits of Ey in 'their' exhibition rooms, by which he means the exhibition rooms situated in Ey's gallery (Baumeister, 1999, p. 20). Keim writes that the pictures which were shown presented: 'Bildnisse, die in den Kreisen der jüngeren Kunst und der jüngeren Künstler als Pflegemutter bekannte und beliebte "Mutter Ey" zum Modell haben. Es gibt gewiß in Düsseldorf keinen Menschen, der so oft und so verschieden dargestellt ist wie sie' (Keim, 20/10/1923, n.pn.). Baumeister notes that this exhibition took place from 15-31 October 1923 (1999, p. 20).

Deutschlands' in a report by Keim (Keim, 1925, p. 812). Indeed Keim may well be the anonymous author of the previous article given the close timing of the two reports, their use of the same expression and the fact that he also wrote for the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*. Once this 'take' on her had been discovered, it appears to have grabbed both the media's interest in Germany and to some extent abroad<sup>353</sup> and provided a vehicle with which to make the German public and to a degree the international public, aware of her contribution to 'modern' art.

Her decision to exhibit many of these portraits as part of the *Sammlung Ey Düsseldorf* touring exhibition and include them in its catalogue, and the idea and name of the tour itself, may well have been intended to capitalise on press interest in these works and the status that she had achieved from these reports. This exhibition certainly helped cement her national celebrity status and the Ey 'brand' and further emphasises her talent for self-promotion. Her choice of respected art historian Max Osborn to write the introduction to the tour catalogue also suggests she realised the importance of endorsement and the association of her 'product' with the 'right' people to give her and her collection added gravitas. The exhibitions in various German cities certainly served to heighten her celebrity outside Düsseldorf and prompted articles about her in the regional newspapers of Cologne, Königsberg, Mannheim and Wiesbaden where this exhibition was shown and in other German cities where it was not displayed.<sup>354</sup> The positive evaluation of her achievements in these reports was helped by her foresight in asking Osborn to write the introduction to her catalogue, since many of these articles quote from his text and utilise points he raises.<sup>355</sup> These articles in turn caused a ripple effect of local interest that helped her tour become a success and whose cumulative value further increased Ey's cultural impact on a national scale.

According to an article in the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* Ey is also said to have been in 'Unterhandlungen mit verschiedenen deutschen und ausländischen Städten, um ihre

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<sup>353</sup> See for instance: 'Mutter Ey - de svältande tyska konstnärernas matmamma och den tyska konstens populäraste modell ('En Konstens', n.d., p. 181), 'Mutter Ey - Tysklands Mest Målade Kvinna' ('Mutter Ey - Tysklands', n.d., n.pn.) and an article by Sternheim in the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*: 'Frau Ey [...] die meistporträtierte Frau der Welt' (Sternheim, 1928, n.pn.).

<sup>354</sup> See for instance: *Düsseldorfer Tagesblatt*, 04/05/1931; *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*, 04/07/1931, n.pn.; *Westdeutsche Woche*, 12/07/1931, n.pn. published in Bochum; *Kunst-Auktion Berlin*, 1931, n.pn.; *Berliner Börsen*, 1931; *Koblenzer General-Anzeiger*, 15/07/1931 and 'Das Ey wird international', 1931, n.pn. presumably from the *Presseamt Düsseldorf*.

<sup>355</sup> See Chapters 2 and 4 in this thesis.

Sammlung, [...] in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Hannover, Antwerpen, Amsterdam und Rotterdam zu zeigen' (*Berliner Börsen*, 1931: Ey, 1936, p. 69f). However nothing appears to have come of these attempts to promote her collection and 'brand' in these German cities and abroad. A review of newspaper reports from this period nevertheless suggests that Ey's international celebrity remained considerable in Europe and farther afield even without this extended tour. For instance an anonymous author in 1931 writes: 'Und doch kommen zu ihr [Ey] Museumsdirektoren und Kunstliebhaber vom ganzen Kontinent. Der Name Ey ist bekannt in Amsterdam wie in Paris und London' ('Die Düsseldorfer Künstlermutter', 27/08/1931, n.pn.) and 'Jan Wellem' (likely to be a pseudonym) in a report in 1932 notes: 'da sind Hefte aus Schweden, Moskau, Belgien, Spanien und Amerika, in denen Mutter Ey nicht gefeiert sondern gewürdigt wird, als die Wegbahnerin der modernen Kunst' (Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.).

Events documented in a letter to Pudlich in 1928 suggest there was already international interest in her gallery at this stage when she mentions a New York journalist wanting to write about her premises and publish photos of works by 'her' artists and in the same letter notes: 'in 14 Tagen [kommt] ein Kunsthändler aus Amerika hierher, der ev. kauft, er ist jetzt noch in Dresden. Wohnt in New York in der 61, u. 62. Straße und heißt Weyhe [Weyer]' (Letter, 06/08/1928).<sup>356</sup> Ey's attempts to take part in an exhibition in fascist Italy (Letter, 11/05/1932) and her approach to Henry Ford in the USA in regard to her collection (Letter, 28/03/1932) also suggest fresh efforts on her part to increase this international standing. That neither of these proposals materialised however could imply that she had approached people who were unsympathetic to her cause or that she had over-extended her celebrity and had not yet achieved enough international recognition to make her collection a universally desired product. Another attempt to exhibit in the USA at the international exposition *A Century of Progress* in Chicago in 1933 might have helped her achieve this standing but this did not take place either, this time for financial reasons.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> No forename for Weyer could be found. Sureda also refers to this art dealer in Letter, 'Dein Brief vom 14. August', n.d. to Ey: 'Seitdem bin ich einmal ein paar Tage in New-York [sic] gewesen. Es ist ein interessanter Zufall, dass Du mir in Deinem Briefe die Adresse des Kunsthändlers Weyer angibst, der derselbe ist, der vorigen Jahres ein Bild von mir angenommen hatte, um es zu verkaufen.'

<sup>357</sup> Ey: 'Den Rücktransport von den Bildern hätte ich ja frei gehabt, aber den Hintransport musste ich bezahlen, und es scheiterte nachher daran, dass der Dollarsturz eintrat' (Ey, 1936, p. 68).

Whereas Ey had previously helped artists who sought to reform the ‘establishment’ through their campaign to ‘modernise’ the *Düsseldorfer Akademie*, at the very latest in 1929 one could attest that moves were being made by the ‘establishment’ to incorporate her within its ranks, and the local authorities were trying to use her to promote Düsseldorf as a city of the arts. This is suggested by the visit of prominent officials from the local authorities and art institutions to her gallery on her sixty fifth birthday,<sup>358</sup> the local authorities’ provision of new gallery premises at no cost to her in 1930 and the visitors she received at its opening.<sup>359</sup> Indeed, although the *Kölner Zeitung* writes in regard to Ey’s flight to Hamburg in 1931: ‘Der Flug ging gut [...] und damit hatte der große Reklamefeldzug der nun die Stadt Düsseldorf mit der “Künstlermutter Ey” führte, seinen Anfang genommen’ (*Kölner Zeitung*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.) correspondence from Düsseldorf *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr (Letter, 03/03/1929 (?)) cited in the *Düsseldorfer Stadtanzeiger* (Luise-Straus Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn.),<sup>360</sup> which congratulates Ey on her sixty fifth birthday in March 1929, shows that the authorities sought to profit from her standing much earlier.

This letter, which acknowledges Ey’s contribution to ‘Kunststadt Düsseldorf’ and mentions Lehr’s present of 12 theatre tickets and a flight from Düsseldorf to Essen (later changed to Hamburg), suggests that the city authorities were attempting to align themselves with popular opinion and win Ey over, with the aim of laying the foundations of a partnership whereby they could use her status to project the image of a vibrant Düsseldorf art scene to the wider world. The formulation in this correspondence: ‘Sie haben zwar nie Beziehungen zu den Offiziellen [...] unterhalten’ also gives the impression that the impetus for this relationship came from the authorities and not from Ey. Moreover the publication of this letter a day before her birthday implies that it was given to the press by the authorities and was not an act of self-promotion by Ey herself.

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<sup>358</sup> See Chapter 4 of this thesis. See also: ‘Zur persönlichen Gratulation erschienen [...] Leiter des städtischen Presseamtes, Dr. Kluth [Heinz Klute]. Ferner gratulierten der Direktor des Kunstakademie, Dr. Kaesbach, [...] die Vorstände der Künstlervereinigung, [...] der Direktor des städtischen Kunstmuseums Professor Koetschau und viele andere’ (Geburtstag, 1929, n.pn.).

<sup>359</sup> In reference to the opening of Ey’s gallery in 1930 Heymann writes in the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung*: ‘Der Saal war dicht gefüllt vor allen denen, die ihre Aufwartung machten. Gustav Reuter überreichte mit zierlichem Knix namens der Stadt einen Strauß Vergißmeinnicht, es war ein ergreifende Szene und die Photographen knipsten mit Wonne das stattliche Paar’ (Heymann, 31/10/1930, n.pn.).

<sup>360</sup> See also Lehr, 03/03/1929 (?), n.n.pub., n.pn.

In regard to the authorities' use of Ey's celebrity Klapheck writes: 'In Düsseldorf war man sich wohl bewusst, mit der "meistgemalten Frau" ein gutes Aushängeschild und einen sicheren Posten im städtischen Werbeetat zu besitzen' (1958, p. 63).

Furthermore in correspondence referring to her treatment by the Nazis Ey appears to comment simultaneously on the behaviour of the Weimar authorities and suggests this was tantamount to exploitation: 'Deshalb bin ich gegen Behörden auch ganz zurückhaltend, noch mehr wie früher, aber ausgenutzt haben sie mich alle nach Strich und Faden' (Letter, 12/07/1939). A report in the *Düsseldorfer Lokal-Zeitung* from January 1933 also echoes this sentiment:

Die Legende von der Mutter Ey haben wir nicht gewollt, sie hat sie selbst nicht geschaffen - die ist das Werk der Düsseldorfer Stadtverwaltung. Und sie hat seitdem bei ihrer eifrigen Jagd nach Fremden dafür gesorgt, daß die ganze Welt von diesem letzten und eigenartigen Original und der Düsseldorfer vornehmen Gesinnung gebührend Notiz nehme. Die Stadt war es, die dabei übertrieb und aus der braven bescheidenen Frau urplötzlich - ja man muß schon sagen: eine Person von Weltgeltung machte. Niemand sonst hat das gewollt als die Stadtverwaltung. Sie hat ihren ganzen Propaganda-Apparat, soweit er nicht auf dem in seinem Grab so wehrlosen Heinrich Heine ruhte, auf dieser Legende aufgebaut. Kein Fremder, kein Prominenter, der nicht zu Frau Ey geschleppt wurde, dreimal um ihre, imponierende Leiblichkeit herumzog und die Leica knipsbereit hielt, während Frau Ey von Amtswegen freundlich zu lächeln und immer denselben Begrüßungsblödsinn über sich ergehen zu lassen hatte (Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn.).

Clearly Ey did become a kind of unofficial ambassador for the council with many V.I.P.s<sup>361</sup> such as film stars and dignitaries as well as ordinary people visiting her premises. Indeed on this evidence alongside her own efforts and those of 'her' artists and the media, the authorities also acted as cultural impresario for her. In my opinion,

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<sup>361</sup> For instance Ey: 'Im Jahre 1929 war der gute, alte Theodor Däubler bei mir [...] Mit Tatjana Barbakoff, eine russische Tänzerin, habe ich manche schöne Abende zugebracht. Brigitte Helm besuchte mich auch [...] Und Lilian Harvey und Harry Halm tranken auch Kaffee bei mir. Joachim Ringelwitz widmete mir sein Buch: Kutteldaddeldu. Mit [sic] einer humorvollen Zeichnung' (Ey, 1936, p. 72).

however, the suggestion by the aforementioned commentators that this was an exploitative one-way relationship ignores Ey's role in its encouragement and the benefits it bestowed upon her. For example she was reluctantly given a new gallery 'rent-free' by the local authorities when she had to move out of Hindenburgwall 11 due to financial difficulties, and without this help her art dealership would have come to an end and her celebrity status would have declined.<sup>362</sup> Furthermore the authorities initially suggested that Ey be given a place in a state-run old people's home (Baumeister, 1999, p. 28) when it became clear that she would have to vacate her gallery, implying that she was not seen as an indispensable cultural ambassador at this point. Thus it appears Ey needed the authorities more than they needed her at this stage and that she was considered expendable in a difficult financial period. Certainly this is the implication when the authorities appear to have changed their stance only after pressure from Ey, 'her' artists, the public,<sup>363</sup> and an article by Heymann<sup>364</sup> which emphasised what the city stood to lose and the damage that would be done to its reputation if Ey were not helped. In 1930 Dr Koetschau, director of the *Kunstmuseum* in Düsseldorf summarises the predicament the Düsseldorf authorities found themselves in as follows:

Frau Ey ist durch eine sehr rührige Reklame wesentlich über ihre Bedeutung hinaus auch außerhalb Düsseldorfs bekannt geworden. Es wird stets gesorgt

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<sup>362</sup> This is acknowledged in the *Neue Mannheimer Zeitung*, 17-18/09/1932, n.pn.: 'Manche schwere, auch materielle Kämpfe, mußten durchgeföhrt werden, wobei in Ansehen ihrer kulturell wichtigen und interessanten Leistung auch die Stadt Düsseldorf helfend eingriff.'

<sup>363</sup> See Ey's letter to *Oberbürgermeister Lehr* (Letter, 14/05/1930) and an article in a Hannover newspaper which reports: 'Vor einem Jahr noch sagte sie: "Und wenn die Stadt Düsseldorf ihrer Kunst nicht besser helfen kann, dann nehme ich einen Handkarren und stelle mich mit den prominentesten Malern an die Straßenecken und verkaufe meine Bilder und mache einen Propagandazug durch die Stadt!"' (Hannover newspaper, 1932, n.pn.). A number of artists drafted a letter to Düsseldorf's *Oberbürgermeister Lehr* on her behalf in which they extolled her virtues as a supporter of young artists (Letter, 26/09/1929). The public's support is implied by the following newspaper report: 'Unter dem Druck der öffentlichen Meinung stellte die Stadt Düsseldorf ihr [Ey] vor einigen Jahren einige Räume zur Verfügung, für die sie keine Miete erhob' (May, 16/11/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>364</sup> Heymann: 'Es geht nur um die Miete, um das bißchen Speis und Trank ist ihr nicht bange, das ist beim Kunsthandel selbst heute noch zu verdienen, wenn man so bekannt ist, so beliebt und so tüchtig ist wie Mutter Ey. Einen Laden und zwei Stuben braucht sie, die am letzten dieses Monats die Räume verlassen muß, in denen sie 13 Jahren als Göttin der Kunst gethront hat. Ein Stück Düsseldorf wäre verloren, wenn Johanna Ey die originellste Frau, die je in unseren Mauern weilte, die Stadt verlassen müßte. Also muß die Stadt einspringen. Sie kann das, bei alle gebotenen Sparsamkeit, ohne das ihr Kosten von Belang entstehen' (Heymann, 16/08/1930, n.pn.). In a letter to family Schramm Ey suggests that the support in the press was not just limited to Heymann: 'Ich war durch die miese Geschäftslage in großer Sorge und dann hat mir die Stadt, nachdem sich die Presse sehr für mich eingesetzt hat, hier nebenan das Postamt als Ausstellungsraum zur Verfügung gestellt' (Letter, 10/12/1930). No other articles in the corpus to hand however provide evidence of this.

werden, dass, wenn Frau Ey aus ihren misslichen Verhältnissen nicht herauskommt, man sagen wird, es läge an der Stadtverwaltung [...]. Natürlich ist das grundfalsch. Aber es fragt sich, ob man in diesem Fall nicht doch der einmal bearbeiteten öffentlichen Meinung Rechnung tragen sollte [...]. Das Eintreten für Frau Ey würde zweifellos von der jungen Künstlerschaft sowohl freudig begrüßt, wie auch von der Mehrzahl der Stadtverordneten gutgeheißen werden. Geschieht nichts für sie, wird sich in der Presse wieder ein lautes Geschrei erheben, und wenn das auch noch so unbegründet ist, es wird schließlich ein Vorwurf für die Stadtverwaltung herauskonstruiert werden. Gewiss ist es eine eigentümliche Form des Mäzenatentums, [...] aber es wird der Stadt Düsseldorf immer noch als einer Kunststadt besser zu Gesicht stehen, als wenn wir die einmal sehr populär gewordene Frau ihrem Schicksal überlassen (Letter, 30/05/1930: Baumeister, 1999, p. 30).

I would therefore argue that it was Ey and her supporters who convinced the authorities that she was essential to Düsseldorf, and the authorities may have felt entitled to use her to promote the city having provided her with a new ‘rent-free’ gallery. Moreover whilst Baumeister views Ey’s participation in the sketch *Sieben Maler und ein Modell*<sup>365</sup> in a revue in February 1932, organised by Dr Klute the head of the city of Düsseldorf’s press office, as further evidence of her manipulation by the authorities,<sup>366</sup> this interpretation does not consider that Ey could have knowingly used this event for her own promotional purposes. Indeed this performance and her wider role as an informal cultural ambassador could indicate that she realised that maintaining momentum behind her celebrity offered the best hope of her business staying afloat during the late 1920’s and early 1930’s. This is certainly suggested in Heymann’s statement in regard to Ey’s promotion of Düsseldorf as a city of the arts:

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<sup>365</sup> Klapheck: ‘Eine Revue im “Apollo” kündigte nach Tanz, Akrobatik und Dresseur als Schlußnummer an: “Sieben Maler malen ein Modell”. Sieben Staffeleien und sieben Kartons werden auf die Bühne gebracht, sieben Maler [...] holen Johanna Ey aus ihrer Loge und geleiten sie unter den Klängen des Gladiatorenmarsches im Triumph durch das Parkett und auf die Bühne. Im Handumdrehen entstehen unter dem Jubel des Publikums auf den Kartons sieben Johanna Eys, sie werden für wohlthätige Zwecke versteigert’ (1958, p. 63).

<sup>366</sup> Baumeister writes: ‘Dieser unglückliche Einfall zeigt, bis zu welchem Grade Düsseldorf Frau Ey als “Original” vermarktete’ (1999, p. 36).

Johanna Ey, die Künstlermutter, die originelle Frau, hat in unserer an Originalen wirklich nicht reichen Zeit und Stadt stets und prompt in Aktion treten müssen, wenn die Fremden anrückten, um etwas von lebendiger Düsseldorfer Kunst außerhalb der musealen Camposanti zu sehen. Sie hat es gern getan, hat auch stets zu ihres Namens Ruhm zu tun gewußt, was praktisch war (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.).

The relationship between Ey and the Düsseldorf council is therefore more complex than certain commentators would have us believe, and I would argue it is of a different nature and involves more parties than has so far been suggested. I would instead be inclined to view this arrangement as a mutually beneficial four-way partnership characterised by endorsement and counter-endorsement. Ey had her premises paid for by the council and had her gallery promoted by them and thus secured her livelihood and increased her chances of attracting potential customers. The local authorities were able to increase the cultural standing of the city by using Ey as a tourist attraction and unofficial ambassador for non-celebrity visitors and V.I.P.s in return for this financial aid. Celebrity visitors gained cultural capital through their association with Ey and simultaneously increased the wider reputation of both Ey and Düsseldorf through the attractive media opportunities that they presented, whilst both they and non-celebrity visitors promoted Ey and Düsseldorf by word of mouth. The local and national and to a limited extent international media also profited from the constellation created by these three parties, since they generated newsworthy stories which sold newspapers, and this in return raised the profile of the aforementioned trio.

On 21 June 1932 however, Lehr took steps to end this relationship with Ey by stopping her 150 RM rent subsidy with the effect that the *Grundstücksverwaltung* asked her to leave her gallery by the latter half of August at the latest. After her non-payment of the 150 RM per month rent, Lehr then revoked Ey's contract from 16 October 1930 and on 21 October started legal proceedings to evict her (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). Ey lost the case on 3 January 1933 and was ordered to leave Postamt 8 and pay 5 RM per day from the period 22 October 1932 until the date she was due to move out (*Der Mittag*, 04/01/1933, n.pn.). If a newspaper from November 1932 is to be believed this led to offers from other cities in Germany including



Cologne, Berlin and Munich as well as from Holland (Amsterdam) (May, 16/11/1932, n.pn.) to provide her with a new gallery. This indicates the widespread recognition she had achieved and suggests she remained a desirable 'product' with others interested in the potential benefits of her endorsement. In the case of Cologne it could also be interpreted as an attempt to use Ey's plight to cast their regional competitor, Düsseldorf, in a negative light.

Lehr's decision to evict Ey is attributed by an article in *Der Mittag* in January 1933 to the difficult financial situation the city found itself in and the need to treat everyone equally in regard to the cuts in 'Unterstützungsleistungen' necessary in this climate, coupled with the fact that both of Ey's sons were in work (*Der Mittag*, 12/01/1933, n.pn.). However as has been argued in Chapter 4 one could also see this as part of a purge of the Düsseldorf cultural scene in accordance with what the National Socialists wanted. An article in the *Freiheit* in 1946 which states that: 'Im Jahre 1932 begann ein neuer "nationaler Wind" in Düsseldorf zu wehen'<sup>367</sup> certainly suggests this could be the case, as does Goebbels when he writes: 'Es ging der Stadt eigentlich nur darum ihren Kunsthandel zu unterbinden, da ihre Kunst mit den aufkommenden nationalsozialistischen Kunstauffassungen nicht zu vereinbaren war' (Goebbels, 2000, p. 16).

Whatever was behind this decision, the attempts to evict Ey in 1932 and early 1933 were unsuccessful because Lehr was replaced and imprisoned by the Nazis in 1933 under the pretext of corruption (*Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 1985, vol. 14, p. 112f). The resolution of Ey's situation then appears to have been either forgotten or deliberately delayed, possibly because the authorities were considering how best to deal with such a popular figure. Ey was therefore in the unusual position of having been given, intentionally or otherwise, a temporary reprieve by the Nazis. In 1934 however the Nazis resumed the process started by their Weimar predecessors and closed her gallery. In the available correspondence between the Düsseldorf authorities and Ey there is no mention of associations with 'degenerate' art or left-wing politics as the reason behind this closure. Moreover Böll's suggestion that her harbouring of Jews and having pictures by Jewish artists in her gallery led to this course of action

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<sup>367</sup> See *Freiheit*, 18/10/1946, n.pn.

remains unsubstantiated.<sup>368</sup> Instead on 16 February 1934 the *Grundstücksverwaltung* notified her that they had found someone else to rent her premises and that she had to leave by 28 February (Letter, 16/02/1934).

This explanation may have been credible in the Weimar Period but against the backdrop of the removal of teaching staff who did not meet Nazi prerequisites from the *Düsseldorfer Akademie* and the emigration and torture of artists she knew, coupled with the windows of her premises being plastered with boycott flyers (Barth, 1984, p. 60), one is inclined to view this explanation with scepticism. The more subtle approach by the Nazis could be explained by Ey's status as a popular local figure and the desire of the local authorities not to alienate the general public, effectively endorsing Heymann's point that: 'Die Stadtverwaltung Düsseldorf hat die Legende von Mutter Ey geschaffen, die ganze Welt glaubt daran. Und wenn sie selbst sie heute nicht mehr haben will, es hilft ihr nichts: Legenden lassen sich nicht einsparen und abbauen. Weil alle Welt daran glaubt, wird auch die Stadtverwaltung Düsseldorf heute und künftig daran glauben müssen' (Heymann, 29/10/1932, n.pn.). Indeed Baumeister argues plausibly that Ey may have been protected from more serious consequences by her celebrity.<sup>369</sup>

A letter from the president of the *Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* which demanded the disbanding of the *Rheinische Sezession* certainly gives an indication of the Nazis' true opinion of her and clearly shows that she was viewed as symbolic of the Weimar era and the type of art they wanted to destroy: 'Vielmehr hat sich gezeigt, dass in der Rheinischen Sezession der Geist jener Kreise der Vergangenheit, die sich um Flechtheim, Frau Ey u.a. scharten, immer noch vorhanden ist. Das hat dazu geführt, dass aus der genannten Ausstellung eine Reihe von Werken von Mitgliedern

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<sup>368</sup> Böll: 'Nur wenige Wochen nach der sogenannten Machtübernahme meldete sich der Geist, der ein gutes Jahrzehnt vorher vor ihrem Laden getobt und geschimpft hatte am Telefon. Wieder einmal, obwohl die Räume ihr ausdrücklich mietfrei überlassen worden waren, wurde Miete gefordert, rückwirkend vom Jahre 1930 an - aber da dieses Argument bei der energischen alten Frau nichts zu fruchten schien, vielleicht auch eine gewisse Scham die Argumente des telefonierenden Beamten schwächte, wurde ein anderer Grund für die Räumungsklage angegeben: sie beherberge Juden und habe Bilder jüdischer Maler in ihrem Laden' (Böll, 1960, p. 78).

<sup>369</sup> Baumeister: 'Johanna Ey, die sich nicht aktiv politisch betätigt hatte, wurde durch ihre Popularität geschützt [...] Offenbar fürchteten auch die neuen Machthaber die Popularität der Kunsthändlerin' (1999, p. 39f). As part of my research it has been ascertained for the first time that there is no record of Ey having had a Gestapo or police file. This is according to an email from the *Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Email, 21/10/2008//04/12/2008).

der Rheinischen Sezession entfernt werden mussten.<sup>370</sup> Furthermore Lauterbach, commenting on a letter to Schwesig from Ey (Letter, 30/07/1921) notes that:

Nach der sogenannten Machtübernahme konnte sich der fanatische Hass gegen Johanna Ey und gegen die Künstler des “Jungen Rheinland” erst recht manifestierend austoben und sogar offiziellen Charakter annehmen. Eines der führenden Mitglieder des “Malkastens” überreichte der NSDAP die berühmt gewordene Seite der “Berliner Illustrierten” aus dem Jahre 1930: “Die meistgemalte Frau Deutschlands” und versah in übelster Weise die Namen der Maler mit den entsprechenden Denunziationen, wie “Jude” oder “Bastard”, oder “Bei der Säuberung der Akademie vergessen zu entlassen”. Ein Zeitdokument von ehrgeizigem Kollegenhass, Kollegenneid und Brodneid [sic] (‘Zum Brief von Johanna Ey an Karl Schwesig’, n.d., n.pn.).

As a consequence of this ‘exo-degradation’ (Rojek, 2001, p. 80) in which this external party stripped Ey of her status through the closure of her gallery, her celebrity experienced a partial regression into notoriety in accordance with the change in societal values to the point where many people she knew - including artists - no longer acknowledged her in the street (Ey, 1936, p. 113). The National Socialists however, as was the case with the Weimar authorities before them, were not as consistent in their approach to Ey as the aforementioned examples suggest. Indeed they appear to have had an opportunistic and split approach to Ey’s celebrity. On the one hand they tried to suppress her popular appeal and demonstrate their strength and policy on ‘degenerate’ art by inducing the closure of her gallery under the pretext of rent arrears. Yet on the other hand they used one element of her Weimar public face, the maternal cliché, to endorse their family policies by presenting her with a golden *Mutterkreuz* (Letter, 02/01/1941).

During the Nazi period Ey’s celebrity status was therefore clearly reduced by Nazi art policy and an indoctrinated public and media despite positive comments about her in the *Frankfurter Volksblatt* in 1935 (*Frankfurter Volksblatt*, 25/06/1935, n.pn.), author Friedrich Kerst’s inoffensive description of her in regard to an exhibition by Pudlich

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<sup>370</sup> Letter, 21/03/1938 from the *Präsident der Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* Adolf Ziegler - no addressee mentioned.

in 1937 in the *Bergisch-Märkischen Zeitung*<sup>371</sup> and Schreiner's mention of her story in *Die Republik der vierzehn Jahre* published in Holland in 1939 (Schreiner, 1939, pp. 131-139). In this context, as has been argued in Chapter 4, the writing of her memoirs in 1936 can be understood as an attempt to record her life and contribution with a view to it being read later by a more sympathetic post-Nazi audience. When the Nazi regime did eventually fall Ey appears to have taken active steps to re-invigorate her 'public face' by writing to a Hamburg newspaper explaining what had happened to her,<sup>372</sup> which led to a Hamburg radio station asking her for an interview broadcast in December 1945.<sup>373</sup> In this way she let her friends know she was alive,<sup>374</sup> and simultaneously used the radio for the first time for self-promotion. This initiative appears to have paid dividends as shortly after this broadcast two businessmen asked if Ey wanted to open a firm with them in Düsseldorf:

Nach Weihnachten, am 3. Januar 1946 erschienen an einem Samstag mit einem schönen Privatwagen bei mir in Reinbek zwei Düsseldorfer Herren, Hinsen und Neumann und frugen, ob ich nicht gerne nach Düsseldorf mochte, um mit ihnen eine gemeinsame Firma zur Ausstellung von modernen Bildern und Kunstgegenständen zu eröffnen, ich bekäme 10% vom Reingewinn, außerdem freie Wohnung - 2 Zimmer und Küche - und 200 Mark monatlich zum Leben (*Nachlass Ey Wien*, n.d.: Barth, 1984, p. 67).

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<sup>371</sup> Baumeister notes that Ey was mentioned in terms which were not derogatory by Friedrich Kerst in regard to an exhibition in July 1937 in *Kunststube Leithäuser* in Elberfeld in which works by Pudlich amongst others were exhibited (1999, p. 41). Kerst: 'In der Systemzeit war der Kunstsalon der Mutter Ey in Düsseldorf am Hindenburgwall eine Sehenswürdigkeit und Mutter Ey selbst darin die Hauptattraktion. Ihre runde gutmütige Erscheinung ist von "ihren" Malern, denen des Ey-Kreises, oft dargestellt worden in allen möglichen und einigen fast unmöglichen Stellungen, so auch von Robert Pudlich, einem ihrer Getreuten' (Kerst, 1937, n.pn.).

<sup>372</sup> Barth: 'nach Kriegsende meldet sich Johanna Ey wieder öffentlich zu Wort. Nachdem sie in einer Hamburger Zeitung über den nationalsozialistischen Bilderraub aus Hamburger Museen gelesen hat, schickt sie dem Redakteur ihren Katalog "Sammlung Ey" und berichtet über ihr und ihrer Kunstwerke Schicksal' (1984, p. 65f). Ey writes: 'In Hamburg wird viel Reklame für mich gemacht, ein grosser Artikel stand in der Zeitung' (Letter, 28/11/1945). This appears to have been the article by H.R.L. (no information available) 'Eine mütterliche Kunstfreundin', *Neue Hamburger Presse*, 03/11/1945, n.pn.

<sup>373</sup> Ey: 'Am 2ten Weihnachtstage spreche ich im Hamburg Rundfunk. Zwei Herren, Dr. Seidel und Dr. Werner [...] waren hier und kommen mich Morgen Montag hier abholen um ein Gespräch mit mir aufzunehmen' (Letter, 14/12/1945).

<sup>374</sup> Ey: 'ich [bekam] von allen Gegenden Briefe von meinen früheren Freunden, die sich freuten, daß ich noch lebte. Mein Tod war schon oft gemeldet worden' (*Nachlass Ey Wien*, n.d.: Barth, 1984, p. 67).

This venture opened in July 1947<sup>375</sup> with surviving art works from Ey's collection previously stored in the Eifel and elsewhere displayed in a *Künstlerkaffeestube* with adjoining *Kabarettbühne*.<sup>376</sup> Hinsen and Neumann were therefore provided with instant access to a renowned collection that afforded their business immediate credibility and standing. The choice of name for the firm *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum Mutter Ey GmbH Düsseldorf* (Barth, 1984, p. 69) also suggests the businessmen were keen to emphasise Ey's endorsement and to transfer the reputation she held in this sphere to their enterprise. This appears to have been an approach shared by the post-war Düsseldorf authorities, who as has already been mentioned, made Ey an *Ehrenbürgerin*, awarded her an *Ehrensold* and worked in conjunction with local radio to organise interviews in order to improve their cultural reputation.<sup>377</sup> The opening of this *Künstlerzentrum* certainly raised Ey's profile in the short term by generating newspaper articles which mentioned her 'story',<sup>378</sup> and by publicising Ey's name every time an event took place on these premises. Moreover Ey's desire to return to Düsseldorf, re-acquire the pictures that had been taken from her,<sup>379</sup> her arrival in the city,<sup>380</sup> her eighty third birthday<sup>381</sup> and finally her death in 1947 generated considerable media interest.

Despite this publicity however one could argue that not enough of Ey's iconic status was revived for the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum* to survive her death since the business was finally closed presumably in October 1950 having re-opened under different management on 12 May 1949.<sup>382</sup> The implication here could be that her

<sup>375</sup> Articles in the S.D.A. refer to July 1947 as the date of the opening and Baumeister states this occurred on 8 July 1947 (1999, p. 50).

<sup>376</sup> Information from the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, 19/07/1947, n.pn. See a list of the artists whose work was displayed at this opening and the prices they commanded in a catalogue produced for this occasion (Catalogue, *Mutter Ey GmbH*, 08/07/1947).

<sup>377</sup> It is however noted by Leyendecker in an article in *Freiheit* that representatives of the council were absent from the vernissage of the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum*: 'der Vertreter der Stadt Düsseldorf wurde von allen anwesenden Persönlichkeiten des westdeutschen Kulturlebens schmerzlich vermißt' (*Freiheit*, 11/07/1947, n.pn.). It is not explained why this was the case.

<sup>378</sup> See: 'Kleiner Bericht aus einer Kunststadt', 1947, n.pn.; *RP*, 09/07/1947, n.pn.; *RE*, 09/07/1947, n.pn.; *Freiheit*, 11/07/1947, n.pn.; *WR*, 12/07/1947, n.pn.; *RE*, 12/07/1947, n.pn.; *Der Spiegel*, 12/07/1947, n.pn.; *Freiheit*, 15/07/1947, n.pn. and *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, 19/07/1947, n.pn.

<sup>379</sup> See 'Mutter Ey macht wieder Pläne', n.d., n.pn.

<sup>380</sup> See *RE*, 29/03/1946, n.pn. and *Freiheit*, 02/04/1946, n.pn.

<sup>381</sup> See: *Freiheit*, 'Mutter Ey zum Geburtstag', n.d., n.pn.; *RE*, 01/03/1947, n.pn.; *Freiheit*, 07/03/1947, n.pn. and *RE*, 08/03/1947, n.pn.

<sup>382</sup> See advert referring to the re-opening of the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum* under new management (*Anzeige*, *Mutter Ey*, 1949) and an article about this event (*Drei Groschen Blatt*,

‘brand’ was not as potent without her personality to sustain it, or equally, that the diverse offerings of this firm, ranging from theatre productions to satirical cabaret, musical performances, fashion shows and art exhibitions - which were not always linked to Ey or Düsseldorf<sup>383</sup> and which continued to an extent after its re-opening -<sup>384</sup> represented an ill-advised business strategy. It is however also likely that consumer taste had moved on to other art styles and that Ey’s celebrity status could not endure in a post-war atmosphere concerned with the present and the future rather than the past. This is implied in an article in the *Rheinische Post* which states: ‘Im ehemaligen Ladenlokal Hinsen werden die jungen Talente wie ehemals Gelegenheit haben, ihre Kunst in die Öffentlichkeit zu hängen, auch wenn sie gerade mal nicht “Mode” ist’ (*RP*, 09/07/1947, n.pn.). Moreover Barth writes persuasively that: ‘was in den 20er Jahren unter dem Namen “Neue Kunst Frau Ey” historische Bedeutung erlangt hat, läßt sich nach 1945 nicht als “Mutter Ey GmbH” vermarkten’ (1984, p. 69) and Böll sums up this situation: ‘Alle Versuche, Johanna nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg wieder in die Ehre zu setzen, blieben künstlich, fast krampfhaft, [...] Die Schuld lag nicht bei ihren Freunden, [...] auch nicht bei den Behörden und den Personen, die diese Behörden vertraten. Es lag an der Zeit, die leer war, sich entleert hatte, derer beraubt war, die sie hätten füllen können’ (1960, p. 81).

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20/05/1949, n.pn.). See *RE*, 27/10/1950, n.pn., which reports on its closure - Barth notes that by this stage it had become nothing more than a pub (1984, p. 69).

<sup>383</sup> An example of the diversity of entertainment offered by the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum* is evident in *RP*, 09/07/1947, n.pn: ‘In einem großen Oberlichtsaal, der tagsüber der Kunstschau dient, werden sich abends vor Tischen und Stühlen auf der kleinen Bühne, Komponisten, Musiker, Dichter, Schauspieler und andere vorstellen’. Evidence of theatre productions is provided by a guest appearance from *Kommödchen*: ‘der kleinen Literaten-, Maler- und Schauspielerbühne Düsseldorfs [...] Sie werden vom Dienstag ab einen Monat lang auf der Bühne in Mutter Eys Ausstellungsräumen ein Gastspiel geben’ (*Der Spiegel*, 12/07/1947, n.pn.). Mention of satirical cabaret is made in the *Freiheit*, 05/12/1947, n.pn, evidence of musical performances in *RP*, 19/11/1947, n.pn. and reference to a fashion show in *RP*, 02/05/1949, n.pn. An example of an art exhibition not linked to Ey which took place in the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum* is *Polnische Graphik* (*Freiheit*, 13/01/1948, n.pn.).

<sup>384</sup> In reference to Mr Ognibeni (no forename could be found) taking over the running of the *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum*, the *Rhein Echo* gives a sense of the direction this business took: ‘[Ognibeni] ein wendiger Cafétier [...] will die Ansprüche herabschrauben und seinen Frühstücks-, Kaffee- und Eßgästen zu angenehmen Preisen etwas gutes bieten. Kabarett ja, aber mehr zum Artistischen hin; sonntags unbekannte Künstler aus dem Publikum. Wechselnde Bildausstellungen in den Räumen werden weiter durchgeführt’ (*RE*, 03/05/1949, n.pn.). See also reference to a theatre performance *Tor und Tod* by dramatist Hugo von Hoffmannsthal (*RE*, 02/06/1949, n.pn.), a reading of works by author Christian Morgenstern (*RE*, 04/08/1949, n.pn.), a ‘Kinderfest bei “Mutter Ey”’ (*RE*, 06/08/1949, n.pn.) and cabaret (*RP*, 28/12/1949, n.pn.) which took place following this change of management. Furthermore a ‘Künstlerkeller’ was to be erected under the café: ‘Er will aber keine Sensation [...] sondern vor allem erstmal den Künstlern aller Berufe ein Aufenthaltsraum und eine Gaststätte sein, in dem zum Einkaufspreis Speisen verabreicht werden’ (*RE*, 18/08/1949, n.pn.).

From an analysis of the collection of newspaper articles in the archive of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* it certainly seems that for approximately a decade after her death Ey remained something of a forgotten figure. Had she been successful in her attempts to get her 1936 memoirs published in 1947 this situation may have been different,<sup>385</sup> but instead the majority of these articles, with few exceptions,<sup>386</sup> mention her only in so far as they name her as part of the title of the firm *Westdeutsches Künstlerzentrum Mutter Ey GmbH Düsseldorf*. Indeed the *Westdeutsche Rundschau* refers to radio station NWDR not wanting to broadcast a programme about Ey's death: 'mit der Begründung, daß eine Mutter Ey weder in Hamburg noch in Berlin, noch auch sonst so bekannt sei, daß sich die Sendung rechtfertigen lasse' (*WR*, 10/09/1947, n.pn.). It appears to have taken Klapheck's 1958 monograph to revive and define her celebrity for a post-war audience. Subsequently in every decade since her death, there has been a publication or republication of substantial texts, mainly in German, relating to Ey and numerous mentions of her in works relating to the *Junge Rheinland*, which have generated media attention.<sup>387</sup> There have also been a wealth of regional and a small number of national newspaper articles in Germany which refer to Ey or focus on her as their subject. These include several articles written by her daughter Elisabeth<sup>388</sup> and a number which have marked particular anniversaries relating to Ey's life dates.<sup>389</sup> Certain artists with whom she was associated also

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<sup>385</sup> In regard to her 1936 memoirs Ey writes in Letter, 15/10/1946 to Mommertz: 'nun habe ich die Schlußworte beinahe fertig, habe einen Verleger u. Drucker und garanti[e]rt für vorläufig 5000 Exemplare mit Illustrationen, Preis des Buches noch unbestimmt, jedenfalls 6 M.50. Ich erhalte vielleicht für jedes Buch einen Reinverdienst von 1 M. bis 1,50 und so fortlaufend. Also muß ich noch einige Jahre leben.' Leyendecker elaborates on why Ey's memoirs were not published in a letter to Klapheck: 'Eines Tages, es war im Jahre 1947, drückte sie [Ey] einen Durchschlag in meine widerstrebende Hand und bat mich [...] etwas daraus zu machen. Die Lektüre war erfreulicher als erwartet [...] Aber es war voller halber und verbauter Satzbildungen. Die Stenotypistin hatte nicht den Fehler gemacht, das von sich aus zu begradigen. Offensichtlich wollte sie die ursprüngliche Frische erhalten. Das beabsichtigte auch ich, als ich beschloß die Sache druckreif zu machen, zunächst ohne bestimmtes Ziel. Das daraus entstandene Manuskript bot ich später, gedrängt von Johanna Ey, dem damals noch bestehende Fähre-Verlag (Till Eulenberg) an, der es auch drucken wollte. Das Büchlein sollte aber aus den vielen Erinnerungsfotos, die Frau Ey besaß, reich illustriert werden. Dazu brauchten wir aber unbedingt das damals kaum vorhandene Kunstdruckpapier. Eulenberg konnte auch nichts beschaffen, und der ganze Plan mußte dann aufgegeben werden' (Letter, 25/02/1958).

<sup>386</sup> See for example Fischer, 1951, Lodenstein, 1952 and Hundt, 1957.

<sup>387</sup> Examples of press coverage include for Baumeister, 1999: 'Partnerin der "jungen Wilden"' ('Partnerin', 19/10/1998, n.pn.) and Körner/Wilkens, 2000: 'Korpulente Leidenschaft' (*WZ*, 15/07/2000, n.pn.).

<sup>388</sup> See *DN*, 03/03/1964, n.pn., *DN*, 29/08/1964 and Stöcker, 1968, pp. 138-140. A talk Elisabeth Ey gave about her mother in the *Heimatverein Derendorfer Jonges* was also the subject of several articles. For instance 'Erinnerung an Mutter Ey', 07/12/1962, n.pn.

<sup>389</sup> See for instance: '100. Geburtstag von Mutter Ey' (*RP*, 03/03/1964, n.pn.) and 'Mit Bildern bezahlt: Heute vor 50 Jahren starb die legendäre Mutter Ey' (*RP*, 27/08/1997, n.pn.).

immortalised her posthumously in accounts,<sup>390</sup> and she has also been mentioned in articles,<sup>391</sup> books and catalogues about certain artists.

Aside from these literary memorials, the most important of which have been documented in Chapter 1 of this thesis, there have been many attempts by regional authorities and institutions, firms and private individuals to memorialise Ey which have themselves generated media coverage. Some of the earliest occurred during Ey's lifetime in the memorialisation of her by Sureda and his family. In a letter from Sureda to Ey referring to a place where she had resided in Majorca for instance he remarks that he had showed guests the "Eyland", wie ich das kleine Häus'chen in Establiments nenne, wo Du zuerst gewohnt hast' (Letter, 'Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe', n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 131f). Furthermore according to author Albert Vigelois Thelen in *Die Insel des zweiten Gesichts* the mattress that she had slept on in Majorca was kept by the Sureda family and given a plaque.<sup>392</sup> This unconventional memorial, which would not be out of place in a contemporary art installation, was also afforded to others who had stayed with the Suredas and their ancestors on the island, such as the composer and pianist Frédéric Chopin.<sup>393</sup> These mattresses, which appear to have been stored stacked on top of each other, can thus be seen to represent a private 'hall of fame' in which Ey's celebrity was raised to the level of the others who were remembered there and vice versa - again offering an example of mutual promotion. The nature of this memorial also has similarities with the way in which fans seek to become closer to celebrities by possessing a memento that had belonged to them, such as an item of clothing, or even that which has been part of them, such as a lock of hair. The mattress offers both, as Ey had slept on it, and it was therefore imbued with her bodily fluids and abrasions. This is a point Thelen appears to acknowledge when

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<sup>390</sup> See: Hundt, 1957; Wever, 1965; Hundt, 1970; Kaufmann, 1970 and Lauterbach, 1981.

<sup>391</sup> For instance: 'Mutter Ey in Ausuferungen: Stadtmuseum zeigt zum 100. Geburtstag Johann Baptiste Hermann Hundt' (*WZ*, 28/11/1994, n.pn.) and 'Otto Dix: Wandel in Düsseldorf' (*RP*, 22/07/1994, n.pn.).

<sup>392</sup> This was brought to my attention in Klapheck, 1958, p. 44/ p. 46.

<sup>393</sup> Thelen writes: 'Der Bettberg, vom Boden bis unter die Decke aus Matratzen geschichtet wies die folgenden, an Täfelchen abzulesenden Ablagerungen berühmter Schläfer auf'. He then names amongst others: 'Don Miguel de Unamuno [Spanish author Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo] [...] - Don Federico [Frédéric] Chopin - Jovellanos [Spanish statesman and author Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos y Ramírez] - Mutter Ey - [...] - Azorín [pseudonym for Spanish author José Martínez Ruiz]' (Thelen, p. 472). The page relating to Ey's mattress cited here (see also p. 664 in the same source for a further mention) is from photocopies in the S.D.A. The short reference used here refers to this source. It could not be established which edition of this book, first published in 1953 and reprinted several times, these pages come from.



he writes: ‘Ich habe Mutter Ey nicht persönlich gekannt und nur, als einzige intimere Berührung, auf einer von ihr historisch beschlafenen Matratze geschlafen’ (Thelen, p. 664). These factors therefore combine to provide an ‘authentic’ memorial with a direct connection to Ey, in which no one view of her is prescribed.

Although never realised, another memorial had been planned during her lifetime by sculptor Bernhard Sopher. Inge Zacher (occupation unknown) writes: ‘Ein Zeugnis für die Verbundenheit Sophers mit dem Künstlerkreis um Johanna Ey ist der Porträtstatuette der Kunsthändlerin von 1932. Sopher hatte schon damals den Plan, ein Denkmal für Ey im Hofgarten zu errichten (*Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 339).<sup>394</sup> The work Zacher is referring to is *Johanna Ey als spanische Eselsreiterin* (now missing, Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 22) (Fig. 56) which offered a life-like sculpture of a rotund, almost spherical Ey sitting astride a donkey in reference to her trip to Spain. It had a claim to ‘authenticity’ as it was created in the period in which she was alive, and by an artist she knew. As Körner and Wilkens suggest it can also be seen to make an ironic reference to the *Reiterdenkmal* of ‘Herrscher[...] und Helden’ (Körner/Wilkens, 2000, p. 21), and if erected, would in my view have addressed her unusual status as a working-class woman in this cultural and historical hierarchy. Had this statue been commissioned and placed in the prestigious central location of the *Düsseldorfer Hofgarten* it would have indicated that Ey was an important cultural figure in the eyes of the Düsseldorf authorities. However given that mid-1932 onwards represented the period in which Lehr attempted to cut ties with Ey, and considering that Sopher was Jewish (Zacher: *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 339f), his sculpture was never likely to have been approved.

Posthumously, the regional authorities in Nordrhein-Westfalen have made various attempts to memorialise Ey. The Düsseldorf authorities for instance commissioned a death mask of her<sup>395</sup> and gave her a grave of honour in Düsseldorf’s *Nordfriedhof* (Area 26, Number 12-13) (Fig. 17) where *Oberbürgermeister* Josef Gockeln held a

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<sup>394</sup> This is also mentioned in *Der Spiegel*, 12/07/1947, n.pn.: ‘Als Eselreiterin sollte sie [Ey] nach einem Modell von Bernhard Sopher in Düsseldorfer Hofgarten aufgestellt werden.’

<sup>395</sup> An article in the *RP*, 01/06/1959, n.pn. states that a death mask of Ey was held in the collection of the Düsseldorf-Bilk *Heimatmuseum* based in the attic of *Haus Freiligrath*. Furthermore Stöcker remarks: ‘Eine Gipsbüste, die Totenmaske im Auftrage der Stadt Düsseldorf von einem Professor der Kunstakademie abgenommen, und ein Schatz an Erinnerungen ist alles, was sie [Elisabeth Ey] von der meistgemalten Frau Deutschlands hat retten können’ (Stöcker, 1968, p. 140).

speech at her funeral (Gockeln, 30/08/1947) and a radio station was asked to cover this event.<sup>396</sup> These efforts could be construed as further attempts, following the Düsseldorf authorities' decision to make her an *Ehrenbürgerin* and award her an *Ehrensold*, to acknowledge an individual who had contributed much to the city's art scene and as a form of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* given her treatment by the city's authorities at the end of the Weimar period and under the Nazis. However they also suggest attempts to use her memory to promote Düsseldorf. This is certainly the impression given in Gockeln's speech: 'Sie, die Stadt Düsseldorf, die sich dankbar verneigt vor den sterblichen Überresten, bekennt sich in dieser Stunde zu dem geistigen Vermächtnis der "Mutter Ey" und zu der Verpflichtung, dass ihr Werk erhalten und ihr Name fortgeführt werden' (Gockeln, 30/08/1947).

That this *Ehrenggrab* was in a central plot in a cemetery in which many important artists are buried<sup>397</sup> suggests she was held in high esteem by the authorities, as does their laying of a wreath on the centenary of her birth (*DN* (?), 04/03/1965, n.pn). Yet if this grave was constructed by them, as appears to have been the case, its execution implies the very opposite. Ey's personal plans for her own memorialisation included a statue by Jupp Rübsam<sup>398</sup> (Fig. 57) and a poem by Wollheim:

An Mutter Ey

Düsseldorf, den 6. Mai 1921.

Deine Augen sind die Ferne,  
Deine Worte sind der Wind,  
Dein Herze, das ist die Werkstätte der ganzen Menschengemeinde,  
Dein Sinn, das ist die Erschaffung alles Gebilde,  
Deine Hände, das ist der Balsam auf den müden und verzweifelten Seelen,

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<sup>396</sup> As has already been mentioned this was never broadcast (*WR*, 10/09/1947, n.pn.).

<sup>397</sup> For example Ernst Barlach, Ewald Mataré and Kollwitz are mentioned on a sign welcoming visitors to the *Nordfriedhof*.

<sup>398</sup> Barth: 'Das Grabmonument, das Frau Ey kurz vor ihrem Tod bei Jupp Rübsam in Auftrag gegeben hat, steht nicht auf ihrem Grab. Rübsams Entwurf, später in Bronze gegossen, ist im Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf zu sehen' (1984, p. 69). It should however be noted that Ey died without being able to approve the design. Körner/Wilkens: 'Diese im Düsseldorfer Stadtmuseum aufbewahrte Statuette ist der Bronzeabguß des Modells, das Jupp Rübsam auf Wunsch von Johanna Ey als Entwurf für ihr Grabmal anfertigte. Sie hat diesen Entwurf nicht mehr sehen können; bevor ihr Rübsam das Modell vorlegen konnte, starb sie [...] Daß Johanna Ey wußte, in welcher Weise Jupp Rübsam ihr ein Grabdenkmal setzen wollte, darf vorausgesetzt werden' (2000, p. 21).

Deine Füße sind der sanfte Abendtritt des Schlafes,  
Deine Wangen sind die leuchtenden, erquickung [sic] - spendenden Signale,  
In Bäume hängender reifer Süßfrüchte,  
Dem Wanderer, der auf leichtem Boot gezogen kommt, heimathoffend.  
Dein milder Kaffee ist der Trost weinender, wehklagender Geister,  
Deine Zigaretten zerbeissen den Schmerz zerrissener Ehen,  
Dein warmer Ofen ist das Zentrum obdachloser,  
schaffender Genien in Düsseldorf.  
Lass uns alle bei Dir bleiben,  
denn siehe der Tag hat sich geneigt,  
Und es lechzt der Mund nach Schnaps und hoher geistiger Zwiesprache.

Gert Heinrich Wollheim (Ey, 1936, p. 116f)<sup>399</sup>

Had her instructions been followed the result would have continued the tradition of 'Ey's' artists 'memorialising' her in their art works and allowed a varied impression of her to emerge from a combination of visual and written elements. However the authorities instead provided a small (78 cm wide x 50 cm high) and slightly elevated sandstone slab, bearing her nickname 'Mutter Ey' and her life dates. The term 'Mutter Ey' on the headstone may have been an attempt to incorporate the title of Wollheim's poem into this memorial and go some way to fulfilling Ey's wishes, but the effect of this name alone without the variety of images offered in Wollheim's text or her real name reduces Ey to the maternal stereotype for posterity. Compared to the often ornate and much larger headstones surrounding Ey's grave and in conjunction with the hardly recognisable reference to this as a grave of honour (indicated by a small sign some distance away from the headstone), the impression is again given that Ey was not, and is not, regarded as an important individual by the Düsseldorf authorities. Clearly in 1947 an expensive gravestone would have been difficult to finance and justify in light of the more pressing matter of rebuilding the city, but in the intervening almost 65 years there has been ample opportunity to realise Ey's plans for

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<sup>399</sup> 'Nachdem dieses vorgelesen war, erklärte Mutter Ey und bekräftigte dies mit einem Schwur, es soll dies durch ihren testamentarischen Willen auf dem Grabstein aufgeschrieben werden. Frau Johanna Ey. den 6. Mai 1921' (Ey, 1936, p. 117).

her own memorial or to upgrade the existing headstone to one more in keeping in size and material with what might be expected from a grave of honour.

The Düsseldorf authorities' reduction of Ey to the maternal stereotype in the promotion of her memory is also apparent in another memorial, inaugurated in 1967 (*DN*, 28/04/1967, n.pn.): 'Mutter Ey-Strasse' in the Düsseldorfer *Altstadt* (Fig. 18). This impression is however tempered somewhat by mention of Ey's real name and life dates in a small inscription underneath this sign, which importantly uses quotation marks in its description of her as a 'Düsseldorfer "Künstlermutter"' in a possible acknowledgment of the controversy surrounding this term. This medium of memorialisation and its location in the *Altstadt* which Ey is said to have put forward before her death<sup>400</sup> suggests that the authorities wanted to honour her wishes in this instance. The nature of this memorial also forcefully incorporates itself into the consciousness of those who live in the vicinity and those passing through as part of the essential geography and is thus better equipped to negate the problem of 'invisibility' often faced by 'traditional' memorials.

This benefit aside however, 'street name' memorials are as dependent as their 'traditional' counterparts on location and scale to reflect the city authorities' admiration for an individual, since as James E. Young rightly remarks '[the] tension between site and memorial can be relieved by a seemingly natural extension of site by monument, or it can be aggravated by a perceived incongruity between site and monument' (Young, 1993, p. 7). In this regard the decision to name a small side street leading to the entrance of an unsightly car park after Ey could be attributed to the practicalities of locating a memorial within the confines of the area in which she lived and worked in accordance with her own wishes, or could be explained by the lack of other suitable sites as an anonymous newspaper article from 1962 suggests:

"Mutter Ey" wohnte in der Ratinger Straße. Am Grabbeplatz betrieb sie ihre Kunsthandlung. Der Kulturausschuß vertritt die Auffassung, daß die Benennung einer Altstadtstraße nach Mutter Ey die geeignetste Form sei,

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<sup>400</sup> Nicolaus: 'Der Schriftsteller Herbert Eulenberg verliert am Grab eine Bitte, die Johanna Ey kurz vor ihrem Tod niedergeschrieben hat: Es möge eine Altstadt-Straße nach ihr benannt werden' (Nicolaus, 1983, p. 69).

um die Persönlichkeit dieser Frau und ihre Verdienste um die Düsseldorfer bildende Kunst in unserem Jahrhundert zu ehren. Die Schwierigkeit bestand bisher darin, daß man verständlicherweise nur ungern alte und historische Straßennamen ändert. Eine gute Möglichkeit, den Namen der Mutter Ey mit der Altstadt zu verankern, bietet die neue Verbindungsstraße in der Verlängerung der Andreasstraße, die nördlich von dem neuen Kunsthallengebäude und südlich von einer neu zu schaffenden Front zwischen Hunsrück- und Neustraße begrenzt wird (*DN*, 08/11/1962, n.pn.).

Yet it could also be construed as an anti-memorial sited on an ‘Ungelände’ (Young, 1993, p. 88), the location and size of which do not represent the optimal way to keep Ey’s memory alive. Journalist Ingrid Bachér writes: ‘Wahrscheinlich wäre sie [Ey] nicht sonderlich begeistert von dieser Straße, die vor allem Zufahrt zum Parkhaus hat, zuviel Geschäftigkeit hat und zuwenig Leben’ (Bachér, 1985 (?), p. 63). Indeed when compared to the main artery in the centre of Düsseldorf named after poet Heinrich Heine, a hierarchy of importance is inevitably produced in regard to Düsseldorf’s historical figures in which Ey’s relative lack of importance for the city authorities at the time of its conception is suggested. An article in 1997 by Arno Gehring (occupation unknown) in the *Düsseldorfer Express* describing the way in which the fiftieth anniversary of Ey’s death was marked certainly implies that this hierarchy existed and remained:

in diesen Tagen jährt sich ihr Todestag zum 50. Mal. In Düsseldorf fand das kaum Beachtung [...] Ein ganzes Jahr lang wird in Düsseldorf der 200. Geburtstag Heinrich Heines gefeiert. Nicht einen Tag der legendären Ey gedacht. Gertrud Hanke, kulturpolitische Sprecherin der SPD: “Ich bin erschüttert. Aber es ist Sache der Verwaltung, dem Rat solche Daten mitzuteilen. Da hat jemand geschlafen” (*Düsseldorfer Express*, 29/08/1997, n.pn.).

Another Ey memorial in Düsseldorf is provided by sculptor Hannelore Köhler’s sculpture dated 1978 (Fig. 58) and installed in the garden of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* in the Bäckerstrasse. This location, accessible through a separate entrance

to the museum, is open to the public, free of charge and offers quiet and appealing surroundings, framed by a lake and mature trees, the *Stadtmuseum* and its gardens and the relatively quiet streets of the Bäcker- and Poststraße. Thus it reflects much more positively on her standing than ‘Mutter Ey-Strasse’. Positioned centrally in this garden, at the point where various paths crisscross this area, visitors are encouraged to take notice of this memorial and given the time and space to contemplate its meaning. Its location adjacent to the *Stadtmuseum* which contains many portraits of Ey and works by ‘her’ artists also helps the memorial to function by providing visitors to the garden with easy access to information about Ey.

Its success as a memorial is however hindered by the modest size of the sculpture, which without the base is only approximately 115 cm tall, 35 cm at the deepest point and 45 cm at the widest point.<sup>401</sup> The relatively small inscription on the base which separates the prefix ‘Mutter’ from ‘Ey’ with a hyphen in a possible attempt to distinguish the historical person from the legend, is also easily overlooked. The location of the inscription below the name of the artist and the date, in the same font and font size, could - for the uninitiated - also cause some confusion as to who the artist and the subject is. Its construction with its aesthetically pleasing flowing lines and curves hewn presumably from granite is also not recognisable as Ey and no hint is given as to her age or occupation. These abstract tendencies however could be considered the sculpture’s strengths since they are not as prescriptive as a more life-like sculpture and to a degree address the problems of representing a multi-faceted individual in a single visual form.

Outside Düsseldorf, there is another memorial to Ey in her birthplace of Wickrath near Mönchengladbach. This was created by sculptor Peter Rübsam (Fig. 59), the son of Jupp Rübsam, who initially designed the sculpture that Ey wanted to stand on her grave. Erected in 1989 following the efforts of Professor Hermann-Josef Kuhna (*Kunstakademie Münster*), Mönchengladbach *Oberbürgermeister* Heinz Feldhage and local people to have a memorial to Ey erected in Wickrath,<sup>402</sup> its location on the Quadtstraße outside the *Volksbank* (which funded the sculpture) occupies a central position in the village at a crossroad with the Poststraße close to the railway station

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<sup>401</sup> These are my own measurements and are approximate values.

<sup>402</sup> Information from *Niersbote*, 16/01/1987.

and on the corner of this quiet, shop-lined street. This positioning coupled with its larger than life form at approximately 217 cm metres tall, 138 cm at its widest point and 105 cm at its deepest point,<sup>403</sup> means it is difficult to overlook. Once the attention of the passer-by has been grabbed, it reveals the name of the subject on a large plaque<sup>404</sup> at its base. Here both Ey's maiden name and her nickname 'Mutter Ey' are cited, and the onlooker is therefore rightly alerted to both the woman and the myth.

Carved from sandstone and weighing six tonnes, its graduation from a roughly hewn base to a more life-like portrayal of Ey exaggerates her curves. The anonymous author of the article 'Eine gelungene Ehrung zum 125. Geburtstag' suggests this format represents the: 'Unerschütterlichkeit einer Frau [...] die sich gegen alle gesellschaftlichen und politischen Widerstände für junge Künstler und deren Werke einzusetzen wusste' (*Niersbote*, 15/09/1989, n.p.n.). Her contribution to the art scene is certainly emphasised through its depiction of Ey as an older woman whose right arm rests on a stack of pictures and whose left side and back are encased by what appear to be large-format paintings. Yet these additions, more so than Köhler's memorial which is ageless and betrays no clue as to her occupation, present only one visual image for posterity. The site of this sculpture also hints at a local political agenda intended to lay claim to Ey for the purposes of tourism and the promotion of Wickrath, as an earlier article in the *Niersbote* suggests: 'Mutter Ey gehört zu den Wickrathern, die den Namen der ehemals selbständigen Gemeinde weithin bekannt gemacht haben. Sie ist eine große Frau. Sie zu ehren das müßte Wickrath eine Verpflichtung sein!' (*Niersbote*, 16/01/1987, n.p.n.). It is clearly open to debate whether this location is appropriate since although born here it was in Düsseldorf that Ey spent most of her life, achieved her celebrity and wanted to be memorialised in a street in the *Altstadt*.

Aside from these largely 'traditional' forms of memorial, Ey has been remembered in many other diverse and unusual ways. Her name and reputation has for instance been used to endorse enterprises in Düsseldorf such as the *Ey art forum GAP 15* on Graf Adolf Platz in Düsseldorf (Fig. 60) and the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf's* café *Spoerl im*

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<sup>403</sup> These are my own measurements and are approximate values.

<sup>404</sup> Width 49 cm. Height 39 cm. These are my own measurements and are approximate values.

Ey (Fig. 61).<sup>405</sup> Moreover the city of Düsseldorf have continued to utilise her for promotional purposes, reproducing her face on the one *Rheingold* note in 2006 - a regional currency designed to encourage people to shop locally (Fig. 62).<sup>406</sup> In addition her fascinating life has proved an inspiration in the cultural sphere.<sup>407</sup> It has led to two radio programmes, Böll's 'Mutter Ey Versuch eines Denkmals in Worten' (1 January 1961) and Horst Pomsel's 'Mutter Ey 120 Jahre' (28 February 1984),<sup>408</sup> and an opera *Die Ey* (1991).<sup>409</sup> There have also been two theatre performances,<sup>410</sup> the first by theatre and film director Peter Kern (*Johannas Leidenschaften*, 2000)<sup>411</sup> and the second written by Gerda Hinze and directed by Philipp Kohlen-Priebe (*Bühne Frei Für Mutter Ey*, 2007).<sup>412</sup> Furthermore a WDR television programme *Rückblende: "Mutter Ey" Die Muse aus der Altstadt* directed by Gabriele Lichins (*Rückblende*, 28/02/1984) took her as its subject, and she has entered the digital realm

<sup>405</sup> When I last visited in July 2009 this café had been closed until further notice.

<sup>406</sup> For further information see *DN*, 10/10/2006, p. 15. Ey's depiction taken from Kaufmann's *Zeitgenossen* (1925) (Fig. 9) was also reproduced on the *Standard-Karte* of the *Art:card* from 1999 which for 120 Marks allowed adults access to all Düsseldorf museums (*RP*, 10/12/1998, n.pn.).

<sup>407</sup> Ey was for instance chosen for an art installation by artist Peter Royen junior in 2000, in which four portraits of famous people associated with Düsseldorf were painted onto a tarpaulin and placed from ground level to the top floor of windows in a car park next to Karl Platz in Düsseldorf to accompany a portrait of artist Joseph Beuys from 1999 (*NRZ*, 30/05/2000, n.pn.). The others depicted were industrialist Konrad Henkel, Heinrich Heine, Louise Dumont/pianist and composer Clara Schumann (*NRZ*, 30/05/2000, n.pn. states this was Dumont. *RP*, 17/06/2000, n.pn. states this was Schumann).

<sup>408</sup> Böll's contribution was 1 hour 15 minutes long as part of 'Kulturelles Wort' on the *Mittelwellen-Programm* WDR (*Westdeutsches Rundfunk Jahrbuch*, 1960/61) and led to articles in the press. See for example *NRZ*, 03/01/1961, n.pn. Pomsel's programme was broadcast on the *Deutsche Welle* (Pomsel, 1984). Pomsel's occupation could not be determined.

<sup>409</sup> This was composed by Ratko Delorko and staged by Ernest Martin in the *JuTA Düsseldorf*. It premiered on 23 November 1991. See: leaflet for this opera, *Die Ey*, 23/11/1991; *RP*, 04/03(?)1991, n.pn.; *WZ*, 29/06/1991, n.pn.; *RP*, 13/11/1991, n.pn. and *RP*, 25/11/1991, n.pn. for more information.

<sup>410</sup> An article in 1957 referring to Jupp Hussels' plan to build and open a *Volks theater* in Düsseldorf mentions that Hundt had planned to write a play about Ey: 'Der künftige Generalintendant [Jupp Hussel] denkt an ein von Prof. Hundt begonnes Bühnenstück über Mutter Ey' (*RP*, 28/03/1957, n.pn.). No record of this having been completed could be found.

<sup>411</sup> Kern's play was staged in the *Kleines Haus* of the *Schauspielhaus* in Düsseldorf and was covered extensively in the regional press. See amongst others: *RP*, 20/05/2000, n.pn.; *WZ*, 10/07/2000, n.pn.; *NRZ*, 10/07/2000, n.pn.; *RP*, 27/07/2000, n.pn. and *RP*, 05/08/2000, n.pn. Kern filmed this theatre performance and released this as a one-hour film *Johanna Ey. Das Café der lebenden Bilder* (2000). This premiered in December 2000 in the *Ufa Palast*, Düsseldorf, in video quality and was supposed to be ready in cinema quality by January 2001 (*NRZ*, 18/12/2000, n.pn. and *RP*, 13/12/2000, n.pn.). Kern was also working on a feature film about Ey: 'Sieben Drehbücher sind geschrieben, der Film kostet inzwischen 14 Millionen Mark. Im nächsten Jahr soll endlich, nach acht Jahren Vorbereitung gedreht werden' (*RP*, 'Die schlauen Augen', 2000, n.pn.). As yet this film has not been released. Hinze's play had its debut in the *Theater FLINGern* in Düsseldorf (*Bühne Frei Für Mutter Ey*, 2007).

<sup>412</sup> Ey's image has also featured at Carnival celebrations. The 'jecke Gesellschaft "Narrencollegium"' depicted her and Kaufmann's *Zeitgenossen* painting on their carnival wagon in 1993 (?) (*Bild*, 29/01/1993, n.pn.) and a three dimensional sculpture of Ey was the subject of a carnival float '125 Jahre Stadtmuseum' in 1999 by artist Jacques Tilly (*RP*, 30/01/1999, n.pn.).



with many websites which refer to her and her own *Wikipedia* page (Ey Wikipedia, accessed 26/02/2009).

Ey's profile has also been raised significantly by private galleries and individuals. An early example of this is offered by an exhibition held in *Galerie May* in Düsseldorf entitled *Düsseldorfer Kunst im goldenen Jahrzehnt* which included 71 works from this period and 35 artists linked to the Ey.<sup>413</sup> Of the private galleries however, Herbert Remmert and Peter Barth's *Galerie Remmert und Barth* in Düsseldorf has made the greatest contribution to raising Ey's profile with two exhibitions in which her name was explicitly mentioned and in which portraits of her were displayed and sold: *Johanna Ey und Ihr Künstlerkreis* (1984)<sup>414</sup> and *Großes Ey wir loben dich: Johanna Ey und ihr Künstlerkreis* (2007) (Fig. 63)<sup>415</sup> and many exhibitions showing works by artists associated with Ey.<sup>416</sup> Historian and collector Günter Goebbels has also contributed considerably to this process through his organisation of exhibitions about Ey and 'her circle' and his significant research.<sup>417</sup>

Museums in Düsseldorf, elsewhere in Germany and farther afield have however also played a vital role in maintaining and increasing the momentum behind Ey's posthumous presence through the inclusion of portraits of Ey in temporary exhibitions and mention of her in their catalogues as part of renewed interest in art in the Weimar Period and the Düsseldorf art scene. Ey's international memorialisation has occurred

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<sup>413</sup> 'Die legendenumwobene Mutter Ey [...] feiert in diesen Tagen noch einmal Auferstehung mit all ihren Kindern. Gemeint sind jene Bild und Zeichnungen, auf denen auch sie abkonterfeit ist' ('Bei May lebt wieder die Mutter Ey', 24/09(?)1964, n.pn.).

<sup>414</sup> See for instance *WZ*, 25/05/1984, n.pn.

<sup>415</sup> See *Die Welt*, 13/10/2007, n.pn. and *FA*, 07/10/2007, p. 81.

<sup>416</sup> See for instance *Das Junge Rheinland: Künstler-Werke-Dokumente* in 1996 (*Das Junge Rheinland*, 1996) referred to in *RP*, 11/12/1996, n.pn.

<sup>417</sup> In regard to exhibitions about Johanna Ey organised by Goebbels see: *Künstler aus dem Kreis um Johanna Ey* in *Haus Lörick*, Düsseldorf, 1993 in co-operation with the *Bürgerverein Heerdt* (*WZ*, 11/02/1993, n.pn. and *WZ*, 11/03/1993) and *Die junge Kunstszene im Rheinland 1909-1938: Im Mittelpunkt 'Das Junge Rheinland', der Kreis um Johanna Ey* in the *Justizvollzugsschule Rheinland-Pfalz*, Wittlich in 2000 (Goebbels, 2000). In regard to exhibitions about artists linked to Ey by Goebbels see *WZ*, 11/02/1993 which refers to an exhibition he organised for what would have been Pankok's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in *Haus Lörick*, 1993. For further examples of Goebbels research contribution see his detailed biography of Hundt (Goebbels, 1993), used as a catalogue in the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf's* Hundt exhibition in 1994 (*WZ*, 28/11/1994, n.pn) and his extensive biography of Mathias Barz for the exhibition *Mathias Barz* in *Haus Lörick* in 1991 - an exhibition which he organised in co-operation with the *Bürgerverein Heerdt* (Goebbels, 1991). Goebbels has also organised several exhibitions about, and conducted major research into, Tatjana Barbakoff. For instance *Tatjana Barbakoff: Eine vergessene Tänzerin in Bildern und Dokumentation*, 2009 in *Kulturbahnhof Eller*, Düsseldorf (Goebbels, 2009).

as part of the exhibition *German Expressionism 1915-1925: The Second Generation* (*German Expressionism*, 1988) exhibited in Los Angeles, Texas, Düsseldorf and Halle an der Saale.<sup>418</sup> The catalogue for this exhibition mentions Ey in detail in a chapter by art historian Friedrich Heckmanns (Heckmanns, 1988). Moreover in the exhibition *War, Resistance and Politics: Düsseldorf Artists 1910-1945* in the *Jewish Museum*, New York (1990) Ey's role was highlighted in the catalogue by associate curator Emily D. Bilski (Bilski, 1990). On a national level this has occurred in the catalogues and exhibitions *Avantgarde Gestern*, in Düsseldorf and Berlin in 1970<sup>419</sup> and on a local level in *Am Anfang Das Junge Rheinland* (*Am Anfang*, 1985) in the *Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf* in 1985.

Although the *Städtische Kunstmuseum* in Düsseldorf appears to have been the first museum to refer posthumously to Ey's contribution in the context of an exhibition of works by artists from 'her circle' in 1952<sup>420</sup> the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* has been the most prolific in its promotion and memorialisation of Ey. This initiative gained momentum in the period following Wieland Koenig's appointment as its head (1979-2003)<sup>421</sup> when the museum partook in a critical discourse on the German past through exhibitions relating to Ey and artists known to her who had been persecuted by the Nazis. This process was then continued under Annette Baumeister in her capacity as acting head and has been maintained by Susanne Anna, who since 2003 has been

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<sup>418</sup> This was shown at the *Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (1988); *Fort Worth Art Museum* in Texas (1989); *Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf* and the *Staatliche Galerie Moritzberg* in Halle an der Saale (1989).

<sup>419</sup> This was shown at the *Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf*, *Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle* and *Haus am Waldsee*, Berlin-Zehlendorf. The catalogue accompanying this exhibition, *Avantgarde Gestern*, 1970, provides a comprehensive examination of the *Junge Rheinland* group in a chapter entitled 'Das Junge Rheinland' by art historian Irene Markowitz (Markowitz, 1970, n.pn.). The catalogue also lists 160 art works - 6 of which mention Ey in their titles - and includes Kaufmann, 1970, n.pn.

<sup>420</sup> 'Im Städtischen Kunstmuseum am Ehrenhof wird in einer Sonderschau der neueren Düsseldorfer Kunst gedacht, wobei zwei Zentren hiesiger Kunsttradition [...] vornehmlich herausgestellt werden: der Kreis um Mutter Ey und der Malkasten' (*RP*, 28/06/1952, n.pn.).

<sup>421</sup> Gerda Kaltwasser (occupation unknown): 'die Sammlung der Epoche des Jungen Rheinlands rund um Johanna Ey gehört zu den Herzstücken des Museums, ist besonders unter Direktor Wieland Koenig kräftig ausgebaut worden' (*RP*, 28/06/1991, n.pn.). Bertram Müller (occupation unknown): 'In zahlreichen (Kunst-)Ausstellungen setzte sich Koenig mit Düsseldorf's NS-Vergangenheit auseinander. Künstlern, die in brauner Zeit verfeimt waren oder von den Nazis gar ermordet wurden, bot er ein spätes Forum, dem er wohl auch den Charakter einer Wiedergutmachung zusprach' (Koenig, accessed 21/08/2009). See also a guide to the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* by Inge Zacher (*Düsseldorf im 20. Jahrhundert*), which gives a list of the exhibitions of artists linked to Ey held in this museum from 1980-1982: Hanns Kralik (1980); Mathias Barz (1980); Lorenz Bösen (1981); Carl Lauterbach (1981); Julo Levin (1981); Trude Brück (1982) and Willi Küpper (1982). Moreover art historian Yvonne Friedrichs in *RP*, 11/09/1980, n.pn. states that it was Koenig who created the 'Mutter Ey' room (more details of which are given shortly) and two rooms for works by artists from 'her circle'. See Bachér, 1985 (?), p. 66, for a further appraisal of Koenig's contribution.

director of the museum. During and after Koenig's appointment various promotional events, exhibitions, literature (Baumeister, 1999), tours and lectures<sup>422</sup> have been organised which have publicised Ey's particular contribution to the Düsseldorf art scene or included mention of her in the context of artists from 'her circle'.<sup>423</sup> The museum has also accumulated the largest known collection of Ey portraits and from 1980 until recently has had a room dedicated to the art dealer in which a number of these works have formed a veritable shrine.<sup>424</sup> This was however dismantled for inclusion in their latest temporary exhibition which focused on Ey, *Ich, Johanna Ey* (2009) (Fig. 64), in which 100 art works depicting her were displayed.

In my estimation this exhibition provided one of the most interesting Ey 'memorials' since it presented the most extensive collection of works about her to be gathered in one place and used these 'authentic' artefacts to create a new monument not tainted to the same degree by planning committees and local authorities as commissioned memorials. Moreover the paying public, even more so than in the case of Köhler's sculpture, were able to view these works in conjunction with background information which helped explain Ey's contribution. The many different images of Ey presented here thus reflected the variety experienced in written sources: Ey was shown in a

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<sup>422</sup> An example of a promotional event linked to Ey in the *Stadtmuseum* is the temporary recreation of Ey's shop selling baked goods and coffee to mark her 120<sup>th</sup> birthday and the reading of excerpts from her memoirs and letters on this occasion in 1984. See *RP*, 25/02/1984, n.pn., *RP*, 27/02/1984, n.pn. and *RP*, 28/02/1984, n.pn. See also mention of actress Stella Avini citing from Ey's *Lebenserinnerung* (Ey, 1930 (?)) in the Ibach-Saal of the *Stadtmuseum* in June 1991 (*RP*, 28/06/1991, n.pn.). In regard to exhibitions related to Ey in the *Stadtmuseum*, from 16/12/1998-31/01/1999 the exhibition *Johanna Ey: Porträts aus dem Bestand des Stadtmuseums Düsseldorf* (*Einladung*, 1998) was shown. This included around 80 portraits of Ey and was the first time so many had been displayed simultaneously (*Düsseldorfer Museen*, 11(?)/1998, n.pn.). Tours associated with Ey in the *Stadtmuseum* include mention of her in the 'Starke Frauen' tour by Werner Alberg in 1995 (*RP*, 03/02/1995, n.pn.), a tour of the portraits of Ey by Baumeister on 10/03/1996 (*Coolibri*, 1996, p. 17) and a tour related to Ey on 02/11/1999 by Baumeister mentioned in a leaflet (?) advertising *KulturHerbst: Ein kulturelles Programm zum Internationalen Jahr der Senioren* (*KulturHerbst*, 1999). The leaflet *Das Junge Rheinland, Programm*, 09/2006-01/2007 gives details of lectures about Ey and the *Junge Rheinland* held at the *Stadtmuseum* in November and December 2006.

<sup>423</sup> See for instance the exhibition *Das Junge Rheinland: Eine Friedensidee* and accompanying catalogue *Das Junge Rheinland*, 1988 and *Das Junge Rheinland: Vorläufer-Freunde-Nachfolger* in 2006 and accompanying catalogue *Das Junge Rheinland*, 2008.

<sup>424</sup> See 'Ein Raum für Mutter Ey' (*RP*, 11/09/1980, n.pn.). The notion of the Ey portraits as a memorial is already present in articles from the Weimar and Nazi period. Schmidtsdorf describes them as: 'Gedenkartikel, in denen "Mutter Ey" gewürdigt und gefeiert wurde' (Schmidtsdorf, 08/01/1933, n.pn) and a report in the *Frankfurter Volksblatt*, 25/06/1935, n.pn. states: 'In einigen dutzend Bildern, in unzähligen Skizzen und Variationen finden wir diese vortreffliche Frau für die geschichtlichen Annalen der Kunst festgehalten und verewigt. So kam es, dass ausser der zweifellos interessanten Bildsammlung eine umfangreiche Galerie von "Johannas" in allen Lebenslagen entstand.'

formal and informal setting, we saw the public face of Ey in commissioned works and the private Ey in non-commissioned works and were able to view her at various stages of her life in a range of moods and guises. As such no one depiction was prescribed and through this mass of impressions, a differentiated collective image of Ey emerged which transcended the boundaries of caricature and gave a sense of the many different layers to her character. It also incorporated Böll's view that 'Ey's' artists should be involved in her memorial: 'Der Bildhauer, die das darzustellende Modell noch gekannt haben, der Maler, die Skizzen liefern, Vorschläge machen könnten, gibt es genug' (Böll, 1960, p. 55) and fittingly utilised the same source that Ey, 'her' artists and the media used to increase her presence in the public realm.

This chapter's analysis has revealed Ey's celebrity to be complex and resistant to simple categorisation. Undoubtedly she had the potential to earn more than the average person from a similar background and level of education but it is noticeable that she never achieved the sustained wealth of other celebrities. When Rojek's statements that: 'social distance is the precondition of celebrity and notoriety' (2001, p. 12), and that 'celebrity culture [...] is overwhelmingly a culture of surface relations' (2001, p. 46) are applied to Ey's celebrity, a similarly ambiguous picture emerges. Clearly she created 'social distance' through autobiographical articles in which she elevated herself above the level of non-celebrities and through the media reports she generated. Moreover her reaction to the closure of her gallery presents her dealing with the inevitable feelings of emptiness, lack of purpose and loneliness in typical celebrity fashion through the writing of memoirs. Indeed this and her other autobiographical texts can be viewed as an attempt to secure a version of herself for posterity, akin to celebrities' attempts to adjust their public face and retain control over how they are portrayed.

Yet whilst Ey obviously does exhibit some aspects of the behaviour associated with celebrity, this is not always the case. During her time as a gallery owner for instance she does not conform to the celebrity stereotype because she never moved her premises outside the area of Düsseldorf where she began her career. Texts from the period commend her for this, for instance Osborn writes: 'Auch als die Dinge hoffnungsvollen Fortgang nahmen, als von Frau Eys Lager Gemälde in die Museen und zu wagemutigen Sammlern wanderten, änderte sich nichts. Sie hütete sich in

angeborener Klugheit davor, nun etwa eine vornehme “Galerie Ey” zu begründen, wie es in Berlin vermutlich geschehen wäre, und blieb in ihrem kleinen Kramladen’ (Osborn, 1931, p. 6).<sup>425</sup> In contrast to the extravagance often associated with celebrity, newspaper reports from the period also frequently describe her and her gallery as ‘bescheiden’,<sup>426</sup> and this impression of her feet remaining firmly on the ground is upheld by the fact that she appears to have retained many of her old friends. In comparison to celebrities who are usually only known through their performances and their presentation in the media, it is also notable that Ey’s gallery was open to the public and that she had many visitors - as Heymann suggests when he writes: ‘die Düsseldorfer waren schon alle einmal bei ihr gewesen’ (Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn.). Thus the ‘social distance’ Rojek associates with celebrity (2001, p. 12) cannot be seen to play a significant part in Ey’s case since her public face was not solely defined by the media and people could visit her and form their own opinions.

Turning now to examine Ey’s view of her own celebrity, one is presented with a similarly contradictory impression. Her request to *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr that the authorities provide her with a new gallery for free or at a reduced rent due to the financial problems she had encountered, coupled with the presentation of her achievements in this letter, certainly suggests she viewed herself as someone of cultural significance and entitled to special treatment, above and beyond that which would be afforded to a ‘normal’ citizen:

Ich darf bei dieser Gelegenheit daran erinnern, daß viele der bedeutendsten heute noch lebender Künstler nicht zuletzt durch meine Tätigkeit die öffentliche Anerkennung gefunden haben, die sie heute genießen [...] Ich glaube, daß die Stadt daran interessiert sein muß, daß auch für die

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<sup>425</sup> See also: ‘Die selbstlose Frau sitzt noch immer in ihrem Bilderladen’ (Braune, 1929, n.pn.) and ‘Schlicht und einfach blieb die Frau. Sie will und braucht keine “Galerie”. Man sitzt in keinem Klubsessel, man sieht keine Samtdraperie hinter gold[...] Rahmen’ (‘Die Düsseldorfer Künstlermutter’, 27/08/1931, n.pn.).

<sup>426</sup> See: ‘Aus ihrer Kaffeestube hat Frau Ey ein Kunststübchen gemacht, daraus ist ein Kunsthandel hervorgegangen, der trotz äußerlich bescheidenen Form durchaus ernst zu nehmen ist’ (*Berliner Illustrierte*, 1930, n.pn.) and ‘In allem Kampf und Krampf blieb Mutter Ey bescheiden, still, ruhig lächelnd’ (Osborn, 1931, p. 5). She is also described as: ‘bescheiden und einfach in ihrem Wesen’ in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, 25/06/1931, n.pn., the *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1932, n.pn. writes of her ‘bescheidener Laden’ and Heymann, 07/01/1933, n.pn. describes her as a ‘bescheidene[...] Frau’.

zukünftige Künstlergeneration die Möglichkeit der Einführung auf den Kunstmarkt beibehalten wird (Letter, 14/05/1930).

Moreover the fact that she was able to send a large collection of articles about herself in answer to a request made by the President of Chicago University suggests she was intrigued by her public standing and the way she was portrayed in the media (Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.).<sup>427</sup> These instances aside however it remains difficult to establish whether Ey considered herself to be a ‘true’ celebrity with a similar status to film stars such as Lilian Harvey who visited her premises. The photos of Ey with famous stars, which are said to have adorned her gallery walls and to often have included personal dedications,<sup>428</sup> could suggest she did not see herself on the same level as these famous individuals and exhibited similar behaviour to that of the star-struck fan, but equally this could be an expression of the level of celebrity she felt she had achieved. Her depressive moods<sup>429</sup> elicited by the closure of her gallery, do however appear less to do with the self-destructive tendencies commonplace amongst celebrities who cannot come to terms with the decline of their celebrity, and more to do with the unjust way this had occurred, the fact that she was no longer able to be an art dealer and the loneliness caused by the loss of contact with many of the artists she viewed as her friends.

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<sup>427</sup> Wellem: ‘Vor einigen Tagen besuchte sie [Ey] der Präsident der Universität Chicago [...] da bat er sie um Uebersendung von Reproduktionen und biographischen Publikationen. Und trotzdem sie, da sie so wenig eitel ist, garnicht [sic] mehr weiß, was alles über sie geschrieben worden ist, treten doch in diesen Tagen sechs Einschreibepäckchen den Weg nach drüben an’ (Wellem, 14/11/1932, n.pn.).

<sup>428</sup> See: ‘Bilder, überall wohin man sieht. Hinter dem Tisch, neben dem Ofen, vor dem Ruhebett. An den Wänden. Und eine Unzahl von Photographien und Widmungsblättern. “Meiner lieben Tante Ey in alter Liebe...”, “Meiner lieben Mutter Ey...Joachim Ringelnatz”, “seiner lieben Nachbarin, [art historian] Dr. Walter Cohen...”, “Für Mutter Ey zum Abschied vom schönen Rhein Otto Dix”, “Meiner lieben Asta, dem einzigsten Mädels, das mir während des Krieges treu geblieben ist” schreibt Heinz Wever [...] Mutter Ey neben Josephine Baker. Mutter Ey Arm in Arm mit Trillhase, mit Wollheim, mit Tatjana Barbakoff’ (*DN* (?), 1929). See also: ‘zwischen Sofa und Fenster, da wo andere Sterbliche eine kahle Wand mit einem Bild beleben, hängt hier eine auserlesene Raritätensammlung. Die viele Kinder der Mutter Ey geben [...] gefunden: Joachim Ringelnatz, Otto Dix, Professor Spatz, Gert Wollheim, Hermann Heckroth, Robert Pudlich, Otto Pankok, Hundt, Rübsam, Max Ernst, Professor Bindel und dann die vielen Besucher, die hier ihre Photos mit einer freundlichen Widmung zurückließen: Lilian Harvey, Brigitte Helm, die Tänzerin Barbakow [Barbakoff], [actor] Otto Gebühr und viele bekannte und unbekannte Künstler aus allen Ländern der Welt’ (‘Besuch bei der Düsseldorfer Künstlermama’, n.d., n.pn.). Furthermore: ‘Und wenn Sie einmal bis zu ihrem Wigwam vordringen dürften, so sehen Sie die Photos all ihrer vielen Freunde und Freundinnen aus der ganzen Welt an der Wand: von den Spaniern bis zu den Kreolen, von Ringelnatz bis zu Lilian Harvey’ (Hannover Newspaper, 1932, n.pn.). The newspaper article ‘Mutter Ey’s [sic] Glück und Ende’, n.d., n.pn. could depict a recreation of this ‘photo wall’ in Ey’s post-Second World War flat. See also the article by Dr Jakob Stöcker (occupation unknown) ‘Brief aus Düsseldorf’, 31/08/1947, n.pn. which includes the same photo.

<sup>429</sup> See the analysis of her correspondence from 1933-1947 in the previous chapter.

In summary, Ey's celebrity status can be seen to fluctuate between local renown and limited international celebrity in accordance with wider changes in politics, society and culture, and the rise and fall of mutually beneficial relationships between Ey and 'her' artists, the media, Hinsen and Neumann, and the Weimar, Nazi and post-war Düsseldorf authorities. Notably in the case of the Weimar authorities it has been demonstrated that this was not a case of pure exploitation as certain commentators have suggested but a 'partnership' from which both parties profited. Ey's continued longevity as a 'living cultural presence' (Rojek, 2001, p. 64) has also been revealed as the result of a fascinating and unusual biography which has provided many points of contact with the growing interest in German art of the Weimar era, the critical approach to the German past and the role of women in art history, coupled with the local Düsseldorf and Wickrath authorities' need for self-promotion.

The result has been a relative boom in the memorialisation of Ey over the last fifty years, the diverse nature of which has been presented in this chapter. The maternal stereotype has been shown to dominate the official memorials erected by local authorities, as well as a number of informal memorials and recent media contributions. However the exhibition policy of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, particularly during and after director Koenig's appointment, has provided a refreshingly differentiated impression. In contrast to celebrities whose status has grown posthumously, the cumulative effect of this growing memorial landscape has not resulted in Ey regaining the widespread national and limited international recognition that she appears to have enjoyed and endured at the pinnacle of her celebrity.<sup>430</sup> Instead her legend has gone full circle, and she has again become the figure of local renown she was at the start of her career.

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<sup>430</sup> For instance the *Rheinische Post* asked its readers to name the 'Düsseldorfer des Jahrhunderts' from a selection of 25 individuals in November 1999. When the article went to print 1,102 people had responded and Konrad Henkel led with 180 votes. Ey was in sixth place with 69 votes. This is not a representational survey but offers interesting anecdotal evidence (*RP*, 13/11/1999, n.pn.).

## Conclusion

Ich sollte menschlich sein? Ob ich etwas anderes sein könnte! Viele sagen, ich wäre ein Schauspieler. Pfui! Sei vollkommen aufrichtig. Dann zeigt man all die Widersprüche [sic], die tollsten Verschiedenheiten und Stimmungen des Geistes, die durchaus wahr sind. Weil sie das nicht unter eine Einheit bringen könne[n], nehmen sie an, man wäre ein Schauspieler. Sie sind zu einfach die Verwicklungen, zu verstehen. Brauchte man ein Glas kaputt zu schlagen, die Menschlichkeit zu zeigen? (Letter, ‘Guten Tag, Du süsse Zitrone!’), n.d.: Ey, 1936, p. 128f, emphasis of typescript).

These words are Jacobo Sureda’s, but his assertion that he is a *Mensch* full of contradictions and idiosyncrasies is also a fitting description for his close friend, Johanna Ey. In order to capture some at least of the contradictions and idiosyncrasies which characterise the life and work of this remarkable woman, the thesis has argued that it is necessary to resist the temptation to place Ey in narrow categories in the desire for simple truths, clear distinctions and a coherent narrative, and has presented a more differentiated account of this fascinating figure. Drawing extensively on archival material, the study has identified, explored and challenged the key components of her legend, as constructed by herself and others, and has subjected them to a critical re-evaluation in regard both to the historical contexts of the legend construction and to the real historical person Johanna Ey, in so far as the historical person can be identified.

The results have proved revealing. In Chapter 2 the analysis of the maternal image which is such a prominent feature of the Ey legend demonstrated that the connotations and contexts of the image were more complex than has typically been assumed. I have shown that Klapheck and Baumeister’s assertion that the ‘Mutter Ey’ stereotype reduced Ey to a role which has overshadowed her wider achievements as an art dealer stands in need of substantial correction. An examination of the available sources in the Weimar period reveals that she was acknowledged as a successful *Galeristin* in



newspaper reports and portraits by her artists even when the maternal image is present, and that these sources did not always use this imagery. Contrary to Klapheck's assertion that Ey did not like the 'Mutter' prefix, it is also clear that Ey used the name herself, incorporated articles in her 1936 memoirs which refer to the trope and wanted this designation on her gravestone. Moreover the implication that this stereotype was pervasive was revealed as undifferentiated following an investigation into its use during the Weimar era. Whilst the press were identified as a frequent user of the 'Mutter' trope, this was only one of several forms of address used by 'her' artists, whereas the Düsseldorf authorities and other official correspondents rarely used the term.

The exploration of the notion of Ey as a 'Neue Frau', presented in Chapter 3, also produces contradictory results. This chapter reveals the limitations of casting Ey in the role of the 'modern' woman as commentators such as Körner and Wilkens have done. Although her status as a working woman and 'modern' art dealer may be seen to conform to the stereotype of the 'Neue Frau' of the Weimar period, her age, physical size and body shape, her many children and her apparent lack of promiscuity confound the trope, often quite radically and, I have argued, with detectable irony. Indeed, an analysis of portraits of Ey with sexual overtones frequently reveals a humorous and ironic subtext which plays precisely on the blatant disparities between Ey and the image of the 'Neue Frau' of the Weimar era. There is also no real evidence that Ey was actively interested in the gender politics of her time. The available sources suggest that the motive behind her becoming an art dealer was not related to promoting the female cause but to reasons of finance and an interest in 'modern' art and its proponents. Closely related to this issue is the question of her attitude towards other women. Here the picture of a woman who disliked other women in her sphere of influence as put forward, for example, by Barth, and which some may advance as an explanation for the seeming indifference to the feminist cause, has been found to be in need of adjustment in light of evidence of Ey's female acquaintances and friendships. The findings presented in the thesis suggest a more complex picture: that whilst she may initially have been averse to women in her gallery, her attitude mellowed with time.

In Chapters 4 and 5 Ey's attitude to politics in general and to the Nazis in particular was subjected to close examination in the first detailed reading of her 1936 memoirs and her letters from the period 1933-1947. Although Ey gives the impression she was not political, I have argued that the art in which she dealt, the political orientation of the artists whose company she held, and the efforts of an SPD politician to help her all point to her left-wing sympathies. This reading is supported by the analysis of her autobiography, which I argue here for the first time was written from an 'inner emigrant' perspective for a post-Nazi audience, displaying evidence of conformity and self-censorship typically found in this category of literature, reflecting at some level the consciousness that such documents could be discovered by the Nazi authorities. Here, nevertheless, an underlying opposition to the Nazis is evident through the description of her role in the 'modern' art movement, her positive appraisal and mention of individuals who fell foul of the regime and her momentary defiance of the Nazi authorities in regard to her eviction. Veiled criticism is also implicit through historical comparisons and newspaper articles in which her views are offered by proxy.

Ey's private correspondence, shaped by the possibility that it too could fall into Nazi hands, provides an even more intimate portrait of the mental, social and financial suffering she endured as a result of the closure of her gallery by the National Socialists. Here she once again emerges as an 'inner emigrant', who reacted to the rise of the Third Reich by fleeing into fantasy, memories of happier times, possible thoughts of emigration and opposition to the Nazis. Her correspondence reveals her previous and continued association with 'degenerate' artists, her ownership of their works and purchase of more works by the 'degenerate' artist Wollheim. Her disapproval of Nazi art policy is also evident in her reaction to the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition, and despite not having a licence she reveals, at no small risk to herself, that she continued to sell art both through an intermediary and by herself. Without mentioning the Nazis directly she documents the effects of their policies on those she knew by way of reference to the sacking, emigration and banning of works by affected individuals and in some cases alludes to their injury or death at the hands of the Nazis. Moreover, a distinct lack of nationalistic enthusiasm is apparent in her descriptions of the Second World War. In post-war Düsseldorf there was clearly no

doubt about her status as victim of National Socialist oppression, either amongst the city authorities or groups persecuted by the Nazis.

The question of Ey's cultural standing is a theme which runs through the present study culminating, in Chapter 6, in the first detailed investigation into the creation of her celebrity. Here Ey's standing is revealed as the result of a web of mutual promotion between Ey and her 'artists', Ey and the media, Ey and the Düsseldorf authorities and Ey and prominent individuals and is shown to oscillate between local renown, local notoriety and local, national and international celebrity, within the framework of changes in artistic appreciation and the German political environment. The catalyst in the process is identified as her offer to Pankok and Wollheim to exhibit works in the windows of her gallery, which in an unreceptive cultural environment led to a local notoriety compounded by her decision to sell only 'modern' art. From this point on Ey clearly profited from the growing reputations of these artists, yet also helped to create their reputations by providing them with an outlet for their art. When these newsworthy artists departed Düsseldorf, however, Ey appears to have sought to maintain the momentum behind her gallery by raising her media profile to fill the void. This was achieved through autobiographical contributions and the large number of portraits of Ey, which she either commissioned herself or which were done of the artists' own volition. These initiatives captured the interest of the local, national and to an extent international media, who now viewed 'modern' art more positively - a newly found status on which Ey capitalised with her *Sammlung Ey* travelling exhibition.

I have also argued, in contrast to Klapheck and Baumeister's assertions that the Weimar Düsseldorf authorities exploited Ey's standing for promotional purposes, that the relationship between Ey and the city authorities should be viewed as a mutually beneficial arrangement. The local authorities appear to have been reluctant to provide Ey with new premises in the face of her eviction from her gallery on Hindenburgwall 11 and seem only to have agreed after pressure from Ey, the press and the public. With this in mind and considering that without the authorities' help it would have been extremely difficult for Ey to continue as an art dealer, it seems a reasonable exchange that she was in turn used as an unofficial cultural ambassador. Indeed the prominent individuals who visited her because of this and the publicity this gave her,

raised her profile and maintained interest in her gallery. The approach of the Nazi Düsseldorf authorities to Ey is also revealed as more complex than their closure of her gallery suggests. Whilst it is clear that the Nazis sought to reduce her cultural standing significantly through the closure, they evidently also felt the need to exercise caution in their treatment of a popular individual, delaying her eviction until 1934 and exhibiting a contradictory, opportunistic approach to her celebrity when they used her to endorse their own family policies by awarding her the golden *Mutter Kreuz*.

After the Second World War Ey's celebrity status, briefly rejuvenated by Hinsen and Neumann's offer to open a gallery with her in another example of mutual promotion, declined following her death in 1947 in the context of a country which preferred to look to the future rather than the past. Klapheck's 1958 Ey monograph did much to re-establish her cultural standing. Yet the growing interest in the art of the Weimar Republic, the rise to prominence of certain artists in whom Ey dealt and the developing discourse about the recent German past and the role of women in the history of art, also found many points of interest in Ey's life and legend. The result, appraised here for the first time, is a diverse memorial culture, permeated by the maternal image, ranging from literary memorials to radio broadcasts, theatre productions, a television programme, a film and the initiatives of galleries, private collectors and museums.

The second wave of interest currently shows little sign of abating, with Ey's celebrity continuing to be used alongside that of Heinrich Heine, artist Joseph Beuys and other prominent *Düsseldorfer* to promote the cultural heritage of the city. On a broader national and international scale, however, it is apparent that she remains largely unknown or at best a peripheral figure in the narratives about artists and art scenes. Her unusual status as a female dealer in 'modern' art and divorced single working mother, her cult status in the Weimar Republic and her persecution in the Nazi period, coupled with the growing interest in the type of art and the status of certain artists in whose works she once dealt, undoubtedly contains the necessary ingredients to capture the wider contemporary popular imagination. However, so far this has not resulted in her being elevated to the level of celebrity she experienced in the 1920's and early 1930's.

Barth rightly observes that the role of the dealer in art history is of crucial importance:

Kunst braucht nicht nur Künstler, die sie machen, sie braucht auch Vermittler, Wegbereiter, Kunsthändler, die sie verbreiten, und insbesondere die Neue Kunst brauchte diese Vermittler, die der Kunst für eine neue Welt den Weg bereiteten, den Weg in die Öffentlichkeit, zu den Menschen, den neuen Menschen oder denen, die durch die Kunst zu solchen werden sollen (Barth, 2006, p. 382).

Yet Ey continues to remain in the shadows, eclipsed by the reputations of artists whose careers she helped to create and who now number amongst the famous representatives of twentieth century German art. It is the hope of the author that the thesis goes some way to redressing this balance by illuminating the life and legend of one of art history's most fascinating figures, acknowledging her significant contribution and providing its own *Denkmal in Worten*.

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(Ey Wikipedia, accessed 26/02/2009) v.c., 'Johanna Ey', <[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johanna\\_Ey](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johanna_Ey)> [accessed 26/02/2009].

(Mauer, accessed 20/11/2010) Benedikt Mauer, 'Düsseldorf im Bombenkrieg', <[http://www.historicum.net/themen/bombenkrieg/themen-beitraege/staedte-regionen/art/Duesseldorf\\_im\\_B/html/pointer/1/ca/a192186aae/?tx\\_mediadb\\_pi1\[maxItems\]=6](http://www.historicum.net/themen/bombenkrieg/themen-beitraege/staedte-regionen/art/Duesseldorf_im_B/html/pointer/1/ca/a192186aae/?tx_mediadb_pi1[maxItems]=6)> [accessed 20/11/2010].

(Müller, accessed 21/08/2009) Bertram Müller, 'Wieland Koenig starb 69-jährig', <<http://www.rp-online.de/public/article/duesseldorf-stadt/476950/Wieland-Koenig-starb-69-jaehrig.html>> [accessed 21/08/2009].

**Emails which have been cited (sorted chronologically):**

(Email, 03/11/2005//07/11/2005) Hausmann to *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* archive and *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* archive to Hausmann.

(Email, 24/06/2007//25/06/2007) Hausmann to Dr Annette Baumeister and Dr Annette Baumeister to Hausmann.

(Email, 21/10/2008//04/12/2008) Hausmann to *Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen* and *Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen* to Hausmann.

(Email, 06/11/2009//09/11/2009) Hausmann to *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* archive and *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* archive to Hausmann.

**Miscellaneous primary and secondary artefacts from Ey or about Ey which have been cited (sorted alphabetically and from S.D.A. unless otherwise stated):**

(*Abschrift*, 13/10/1930//30/10/1930) *Abschrift*, Düsseldorf, 30/10/1930, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 31/ p. 32.

(*Abschrift*, 24/07/1934) *Abschrift*, Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf, 24/07/1934. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 173f.

(*Abschrift, Nachweisung*, n.d.) *Abschrift, Nachweisung* ‘der durch das Kunstmuseum von Frau Ey übernommenen Bilder’, n.d.

(*An Mutter Ey*, 06/05/1921) Gert Wollheim, *An Mutter Ey*, 06/05/1921, in Ey, 1936, p. 116f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 181 and Barth, 2007, p. 8.

(*Anzeige*, Mutter Ey 1949) Advert that *Mutter Ey GmbH* was under new management. This was printed in all Düsseldorf newspapers and pasted onto all advertising columns in the city.

(*Auszug*, 24/09/1930) *Auszug* ‘aus dem Beschlussbuche des Grundstücksverwaltungs-Anschlusses’, Düsseldorf, 24/09/1930.

(*Bühne Frei Für Mutter Ey*, 2007) Leaflet advertising the theater performance *Bühne Frei für Mutter Ey* written by Gerda Hinze and directed by Philipp Kohlen-Priebe. A joint production by *Theater FLINGern*, *Aurora Theater Düsseldorf* and the *Theater FUSION Düsseldorf*. This took place from 25/08/2007-11/11/2007 at *Theater FLINGern*, Ackerstr. 144, 40233, Düsseldorf. Given to Hausmann by Goebbels.

(Catalogue, *Mutter Ey GmbH*, 08/07/1947) n.au., ‘Mutter Ey gibt sich die Ehre Herr Hermann Ey (?) Anlässlich der Eröffnung des Westdeutschen Künstlerzentrums, verbunden mit einer Kunstausstellung mit Werken von Malern und Bildhauern aus ihrem Kreise vor 1933, ergebenst einzuladen’, 08/07/1947.

(*Das Ey Gedicht*, 1922) Adalbert Trillhaase, *Das Ey Gedicht*, 1922, in *Das Junge Rheinland*, 1996, p. 20f.

(*Das Junge Rheinland, Programm*, 2006-2007) *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf* programme of events from 09/2006-01/2007. A leaflet which includes a list of lectures related to the *Junge Rheinland: Vorläufer-Freunde-Nachfolger*, 2006, *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*. From Hausmann's collection.

(*Die Ey*, 23/11/1991) Leaflet from the Ey opera entitled *Die Ey*, which premiered in Düsseldorf in the *JuTa*, Kasernenstr. 6, Wilhelm-Marx Haus on 23/11/1991. Composed by Ratko Delorko and staged by Ernest Martin.

(*Einladung*, 1998) Invitation to the opening of the exhibition *Johanna Ey: Porträts aus dem Bestand des Stadtmuseums Düsseldorf*, 16/12/1998-31/01/1999, *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*.

(*Entwurf II*) n.au., *Entwurf II*, July 1959, pp. 1-6. A legal document regarding compensation for Ey's family for the closure of her gallery by the Nazis.

(Ey, 1936) Johanna Ey's memoirs, 'Nachdruck nur mit meiner Genehmigung: Frau Ey', typed manuscript, 1936.

(Ey, 'Handschriftliche Memoiren', n.d.: Klapheck, 1958) Johanna Ey, 'Handschriftliche Memoiren', n.d., n.pn., cited throughout Klapheck, 1958.

(Ey's birth certificate) Johanna Ey's *Geburts-Urkunde*. Photo by Hausmann from a photocopy in S.D.A.

(Ey's marriage certificate) *Heiratsurkunde* for Johanna Stocken and Robert Ey. Copy dated 05/05/1959.

(Gockeln, 30/08/1947) 'Trauerrede des Oberbürgermeisters Gockeln am offenen Grab der Mutter Ey auf dem Nordfriedhof zu Düsseldorf am 30. August 1947'.

(Goebbels, 2007) Reproduction of a Japanese woodcut that Ey had in her possession, plus notes about the artist, subject of the woodcut and to whom Ey gave it as a present. Research sent to Hausmann by Goebbels in 2007.

(*Ich, Johanna Ey, Ausstellungsführer*, 2009) *Ich, Johanna Ey, Ausstellungsführer*, *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, 2009. From Hausmann's collection.

(*Ich, Johanna Ey, Programm*, 2009) *Ich Johanna Ey, Programm*, 01-05 2009, *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, 2009. From Hausmann's collection.

(*Johannas Leidenschaften*, 2000) Brochure accompanying the theatre production *Johannas Leidenschaften*, 2000. Introduces the director and actors and offers a short résumé of Ey's biography by Ingrid Bachér.

('Johanna Ey', 1927) Johanna Ey, 'Johanna Ey: Meine spanische Reise', in *Am Anfang*, 1985, pp. 84-94.



(*KulturHerbst*, 1999) Leaflet (?) advertising a tour (?) in the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, on November 2, 1999, entitled *Die Kunsthändlerin Johanna Ey* in the context of *KulturHerbst: Ein kulturelles Programm zum Internationalen Jahr der Senioren*.

(*Nachlass Ey Wien*, n.d.) 'Handschrift von Johanna Ey', n.d., n.pn., in Barth, 1984, p. 67/ p. 69.

(Pankok, 1947) Hulda Pankok, *Grabrede für Mutter Ey*, September 1947, *Archiv Otto Pankok-Museum*, Hünxe-Drevensack, n.b./n.a., in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 126f.

(Pomsel, 1984) Transcript of Horst Pomsel's, 'Mutter Ey 120 Jahre', broadcast on the *Deutsche Welle* (shortwave 49m-band) as part of the 'Kulturspiegel' on 28/02/1984 at 8.25 a.m. and repeated every four hours.

(Postcard, 16/08/1937) Ey to Robert Pudlich, Lübeck, 16/08/1937.

(Postcard, 08/11/1941) Ey to Jean Paul Schmitz, Lübeck, 08/11/1941.

(Postcard, 05/07/1946) Ey to Hans Busch, Düsseldorf, 05/07/1946.

(Preface to the typed manuscript of Ey 1936) Loose handwritten sheet by Günter Goebbels - includes reference to the typed manuscript of Ey's 1936 memoirs available in the S.D.A., n.d. Inserted in the S.D.A. file directly before the typed manuscript of Ey's 1936 memoirs.

(*Receipt*, 14/10/1929) n.au.l., receipt documenting the works taken by the Düsseldorf council from Ey's collection in exchange for the payment of 1800 RM to cover Ey's debts, Düsseldorf, 14/10/1929, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 27.

(Telegram, 04(?) /03/1929) Max Ernst to Ey, Berlin, 04(?) /03/1929, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 52, Barth, 1984, p. 8 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 115.

(*Todesnachricht*, 1947) Ey's death notice informing the recipient of her death in 1947 and her burial on 30/08/1947 in Düsseldorf's *Nordfriedhof*.

(Transcript, 1934) Transcript of a telephone conversation between Ey and *Direktor Gerlach*, shortly after 28/03/1934, in Ey, 1936, p. 104. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 171.

(*Vollmacht*, 12/10/1946) A typed document signed by Ey in which she gives Karl Leyendecker the authority to publish her memoirs, Düsseldorf, 12/10/1946.

(Wollheim, 1922) Gert Heinrich Wollheim, 'Ein anderer Sinnspruch', 29/07/1922, in *Komödie einer Unverschämten*, in Ey, 1936, p. 118. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 182.

('Zum Brief von Johanna Ey an Karl Schwesig', n.d.) Carl Lauterbach, 'Zum Brief von Johanna Ey an Karl Schwesig vom 30. Juli 1921', n.d.

**Miscellaneous primary and secondary artefacts from Ey or about Ey which have been consulted but not cited (sorted alphabetically and from S.D.A. unless otherwise stated):**

Ey's *Gastbuch* spanning her time as an art dealer and showing example of the works she had in her possession.

Handwritten copy of the poem about Ey by Gert Wollheim (Wollheim, 1922: Ey, 1936, p. 118/ Baumeister, 1999, p. 182). It is not signed but the handwriting appears to be Ey's.

Postcard from Ey to Robert Pudlich, n.d. but from a visit to Lübeck in the possession of Günter Müller-Pudlich. This has not been cited out of respect for Monika Pfeil who is writing a doctorate about Pudlich and may want to present this postcard as an original contribution.

Postcard (?) from Ey to the family of Joseph Spinnrath offering her condolences following his death. Date approximately 26/01/1933.

Postcard from Ey to Jean Paul Schmitz, 31/12/1942.

Postcard from Ey to Hans Busch, 1947 (?).

Postcard from Ey to Hans Busch, Düsseldorf, 16/04/1947.

Postcard from Robert Pudlich to Hermann Ey, 23/06/1949.

Telegram from Otto Dix to the family Ey, n.d.

**Letters to Ey or about Ey, which have been cited (sorted chronologically and from S.D.A. unless otherwise stated):**

(Letter, 'Auf dem Wege zurück', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda and Elinor to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 123. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 186f.

(Letter, 'Dein Brief vom 14. August', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 120f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 185f.

(Letter, 'Ey, ich hatte mir gedacht', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 139f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 196f.

(Letter, 'Ey'chen, hast Du viel auf mich geschimpft', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda, Robert Pudlich and Elinor Sureda-Sackett to Ey, Marseille, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 130f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 190f.

(Letter, 'Fabelhafte und phantastische Johanna Ey!', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, pp. 123-125. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 187f.

(Letter, 'Guten Tag, Du süsse Zitrone!', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 128f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 189f.

(Letter, 'Ich weiss es', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, Genova, n.d., in Ey, 1936, pp. 135-137. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 194f.

(Letter, 'Ja Ey, ich habe alle Deine Briefe', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, Genova, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 131f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 191f.

(Letter, Jupp Bell, n.d.) Jupp (Josef) Bell to Ey, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 116. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 180f.

(Letter, 'Meine liebe, liebste Johanna!', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, Genova, Majorca, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 133f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 192f.

(Letter, 'Zum Teufel mit dem Ey!', n.d.) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, Sieste, Southern France, n.d., in Ey, 1936, p. 137. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 195.

(Letter, 30/07/1921) Ey to Karl Schwesig, 30/07/1921, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 16f.

(Letter, Christmas 1922) Otto Griebel to Ey, Christmas 1922, in Barth, 2007, p. 50f.

(Letter, 'Du bist ein rettender Engel', 1922 (?)) Otto Dix to Ey, 1922 (?), in Schreiner, 1926, p. 47. Also cited in Ey, 1930, p. 79, Barth, 1989, p. 19 and Barth, 2007, p. 45.

(Letter, Griebel, 1922) Otto Griebel to Ey, 1922, in Barth, 2007, p. 114.

(Letter, 'Liebe Mutter Ei! Ei!', 1922) Otto Dix to Ey, 1922, in Barth, 1989, p. 18.

(Letter, 'Liebe Mutter Ey! Wie gehts?', 1922) Otto Dix to Ey, 1922, in Barth, 1989, p. 25.

(Letter, Jean Paul Schmitz, 1927) Jean Paul Schmitz to Ilse Pieper, El Arenal, Palma de Mallorca, 1927.

(Letter, 01/05/1927) Jean Paul Schmitz (?) to Ilse Pieper, Puerto-Pollensa, 01/05/1927.

(Letter, 'Jetzt sitze ich mich in meinem Hause', March (?) 1927) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, March (?) 1927, in Ey, 1936, p. 119f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 183.

(Letter, 08/05/1927) Jacobo Sureda and Elinor Sureda-Sackett to Ey, Paris, 08/05/1927, in Ey, 1936, p. 126f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 188f.

(Letter, 21/05/1927) Ey to the Schramm family, Düsseldorf, 21/05/1927.

(Letter, 06/08/1928) Ey to Robert Pudlich, Düsseldorf, 06/08/1928, S.D.A. Cited in Klapheck, 1958, p. 40.

(Letter, Schmurr, March 1929) Professor Schmurr, *Staatlichen Akademie*, to Ey, March 1929, in Ey, 1936, p. 51f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 114f.

(Letter, Spatz, March 1929) Professor Will Spatz to Ey, March 1929, in Ey, 1936, p. 51. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 114.

(Letter, 03/03/1929 (?)) *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr to Ey, 03/03/1929 (?), in Lehr, 03/03/1929 (?); Luise Straus-Ernst, 03/03/1929, n.pn.; Ey, 1936, p. 50 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 112.

(Letter, 04/03/1929) *Generalintendanz der Städtischen Theater Düsseldorf* Walter Bruno Iltz to Ey, Düsseldorf, 04/03/1929, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 50f and Baumeister, 1999, p. 113f.

(Letter, 26/09/1929) Various artists to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, Düsseldorf, 26/09/1929, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 25.

(Letter, 22/10/1929) Ey to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, 22/10/1929, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 27.

(Letter, 25/10/1929) Robert Görlinger to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, Cologne, 25/10/1929.

(Letter, 29/10/1929) *Stadtsyndikus* Dr Hensel (?) to Robert Görlinger, 29/10/1929.

(Letter, 05/12/1929) Robert Görlinger to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, Cologne, 05/12/1929.

(Letter, 30/01/1930) Ey to *Rechtsanwalt* Karl Vossen, Düsseldorf, 30/01/1930, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 28.

(Letter, 18/02/1930//21/02/1930) Two letters in one: First: (?) to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, Düsseldorf, 18/02/1930. Second: (?) to (?), Düsseldorf, 21/02/1930.

(Letter, 20/02/1930) Rudi vom Endt and various artists to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, 20/02/1930, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 28.

(Letter, 14/05/1930) Ey to *Oberbürgermeister* Dr Lehr, 14/05/1930, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 29f.

(Letter, 30/05/1930) Koteschau to (?), 30/05/1930, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 30.

(Letter, 01/09/1930) (?) to *Bürgermeister* Reuter, Düsseldorf, 01/09/1930. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 31.

(Letter, 09/09/1930) Letter from (?) *Stadtsyndikus* to *Bürgermeister* Reuter, Düsseldorf, 09/09/1930.

(Letter 22/10/1930) Ey to Dr Hensel, *Stadtsyndikus*, Düsseldorf, 22/10/1930.

(Letter, 10/12/1930) Ey to the Schramm family, Düsseldorf, 10/12/1930, S.D.A. Cited in *Das Tor*, 1985, p. 12/ p. 14.

(Letter, Glaser, 1931) *Staatliche Museen, Staatliche Kunstbibliothek Berlin* Glaser to Ey, 1931, in Ey, 1936, p. 101. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 164.

(Letter, 30/03/1931) (?) *Stadtsyndikus* to *Sparkassendirektor* Dr Vogt, Düsseldorf, 30/03/1931.

(Letter, 17/04/1931) (?) *Stadtsyndikus* to *Sparkassendirektor* Dr Vogt, Düsseldorf, 17/04/1931.

(Letter, 27/04/1931) *Städtische Sparkasse zu Düsseldorf* to Dr Hensel, *Stadtsyndikus*, Düsseldorf, 27/04/1931.

(Letter, 13/06/1931) *Kölnischer Kunstverein* to Ey, Cologne, 13/06/1931.

(Letter, 09/07/1931) Robert Pudlich to Walter Kordt, 09/07/1931, *Nachlass Walter Kordt, Heinrich-Heine-Institut*, Düsseldorf, n.b./n.a. Cited in Hausmann, 2007, p. 65, Fig. 20.

(Letter, 18/09/1931) Otto Nagel to Ey, 18/09/1931.

(Letter, 22(?) /09/1931) Otto Nagel to Ey, 22(?) /09/1931.

(Letter, Greifswald, Oct 1931) Director of the *Universitäts-Bibliothek*, Greifswald to Ey, October 1931, in Ey, 1936, p. 100. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 163.

(Letter, Kyser, 1932) Karl Kyser to Ey, 1932, in Ey, 1936, p. 73. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 142.

(Letter, Reismüller, Feb 1932) General Director of the *Bayrische Staatsbibliothek* Reismüller to Ey, February 1932, in Ey, 1936, p. 100f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 164.

(Letter, 05/03/1932) Max Ernst to Ey, Paris, 05/03/1932 not 1931, in Krempel, 1985, p. 13.

(Letter, 12/03/1932) *Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Königsberg*, Dr Lohmeyer to Ey, Königsberg, 12/03/1932, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 100 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 163.

(Letter, 28/03/1932) V.L. Shevlin to Ey, 28/03/1932, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 133f.

(Letter, 12/04/1932) Art director of *The Detroit Institute of Arts*, W.R. Valentiner, to Ey, 12/04/1932, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 133.

(Letter, 11/05/1932) Italian General Consul to Ey, 11/05/1932, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 67 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 132.

(Letter, 01/06/1932) R. Schenk (?), *Städtische Kunstsammlung, Wiesbaden Neues Museum* to Ey, 01/06/1932.

(Letter, 09/10/1932) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, 09/10/1932, in Ey, 1936, p. 122f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 186f.

(Letter, 15/11/1932) Robert M. Hutchins, president of the *University of Chicago* to Ey, Chicago, Illinois, 15/11/1932, in Baumeister, 1999, p. 135.

(Letter, 'es ist nicht notwendig', 1933) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, 1933, in Ey, 1936, p. 138f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 196.

(Letter, 03/01/1933) N.H. DeFoe, Department of Exhibits, *A Century of Progress*, international exposition Chicago 1933, to Ey, 03/01/1933, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 135f.

(Letter, 02/02/1933) N.H. DeFoe, Department of Exhibits, *A Century of Progress*, international exposition Chicago 1933, to Ey, 02/02/1933, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 136/ p. 138.

(Letter, 04/02/1933) N.H. DeFoe, Department of Exhibits, *A Century of Progress*, international exposition Chicago 1933, to Ey, 04/02/1933, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 138f.

(Letter, 30/07/1933) Ey to Jacobo Sureda, Düsseldorf, 30/07/1933. Cited in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 117 and Baumeister, 1999, p. 202f.

(Letter, 15/11/1933) Ey to Jacobo Sureda, 15/11/1933, S.D.A. Cited in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 117 and in Baumeister, 1999, p. 204f.

(Letter, 16/02/1934) *Grundstückverwaltung im Auftrage: Direktor Gerlach* to Ey, 16/02/1934, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 102. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 169.

(Letter, 12/03/1934) *Grundstückverwaltung im Auftrage: Direktor Gerlach* to Ey, Düsseldorf, 12/03/1934, in Ey, 1936, p. 103 and in Baumeister, 1999, p. 170.

(Letter, 28/03/1934) *Obergerichtsvollzieher Gerlings* to Ey, 28/03/1934, in Ey, 1936, p. 103f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 170.

(Letter, 23/05/1934) On behalf of *Direktor Gerlach* to Ey, Düsseldorf, 23/05/1934, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 172.

(Letter, 02/06/1934) Dr Hupp to Ey, Düsseldorf, 02/06/1934, S.D.A. Cited in Ey, 1936, p. 105a/bf, Barth, 1984, p. 60f and Baumeister, 1999, p. 172.

(Letter, 04/08/1934) Dr Schubert, on behalf of the head of the *Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf*, to Ey, Düsseldorf, 04/08/1934, in Ey, 1936, p. 107. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 174f.

(Letter, 06/06/1935) Jacobo Sureda to Ey, 06/06/1935, in Ey, 1936, p. 140. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 197.

(Letter, 'Ich sende Ihnen', 1935) Elinor[...] Sackett-de-Sureda to Ey, June (?) 1935, in Ey, 1936, p. 141. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 198.

(Letter, 'Ich habe nicht mehr die Zeit', 1935) Elinor[...] Sackett-de-Sureda to Ey, n.d. but from 1935 and shortly after the letter 'Ich sende Ihnen', 1935, in Ey, 1936, p. 141f. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 198.

(Letter, 12/03/1936) Ey to 'Krause' (real name Jean Paul Schmitz), Düsseldorf, 12/03/1936, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 7/ p. 40.

(Letter, 03/04/1936) Ey to 'Krause', Düsseldorf, 03/04/1936, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 41.

(Letter, 28/02/1937) Ey to 'Krause', 28/02/1937, S.D.A. Cited in Baumeister, 1999, p. 41.

(Letter, 11/05/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 11/05/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 19/07/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, Lübeck, 19/07/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 27/07/1937) Ey to (?), 27/07/1937, in Klapheck, 1958, p. 51f.

(Letter, 23/08/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 23/08/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 28/09/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 28/09/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 17/10/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 17/10/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 28/10/1937) Ey to Günter (?) Grote, 28/10/1937, in Grote, 1987, p. 31f.

(Letter, 09/11/1937) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 09/11/1937, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123f.

(Letter, 1938 (?)) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, circa 1938, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 123.

(Letter, 03/03/1938) Ey to 'Krause', 03/03/1938.

(Letter, 09/03/1938) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 09/03/1938, in Barth, 2007, p. 78. Transcribed for the first time here by Herr and Frau Traub.

(Letter, 21/03/1938) *President der Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* Adolf Ziegeler to (?), Berlin, 21/03/1938, in Lauterbach, 1981, p. 31.

(Letter, 07/07/1938) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 07/07/1938, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 29/07/1938) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, Düsseldorf, 29/07/1938, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 01/11/1938) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, Düsseldorf, 01/11/1938, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 16/01/1939) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 16/01/1939, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 22/05/1939) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 22/05/1939, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 12/07/1939) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 12/07/1939, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, 19/07/1939) Ey to Robert Pudlich, 19/07/1939.

(Letter, 10/08/1939) Ey to Dr Flora Scherer, 10/08/1939, in *Am Anfang*, 1985, p. 124.

(Letter, December 1939) Ey to (?), December 1939, in Klapheck, 1958, p. 12.

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