

Hannah Höch's radical imagination: a  
study on the transformation of reality  
through space, language and a politicised  
psychoanalysis.

Volume 1 of 2: Written thesis

Andrea Kay Tabernacle

UCL

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# Declaration

I, Andrea Kay Tabernacle confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## Abstract

This thesis presents an analysis of Höch's work in relation to the idea of radical imagination. It proposes that Höch activated radical imagination in her work, aiming to transform perceptions of reality, in order to create social change. In pursuit of such change, Höch was influenced both by psychoanalysis and philosophy, in particular, by Salomo Friedländer's concept of creative indifference. The target for radical imagination is the dismantlement and reconstruction of the prevailing moral, social and aesthetic order, from its root. This study argues that its effect derives from its rootedness in the perception of subjective realities. Beginning in the unconscious processes of looking and the construction of concepts of self and other, it is radical in means as well as in intention towards fundamental changes in values. While not directed at specific political aims, it is argued here that there is, nonetheless, an ethical and political imperative. The research has been carried out through an examination of Höch's work in context, including by reference to Walter Benjamin and Sigmund Freud. Her work is also considered in relation to other Dada artists and the writer, Til Brugman. This study also uses art-practice to model, speculate and reflect on radical imagination. Both Friedländer and Höch develop their ideas through art: Höch in her varied practice and Friedländer through grotesque stories. Höch's development of methods to enact radical imagination can be understood as akin to contemporary practice-based research. In foregrounding Höch's ideas about imagination and reality, from her statements and the visual evidence of her work, this thesis aims to produce a new interpretation of Höch's work, based on the attribution of agency to Höch as a pioneering cultural producer: her work contributing to a wider articulation of ideas about imagination with importance beyond the discipline of Fine Art.

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Notes:

1. Unless otherwise stated, translations from German are mine.
2. References to the writing for some authors, chosen for their contextual or temporal proximity to Höch, have been cited with the original publication date in square brackets. This is to indicate their contemporaneity to Höch and to avoid confusion. The bibliographic entry is to the edition referred to. For example, Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* is given an in-text citation of 1953 – the date of the Strachey translation – and also [1900]. Similarly, Höch's writing is referenced in the text with the original date, or the revision date where a revised version is used, in addition to the publication date of the edition in the bibliography.
3. Some additional illustrations, not directly discussed in the text, are included in Appendix 1.

## Prologue

*To have discovered the eternal task of such art is one of the great spiritual events of our time: this task of the psychic regulator, antidote, conversion of reaction to action, insurrection and conscience (Höch, 2008) [1946].<sup>1</sup>*

Radical imagination is proposed in this thesis as a catalyst for fundamental social and political change, as a practice in art that has effect. The original contribution to knowledge here is found in this proposition about Höch's project; that this was the consistent imperative in the work of a woman who embraced the responsibility of an artist and the role of art. Radical imagination, I argue, begins in the unconscious processes of seeing and in the construction of the concepts of self and other. It is radical in means as well as in its intention towards a fundamental change in values. As such it is paradigmatic, in that it aims to completely dismantle and reconstruct the existing order. This study argues that the effect of radical imagination is manifested in pursuit of the overriding task that Höch understood to have been discovered for art. It derives from the rootedness of imagination in perception. That is, it recruits the everyday imagination that forms part of the process of perception. It has an ethical and political dimension while not being propaganda: it is not literal in calling, for example, for specific changes in social conditions or political relations. But there is the aspiration that in understanding different perspectives, and through the freedom inherent in radical imagination, people will behave more benevolently, and that, by revealing distortions, destructive ideologies can be exposed and undermined. The idea of radical imagination modelled on Höch's practice might also potentially be drawn into use in contemporary art practice in the 21st Century. We now face political challenges that are different in their specifics, but there are some similar broad common themes to those faced by Höch; such as a concern for freedom and awareness of distortions in the way reality is presented. There are also parallels in the use of power enacted through corporeal coercion, geographic and spatial control, and in the denial of complexity leading to simplistic and dishonest emotional appeals. In her enactment and theorisation of radical imagination Höch is not unique. Her work is a product of its time and context. However, Höch's work exemplifies a particularly thorough and

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<sup>1</sup> *Fantastische Kunst* ('Fantastic Art'), 1946, is a gallery text written by Höch for an exhibition at the Galerie Gerd Rosen, Berlin.

insistent articulation of the idea of radical imagination, such that it can be used to reinterpret her work in a way that prioritises Höch's agency.

# Introduction

*To this day I have tried, with these techniques, criticism, sarcasm, but also sadness and beauty, to express my ideas, as my way to have contact with the world.* Höch, 1976.<sup>2</sup>

The plaque outside Höch's last home in Heiligensee, Berlin, describes her as 'the painter Hannah Höch', 'known for collage and photomontage', Figure 1.<sup>3</sup> The Heiligensee plaque exemplifies approaches to Höch's legacy that foreground her photomontage, particularly in relation to the Berlin Dada group. These focus normally on the Weimar period, often presenting her work as defined by its propaganda value. This thesis presents an analysis of the idea of radical imagination in relation to Höch's work as a whole, including her work in different mediums, and work made in association with different movements and individuals. It includes examples that are overtly political in their specific reference to political subject matter, and it includes work that cannot be accounted for in those terms. Writers such as Maud Lavin and Peter Boswell effectively rescue Höch from the dismissal of early Dada accounts and this does not need to be repeated.<sup>4</sup> However, Höch's perspective, as a critically aware theorist and practitioner of art has not always been afforded adequate attention. This thesis aims to attribute appropriate agency to Höch in the production and presentation of her work. Radical imagination is analysed here in Höch's oeuvre as a whole. It is proposed as a means to understand Höch's intentions and priorities with some degree of consistency in its application to the breadth of her varied output during seven

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<sup>2</sup> 'Bis zum heutigen Tage habe ich versucht, mit diesen Techniken mein Gedankengut, Kritik, Sarkasmus, aber auch Trauer und Schönheit zum Ausdruck zu bringen, auf meine Weise Kontakt mit der Welt zu haben' (Höch in Moortgat and Thater-Schulz, 1989, p.23).

<sup>3</sup> 'Hier lebte und arbeitete von 1939 bis 1978  
die Malerin  
HANNAH HÖCH  
1.11.1889-31.5.1978  
Sie wurde vor allem durch ihre Collagen  
und Photomontagen bekannt.  
1919 Mitbegründerin von »Dada Berlin«  
Eine der Großen Frauen ihrer Epoche.'

<sup>4</sup> For example, as will be discussed further, Makela and Boswell write about Höch in *The Photomontages of Hannah Höch*, 1996 (Makela and Boswell, 1996); and Lavin in *Cut with the kitchen knife: the Weimar photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Lavin, 1993).

decades of production as a pioneer of modern art. To that end, it considers work in different mediums and from different times, because the aim is to present an analysis that focuses on understanding Höch's aims as more ambitious and more radical than propaganda. It identifies mechanisms of effect, locating these in the processes of imagination. Radical imagination, as practiced by Höch in her work, can be indirect insofar as subject matter or content. It may not always call directly for specific political changes. But I argue here that its effect on the viewer is intended to be direct. Höch's work is radical in its direct effect on the perception and interpretation of reality, through an imagination that is fundamental in its relation to other mental activity. This study therefore takes a broad view of the context, drawing on a wide range of examples from Höch but its focus narrows on radical imagination as an idea, and specifically in its development by Höch, in her work.

The research design for this study has emerged from the consideration of three common approaches within the existing literature on Höch. These are, firstly, the inclusion of Höch as part of wider discussion of modern German art and particularly in association with Dada.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, many writers have adopted a biographical methodology, including as recently as 2013 (Nero, 2013). Finally, in some studies social context is prioritised over other types of analysis; this approach often also includes aspects of Höch's biography.

When Höch came to Berlin to study painting from Gotha in 1912, she was already 22 (Höch, 1959a, p.91). This is explained in Heinz Ohff's biography: 'In the family the father has absolute authority. The eldest daughter enters life relatively late because she, as a matter of course, has first to help to bring up the youngest sister, an unwritten law' (Ohff, 1968, p.10).<sup>6</sup> Höch cared for her sister, before eventually leaving to study art. In a letter published in Walter Mehring's *Berlin Dada*, Höch explains the impact of the First World War, describing the 'collapse of my hitherto well-tempered worldview' (Mehring, 1959, p.91).<sup>7</sup> Art schools were closed for a time during the war

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<sup>5</sup> Höch priorities the strength with which an individual artwork communicates ahead of art movements or groups (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929]. Moreover, Ellen Maurer argues that if Höch were to be identified with one particular movement it would be Constructivism (Maurer, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> 'In der Familie hat der Vater absolute Autorität. Die älteste Tochter tritt verhältnismäßig spät ins Leben, weil sie, ganz selbstverständlich, zuvor helfen muß, die jüngste Schwester aufzuziehen, ein ungeschriebenes Gesetz.'

<sup>7</sup> 'der Zusammenbruch meines bis dahin so wohltemperierten Weltbildes.'

and Höch returned to Gotha and worked for the Red Cross before resuming her studies in Berlin (Makholm, 1996, p.185). She was, therefore, still a student when she met the Berlin Dadaists. Dada was an art and literary movement beginning in Zurich in 1916, at Hugo Ball's Cabaret Voltaire, with Dada groups appearing later in other cities such as Berlin, Cologne, Hanover, Paris and New York (Jones, 2014). The movement began as an anti-militarist response to the First World War, opposed to the values seen by Dadaists as having led to war (Sheppard, 2000, p.173). Dadaists associated with Höch and appearing in this thesis include: Johannes Baader, George Grosz, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield, Weiland Hertzfelde, Richard Huelsenbeck, Walter Mehring, Man Ray, Hans Richter, Kurt Schwitters, Arthur Segal, Hans Arp, Sophie Täuber and Tristan Tzara.<sup>8</sup> After graduating Höch worked part-time for Ullstein, the major publishing company responsible for producing newspapers and illustrated magazines such as the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*. Her work involved producing designs for embroidery patterns, some of which appeared in her collages, for example *Weißer Form* (White Form), 1919, Figure 2. Höch's job at Ullstein afforded her a degree of financial freedom and independence. She rented a flat in Friedenau, which she also used as a studio, Figure 3. The Friedenau flat became a meeting place in the early 1920s for readings of experimental poetry and prose with artists such as Schwitters, Arp and Täuber (Makholm, 1996, p.192). Höch worked with the Berlin Dadaists until 1922 when she parted from the group as well as ending her relationship with Hausmann (Makholm, 1996, p.190). In 1924, Höch met the Dutch writer, Til Brugman, and moved to the Netherlands to live with her in The Hague. Höch began to be known as an artist and support herself through her art.

Juan Vincente Aliaga identifies three major factors with an important influence on the course of Höch's work. These are her financial independence through her part-time employment at the Ullstein publishing house from 1916 to 1926, her relationship with Hausmann until 1922 and her relationship with Brugman (Aliaga, 2004b, pp.314–

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<sup>8</sup> Dada has been extensively written about and debated – for example: Richard Sheppard critiques some of the clichés about Dada as nihilistic and negative in *What is Dada?* (Sheppard, 1979b) and contextualises Dada as a link between modernism and postmodernism in *Modernism – Dada – Postmodernism* (Sheppard, 2000); Richter provides a insider view of Dada in *Dada art and anti-art* (Richter, 1965); women in Dada are introduced by Naomi Sawelson-Gorse in *Women in Dada: Essays on sex, gender and identity* (Sawelson-Gorse, 1998); and Dafydd Jones provides a recent theoretical engagement with Zurich Dada in *Dada 1916 in Theory: Practices of Critical Resistance* (Jones, 2014).



315). Hausmann's ideas and their influence on Höch are treated extensively by many writers so will not be repeated here. Brugman was a Dutch writer who had worked on the *De Stijl* journal and on Kurt Schwitters's journal *Merz*. She published poems in *De Stijl* and worked as a translator, for example translating Piet Mondrian's *Art and Life* into English. She is described, by Höch, as a Sprachgenie, or linguistic genius, whose 'boundless imagination made an air of never-ending drolleries' (Höch, 1989d, p.198) [1958].<sup>9</sup> It has been noted, for example, by Aliaga, that Höch's work changed during the period from 1922 after leaving the Berlin Dada group (Aliaga, 2004b). Her work with Brugman is strongly psychological; Brugman had studied psychology and philosophy as well as languages in Paris and London before they met. During the period from 1922 to 1929 Höch lived in The Hague with Brugman and they travelled, participated in events and made contacts and work. During 1929 to 1935 they had returned to Berlin, Höch had her first solo shows and was included in the major international group show *Film und Foto*. The philosopher Salomo Friedländer was another important and influential figure in Höch's circle. Friedländer wrote literature under the pseudonym Mynona (Anonym backwards) but published his philosophical writing as Friedländer. Friedländer was 'well known at the Berlin Café des Westens and on the cabaret scene' (Benson, 1987b, p.10). Friedländer and Brugman will be introduced more fully in later chapters. I do not include, in detail, Höch's important collaborative friendship with Kurt Schwitters. Stina Barchan has written extensively about this important friendship and the work created from it in *The House and the Archive: Hannah Höch and Kurt Schwitters* (Barchan, 2009). Höch returned to Berlin, with Brugman, in 1929, living for a time in the Friedenau flat before moving in 1938 to Heiligensee where she was based for the rest of her life. Some of the commonly found approaches to Höch's work within the literature will now be considered in turn: those focusing on her association with Berlin Dada; those using her biography as a starting point; and studies in which social context is prioritised over other types of analysis.

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<sup>9</sup> 'Ihre grenzenlose Phantasie machte sich in nie endenden Drolerien Luft'

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

## Dada

As one of the ‘four H’s’ of Berlin Dada (Höch, Hausmann, Heartfield and Huelsenbeck) it is perhaps inevitable that much of the literature on Höch compares her to others in Berlin Dada (Mehring, 1959). Writing on the Berlin Dada history draws, properly, on artists’ own recollections and writings. This can present difficulties for studies on Höch, however, because many of the primary Berlin Dada accounts, if they include Höch at all, are dismissive. For example, Hans Richter, in *Dada: art and anti-art*, 1965, asks why Höch was involved with Dada at all, as a small town ‘quiet girl’ among her loud male colleagues (Richter, 1965, p.132). Richter describes Hausmann as Höch’s ‘mentor’ and says of Höch’s involvement in the *First International Dada Fair*, 1919, ‘she only contributed collages’ (Richter, 1965, p.132). The condescending language used in his descriptions of Höch includes, ‘good girl’, and a ‘little girl’, ‘with a tiny voice’ (Richter, 1965, p.132). Richter describes Höch’s well-known *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* (‘Cut with the Dada kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly cultural epoch of Germany’), 1919, Figure 4, as a portrait of the Berlin Dadaists. Perhaps this work was included because it was seen as being about the group. Her inclusion is uncharacteristic of the *Club Dada Berlin*; more often she was discouraged from exhibiting and was seldom published in Berlin Dada journals. Höch’s participation in the *First International Dada Fair*, 1920, at the Galerie Otto Burchard, was secured by Hausmann in the face of opposition from both Grosz and Heartfield (Funkenstein, 2001, p.42).<sup>10</sup> Because of the attitudes of some in that group toward women, relying on their accounts gives a distorted picture. Höch describes Schwitters and Arp as being exceptional: ‘Hans Arp and Kurt Schwitters, in my experience, were rare examples of the kind of artist who can really treat a woman as a colleague’ (Höch, 1959b, p.74).<sup>11</sup> The large retrospectives in the 1990’s and again around the time of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Höch’s death in 2008 have recovered Höch’s reputation from this earlier mistreatment. Höch recognised the bias towards her Dada work, saying ‘I’m sick and tired of Dada [...] Everything else

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<sup>10</sup> A detailed analysis and description of *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands*, 1919, is found in *Figurations of Women Dancers in Weimar Germany (1918-1933): Hannah Höch, Otto Dix, and Paul Klee* (Funkenstein, 2001) and in *Cut with the kitchen knife: the Weimar photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Lavin, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Roditi interviewed Höch in Berlin in June 1959 (Höch, 1959b).

that has developed goes unnoticed' (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311).<sup>12</sup> While Höch may have felt frustrated about Dada overshadowing the rest of her oeuvre, she also stressed the importance of her Dada experience, reflecting in 1959 '[w]e old Dadaists can probably only see this whole existence through all-encompassing Dada glasses' (Höch, 1959a, p.92). She told Edouard Roditi:

you must admit that our slogans were effectively shocking. Of course, today they would no longer seem so very novel, and I'm afraid that nobody would take them now as seriously as the respectable Berlin bourgeoisie of 1919 did (Höch, 1959b, p.68).

This comment suggests that Höch was aware of the provocativeness of the group's activities and the potential reception of her work.

Höch's association with the Berlin Dadaists can tend to obscure her particular and different political priorities. She is sometimes considered to embrace revolutionary politics when in the company of Berlin Dadaists:

the Berlin Dadaists – Hausmann, Huelsenbeck, Höch, Heartfield and Grosz in particular – embraced the aim of revolutionary social change and, in the case of Hausmann and Huelsenbeck, published a radical and at least semi-serious political manifesto (Bradley, 2007, p.15).

Höch's lack of publishing was not entirely in her control. Lavin recognises that Höch's political expression is different from other Berlin Dadaists, writing, 'Höch's work does not convey the explicit and often prescriptive messages of Heartfield's photomontages' (Lavin, 1998, p.330). Höch's gender concerns distinguish her politically from artists such as Hausmann. Höch was active in support of feminist campaigns, and referred to women's suffrage in her work.<sup>13</sup> She took part in the *Frauen in Not* (Women in Need) exhibition in 1931 at the Haus der Juryfreien in Berlin in support of women's reproductive rights (Funkenstein, 2001).

Richter describes Höch's collages as 'sometimes political' (Richter, 1965, p.132). The political in Höch's work is sometimes judged in terms of the conveyance of explicitly political subject matter, in relation to political texts, movements or

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<sup>12</sup> Translated in Aliaga (Aliaga, 2004b).

<sup>13</sup> *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands* ('Cut with the Dada kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly cultural epoch of Germany'), 1919-20, includes a map, in the lower right hand corner, of countries in Europe where women had achieved suffrage (1919 in Germany).

arguments, rather than with regard to the effect of her work on the viewer, on other artists and herself, or the intentions behind the work and its lasting legacy. This thesis argues that, for Höch, imagination is political in the sense of having political intention and aims, but the term ‘political’ is difficult in this context, because of the possibly confusing association with practices Höch sees as propaganda or tendentious art. The term radical imagination is used for art that Höch separates from propaganda, but which aims to create change. Whether Höch’s work is as ‘political’ as, for example, Heartfield’s work is less important to this study than the question of what the distinction between propagandistic and aesthetic meant for Höch, within the whole body of her work, which I argue was radical in its intention and effect. For this reason, rather than referring to the term, ‘political’, I use the term ‘radical’, for Höch’s intended aims for imagination – meaning going to the root, or departing greatly from the usual in order to create change on a fundamental level. Höch’s work was politically informed and motivated and affected by the social context. Lavin and others have, through their analysis of the social context, countered ideas that Höch’s was either less political or less serious than her male colleagues in Berlin Dada.

While the Berlin Dada group was important to Höch, after leaving the Berlin Dada group Höch began to gain a reputation as an artist in her own right. She rejected aspects of Berlin Dada she disagreed with and sought out contacts with artists with whom she had ideas in common, including artists involved in constructivism, De Stijl and Surrealism. The early Dada influence is included in this study as it can inform the question of how Höch might have conceived of imagination. However, this study looks beyond the short-lived period towards which Höch expressed ambivalent feelings.

Figure 4.



## Biographical approaches

Many accounts of Höch's work draw strongly on her biography. For example, Lavin writes of *Vagabunden*, 1926, '[a] biographical reading offers itself immediately', referring to her relationship with Brugman (Lavin, 1990, p.66). The ease with which a biographical reading 'offers itself' follows a pattern of approaching Höch's work through her biography, starting with her relationship with Hausmann. Höch became involved in the Club Dada Berlin group slightly later than the other Dadaists and after they had published a substantial number of articles setting out their ideas; in many cases they founded and owned the journals in which they published. Boswell writes that Höch's *The Domptense*, (c1930, reconfigured c1959-1964), Figure 5, had 'strongly biographical implications, presenting a veiled commentary on Höch's lesbian relationship with the Dutch poet, Brugman, with whom she was involved from 1926 to 1935' (Mills and Boswell, 2003, p.16). Boswell appears to suggest a causal link between changes in subject matter and Höch's relationship with Brugman. He argues that Höch's work became more focused on gender and relationships between the sexes after meeting Brugman. Boswell also presents Höch's use of different mediums and techniques in terms of the motivations of her career, arguing that:

In the late 1950s, Höch was enjoying a newfound celebrity after years of obscurity. Galleries and museums were rediscovering Dada and Höch suddenly found her work from the Weimar era in demand [...] Under the circumstances, she likely felt the urge to revisit the work that made her famous (Mills and Boswell, 2003, p.19).

The works that appear to need biographical explanation are often those less easily attributable to Hausmann or to Berlin Dada in general, including the work Höch refers to as imaginative, fantastic or Surrealist.

A primarily biographical approach to Höch might obscure the importance and meaning of imagination to Höch, if her work is read through her relationships or through the ideas of others, in some cases in direct contradiction to her stated intentions. Boswell argues that Höch shifted toward more internal concerns as the political situation in Germany deteriorated, and that her works from this period reflect an 'escapist attitude' (Boswell, 1996, p.17). He refers to Höch's 'retreat into a private realm of fantasy and imagination' from 1933, attributing this to a 'reaction to the personal and social crises of the times' (Boswell, 1996, p.16). While he acknowledges the 'turn to the freedom of fantasy in her photomontages during the Nazi period had its roots in her earlier paintings, gouaches and watercolors' he contrasts Höch's 'tribute

to the pleasures of the imagination' with 'the practices of Berlin Dada, with its revolutionary criticism of bourgeois society and the German political and military hierarchy' (Boswell, 1996, p.17). In the 1930s, Boswell states that Höch's work's 'social dimension had been confined exclusively to the realm of gender issues' (Boswell, 1996, p.16). The expression 'inward turn', by Boswell, together with as is 'whimsy', 'escapist', 'fanciful', and 'tame', tend to suggest a less serious and less political intention. Boswell argues that Höch was 'more attuned to the inner voice than to public proclamation' (Boswell, 1996, p.7). So, while Boswell acknowledges the importance of imagination to Höch, associating this with her affinity with Surrealism and with 'apolitical artists such as Schwitters and Arp', this thesis argues that Höch's use of imagination is neither apolitical, nor less political or serious, nor an escape or retreat (Boswell, 1996, p.19). Höch continued to make critical work during the Second World War, after being named by the Nazis as a cultural bolshevist. Wolfgang Willrich's *Säuberung des Kunsttempels* ('Cleansing the Temples of Art'), 1937, referred to Höch's signing of the Novembergruppe breakaway letter of 1921, and was illustrated by a reproduction of her painting *Die Journalisten* ('Journalists'), 1925, Figure 6, (Makholm, 1996, p.197).<sup>14</sup> As Boswell finds, quoting Höch from her interview with Roditi, Höch eventually ended all contact with friends and colleagues lest she endanger them through her activities and her collection of art material (Boswell, 1996, p.16). Höch declined to declare her support for National Socialism in return for continuing to work as an artist (Makholm, 1996, p.196). Boswell reports that Höch's planned exhibition at the Dessau Bauhaus in 1932, of photomontages and watercolours, was cancelled when local government Nazis closed down the school (Boswell, 1996, p.16). While her Expressionist and Dada activities put Höch in danger, the Nazis were also opposed to abstract art with its apparent association with madness. Therefore any 'retreat' to abstraction would seem unlikely to have improved her reputation with the authorities. The Nazis infamously burned books in 1933 yet, even as late as 1935, Höch and Brugman published a book of critical stories (Brugman, 1935b).

By treating Hausmann as the theorist of the group Timothy Benson extends Hausmann's ideas to others in Berlin Dada including Höch, who he describes as '[u]ncumbered by Hausmann's thicket of theoretical issues' (Benson, 1987b, p.175). However, Benson finds similarities between Höch and Hausmann's work, which are, in Höch's case, preceded by earlier work showing 'her progress from typography and

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<sup>14</sup> Willrich organised the *Entartete Kunst* ('Degenerate Art') exhibition in Munich in 1937.

layout to the *Klebebild* and *Plastik*' (Benson, 1987b, p.174). Benson finds that, 'Höch's works show a strong structural sense related to the exploration of asymmetrical structure' (Benson, 1987b, p.174). The evidence in Höch's notebooks of the development of her ideas and practices, and its absence in Hausmann's, suggests that Höch was responsible for the development of her own work, and had a degree of influence on Hausmann. Benson's research indicates a two-way exchange of influence between Höch and Hausmann, with additional similarities due to the common context. Höch's exploration of ideas continues after her split from Hausmann. Höch states that:

Poor Raoul was always a restless spirit. He needed constant encouragement in order to carry out his ideas and achieve anything at all lasting. If I hadn't devoted much of my time to looking after him and encouraging him, I might have achieved more myself. Ever since we parted, Hausmann has found it difficult to create or impose himself as an artist (Höch, 1959b, p.70).

Höch assessment of the direction of influence between her and Hausmann is that her encouragement was necessary for him to carry out his ideas, to the detriment of her own work. It would, therefore, be misleading to ascribe Höch's theoretical motivation and methodology solely to the influence of Hausmann.

Höch thought independently as an artist, but Michael Desmond and Michael Lloyd extrapolate her ideas directly from Hausmann (Desmond and Lloyd, 1992). The National Gallery of Australia hold a painting by Höch called *Imaginäre Brücke*, 1929, Figure 7, exhibited seven years after Höch's break up with Hausmann. It includes a representation of two heads. The catalogue entry accompanying the work, by Desmond and Lloyd, states that the heads represent Hausmann and Höch, whom they resemble. The entry refers to an interpretation by Eva Maria Rossner, Höch's niece, suggesting a biographical narrative in this painting, involving Höch's wish for Hausmann to leave his wife for Höch, and for Höch to have a baby with Hausmann. The theoretical part of Desmond and Lloyd's discussion refers to two works by Hausmann involving mannequin heads. Their analysis is that the theoretical context represents an example of Höch's use of Hausmann's ideas: 'In *Imaginäre Brücke* Höch seems to have taken over Hausmann's satirical image' (Desmond and Lloyd, 1992). Höch's view, as quoted previously, is that she generated her own ideas, which argues against Desmond and Lloyd's suggestion that she would carry out Hausmann's ideas, many years after their separation.

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

Figure 7.

## Social context

The third approach to interpreting Höch's work that this thesis seeks to avoid is one that treats social context as the sole important factor. Lavin stresses the importance of social context, writing: '[o]nly a return to social context and an examination of specific strategies of representation will enable us to determine the significance of particular images of androgyny' (Lavin, 1990, p.64). However, it is possible for Höch's representations of androgyny to be explained other than by social context. The representation of gender in the mass media photographic reproductions which formed a large part of the source material for Höch's photomontage exist in a theoretical context within which Höch situated her work. There are other possible explanations for her use of androgynous figures, including her interest in Friedländer's concept of creative indifference as the neutral point between polar opposites, as will be discussed in Chapter two. It could equally be understood as an extension of the characteristic composite forms in her work, which, it is argued here, connects to how images are combined in the imagination. The composite figures in Höch's photomontage may not *represent* women, or people, so much as they are *made out of* representations of people. Lavin's interpretation of 'androgynous' forms through social context does not explain the similar combining of elements from the plant and animal kingdoms, for example, as found in *Vereinigung* ('Fusion'), 1922, Figure 8, in which mechanical and technological forms combine in a plant-like figure. Combining different elements into new forms is not restricted to combining male and female elements. Neither does a focus on androgyny explain the collaging of words in her poetry and writing, as will be examined in Chapter three. The analysis of these forms solely by recourse to social context and biography does not address all possible interpretations, and perhaps not even the most pertinent ones. While important therefore, the social context alone cannot determine the significance of the androgynous forms in Höch's work in isolation from other factors.

Lavin argues that Höch's relationship with Brugman may have been influential in the further development of existing gender concerns, articulated through the androgyny in some of her photomontage. She also writes that Höch's attitudes towards theories of sexuality can be inferred from Brugman's stories (Lavin, 1990, p.80). This is reasonable: often people find common ground with those they choose to work with. However, Lavin assesses the political import of Höch's work by reference to her relationship with Brugman. She describes 'overtly political photomontages' including images relating to women's political rights, and qualifies this through her discussion of

Höch's relationship with Brugman. Lavin writes that Höch was reluctant to define her identity as a lesbian or bisexual, writing 'neither Höch nor Brugman were active in homosexual organizations' (Lavin, 1990, p.67). By juxtaposing these statements Lavin associates her judgement of the political in Höch's work with a judgement of the political in Höch's personal relationships, as if to suggest that if Höch had a 'public identity as a lesbian' this would more strongly support an interpretation of her work as having been influenced by her relationship with Brugman (Lavin, 1990, p.67).

A further criticism of an approach prioritising social context, combining this with aspects of her biography, is that this can produce a distorted picture of Höch's aims and priorities. Lavin presents Höch's representation of gender as a coded representation of her sexuality, particularly during her relationship with Brugman. Problematically, in Lavin's analysis there appears to be an equivalence made between sex, gender and sexuality. This leads her to the conclusion that Höch's personal relationships to some extent explain her political and aesthetic choices, albeit indirectly:

Her shifting sexual preferences, of course, are not directly reflected in her representations. Rather, in keeping with representations of the New Woman and certain leftist ideologies of Weimar, her androgynous images depict a pleasure in the movement between gender positions and a deliberate deconstruction of rigid masculine and feminine identities (Lavin, 1990, p.67).

It is argued here by contrast that while biography and social context are relevant, their sole use to explain Höch's work obscures her theoretical priorities, and further that Höch's attitudes and her representations of gender do not have to be consistent with her sexuality. Nor need they accord with her representations of androgyny. Figures in Höch's work are sometimes given gender roles – such as bride and groom – and some common Dada motifs such as the dancer or the boxer are used.<sup>15</sup> In *Domptense* (Tamer) c1930-1963-64, the constituent photographic elements retain their male or female characteristics so the result is not androgynous but rather a combined form containing both male and female elements.

In analysing Höch's photomontage, Lavin concentrates on the representation of gender identity and the reception of Höch's images by women, proposing a hypothetical urban woman, familiar with mass media but also a visitor to exhibitions like *Film und Foto* – women who she argues were provided with a sense of identity by

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<sup>15</sup> Funkenstein discusses the context for Höch's figuration of dancers in *Figurations of Women Dancers* in Weimar Germany (1918-1933): Hannah Höch, Otto Dix, and Paul Klee (Funkenstein, 2001).



Höch's androgynous photomontages (Lavin, 1990, p.65). Lavin finds that while there were ostensibly greater opportunities for women's self-determination in Weimar Berlin, for most women political and economic participation remained limited. She locates women's experiences of modernity within images of androgyny, with mass culture presenting the myth of the New Woman. Höch's depictions of androgyny are understood by Lavin as representations of gender identity that contribute to 'the non-hierarchical and non-static representation of gender' (Lavin, 1990, p.65). The 'imaginary relationship of the subject to the real' is how Lavin defines ideology (Lavin, 1990, p.65). Her focus is on examining differences between myths, such as that of the New Woman, and 'everyday realities' such as low pay (Lavin, 1990, pp.64–65). 'Realities' is used by Lavin here in the sense of the everyday state of affairs, how things really are. She refers to the real, in explanation of the term ideology (perhaps following Althusser and suggesting a Lacanian understanding of the imaginary order). Lavin finds a representation, in Höch's work, of economic and power relations affecting Weimar women, within presentations of myth and imaginary relations. She argues against seeing representations of androgyny as an uncomplicated liberation from gender expectations, pointing out that they 'may also feed reactionary ideologies of individualism and class prejudice' (Lavin, 1990, p.64). The photomontage that Lavin judges the 'most ambiguous and sophisticated image of androgyny', *Dompteuse*, has had its date revised because one of the photographs identified as a source was not published until 1959. It appears likely *Dompteuse* was reworked, after being first made in 1930, to include a newer colour photographic reproduction (Mills and Boswell, 2003).<sup>16</sup> The revised dating separates this photomontage from the Weimar period (although still started in 1930), slightly weakening its connection to the Weimar context. With the notable exceptions of exhibitions such as *Film und Foto*, a massive touring group show opening in 1929 as the Weimar era was drawing to a close, Höch generally exhibited paintings. Lavin also refers to the Berlin *Fotomontage* exhibition of 1931 followed by exhibitions in Brussels and Philadelphia. Höch's first major exhibition of photomontage was in 1934 in Brno, Czechoslovakia (Makholm, 1996, p.196). It is difficult, therefore, to reconcile Höch's relatively late exhibition of photomontage with the idea of a hypothetical Weimar woman as the intended

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<sup>16</sup> Julie Nero builds on both Lavin's emphasis on gender and on a biographical methodology, concentrating on Höch's relationship with Brugman and examining Höch's oeuvre in the context of Weimar sexual sub-culture. She finds a correlation between themes in Höch's work and her 'intimate relationships' (Nero, 2013, p.xxii). Nero focuses on the medium of photomontage.

‘historical spectator’ (Lavin, 1990, p.65). Lavin’s proposition also raises an interesting question – if the modern urban Weimar woman (in Lavin’s analysis, potentially lesbian or bisexual) was the historical spectator for Höch’s photomontages, who was the historical spectator for the rest of her work?

The idea of a historical spectator for Höch’s photomontage comes from the considering a fragment of Hoch’s work. This thesis, by contrast, aims to examine Höch’s work as a whole, and where possible avoid compartmentalising by medium, period or biography. Where analysis of Höch’s work is restricted to photomontage, it is not tested outside that medium. In the literature on Höch, photomontage is often afforded more attention. For example, Lavin’s *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* concentrates on Hoch’s Weimar photomontage (Lavin, 1993). Dawn Ades’s *Photomontage, 1976*, likewise focuses on photomontage (Ades, 1976a). Aliaga has departed from the Weimar period, writing about photomontage throughout Höch’s life, but few have considered photomontage alongside painting, poetry, sculpture, or other mediums. As a result there is the, perhaps unintended, impression given that her work in other mediums, especially painting, is less important (Aliaga, 2004a). One exception to this tendency is Ellen Maurer’s study of Höch’s oil paintings, but again, the focus is medium specific (Maurer, 1995). The intention in this thesis is to examine the importance of imagination in the whole body of Höch’s work, evaluating its role as a deliberate strategy and part of her core beliefs. This implies a critique of the assimilation of all Höch’s creative processes to photomontage because of the incomplete and inconsistent account produced.

The important, detailed attention writers such as Lavin and Maria Makela pay to the significance of mass media photographic reproduction, linking this to representations of gender, retrieves Höch from previous neglect (Makela, 1997). However, there are some omissions. Lavin acknowledges the use by Höch of psychoanalytic theory (Lavin, 1993, p.26). She also refers to Sigmund Freud’s writings on bisexuality in *Androgyny, Spectatorship, and the Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Lavin, 1990, pp.79–86). But, Joanna Drucker writes: ‘Lavin does not make use of psychoanalytic theory, and this component with eventually need elaboration if the social theory of the artistic subject is to be fully developed’ (Drucker, 1993, p.84). Drucker argues, in a review of Lavin’s *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch*, that Höch’s project was complex because it involved ‘the intersection between the private imaginary and the production of identity as a social category’ (Drucker, 1993, p.84). Agreeing with Drucker, I argue here that psychoanalytic theory

is appropriate to an understanding of Höch's work, given the extensive links between psychoanalysis and art in Berlin, which will be outlined in Chapter four. Psychoanalytic theory is particularly relevant in relation to imagination.<sup>17</sup>

While a primarily biographical approach can lead to the explanation of Höch's work through other people's ideas, biography is nonetheless an important factor in understanding her work. This thesis identifies key influences on Höch's thinking about imagination including, for example, her colleagues Friedländer, discussed in Chapter two, and Brugman, and the theoretical writing of Walter Benjamin and Freud. This does not suggest a lack of independence of thought or direct causal relationships between people and her ideas as expressed through her work, but acknowledges that art involves collaboration and communication. It is reasonable that someone would, because of their affinities with particular ideas, seek out people to share and develop those ideas. This is different from the suggestion that Höch drew the ideas of others into her work ahead of her own theoretical priorities. Höch disseminated ideas and approaches and influenced others while also being open to influence. There are similarities in Höch's outlook with that of others in the Berlin Dada group, not least because of the shared background influences and history. However, there are also differences and these are more extensive than, for example, the inclusion of gender analysis by Höch in her political approach, as identified by Lavin. A more significant difference between Höch and other Berlin Dadaists is a theoretical separation that existed within Dada. This difference is pertinent to Höch's conception of imagination, as will be explored in the next chapter.

It may have been difficult, even as recently as the 1990s, for some writers to ascribe theoretical motivations to a woman. A concentration on Höch's biography, the social context and the physical details of her materials and sources avoids this difficulty, but has the effect of relegating the philosophical context, the art context and Höch's own thinking. This thesis focuses on Höch's ideas, while including the important

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<sup>17</sup> Höch's Berlin art circle was closely connected to the early history of psychoanalysis through interactions with the psychoanalysts, Otto Gross and Ernst Simmel, and also artists and writers associated with psychoanalysis, such as Arthur Segal and Alfred Döblin. According to Höch's biographer, Simmel, Segal and Döblin were all attendees of the monthly meetings of the Mynona-Segal circle that Höch also took part in (Ohff, 1968). Additionally, there are indications in Höch's work of an awareness and engagement with psychoanalysis including direct references to Freud, such as in the undated story, *Julie* (Höch, 1995b). The importance of psychoanalytic ideas to Höch is developed in Chapters four and five.

contextual considerations and biographical detail where relevant. Höch's post-Dada choice of colleagues and friends aligns more accurately with her stated ideas than that of her Berlin Dada associations and activities. While Höch is an artist for whom it is difficult to identify clear progressive changes in style, subject or medium, her pluralistic approach was consistent in involving her beliefs about the transformative potential of imagination. This thesis attempts to establish whether concepts of imagination can be usefully applied to an analysis of Höch's work and, if so, how this might change understandings of her overall project. For example, seen as part of a methodology of imagination, combined with her writing about reality and fantastic art, perhaps Höch's work does not demonstrate an 'inward turn' or a 'retreat' from the political. This study investigates different concepts of imagination in relation to Höch, in order to produce a new understanding of her work, one that prioritises her own statements and the evidence of the work in the context of a wider debate about imagination. It proposes that Höch accesses, enacts and creates openings for imagination as a radical force that can change people's perception. The radical imagination proposed here is rooted in the perception of subjective realities. The subjectivity of imagination and its relationship to reality is discussed in more detail in Chapter one, but in brief, the subjectivity proposed here relates to a material existence. This idea is developed from Höch's statements and actions in relation to, for example, the idealism of some Expressionists. This thesis presents a model of imagination that is inter-subjective. It is not idealist, but is subjective in the sense of being a modern, human imagination, neither a lesser reflection of an exterior reality, nor produced externally, for example by a deity. If Höch's thinking is located in relation to modern German art, and more specifically to Höch's particular circle, a complex and nuanced position can be identified in relation to reality and the subject that is not idealist, but does suggest that people affect each other. This is essential to the aim of radical imagination to transform social relations through how reality is perceived.

Figure 8.

## Methodology

This is a qualitative study about Höch, and about imagination and its radical potential. The research has been conducted from the perspective of an artist, and written as a thesis in the field of Fine Art. The project is partly historical and so informed by the previous scholarship of art historians. Some material here was found in archives, some was encountered in art galleries. I have prioritised the use of Höch's voice, through her statements, writing and her art. There are potential pitfalls to relying on Höch's judgement on herself, including possible biases such as commercial pressure and the natural self-interest in portraying herself favourably. However, regardless of the extent to which Höch's own assessment may need to be qualified, the starting point is to consider her views on the central issues of importance in her work. I argue in this thesis that radical imagination permeates and underpins Höch's attempt at 'contact with the world', and an understanding of radical imagination is essential in order to understand her work as a whole (Höch in Thater-Schulz, 1989a, p.23). Höch's aims are connected to her awareness that we engage with the world and affect it as it affects us. She used her fantasies or imagination, through her painting and other visual and written art, to demonstrate the subjective nature of experience, in order to show that it is possible to experience the world differently. Further, this study proposes that Höch activated radical imagination through enacting it in her work, in order to produce material changes through the changed understandings and perspectives her work was intended to create. As will be set out in more detail in the next chapter, imagination, in Höch's thinking, is not a transcendental or categorical truth, but an active engagement that can be chosen freely: in that engagement reality shifts – it is not fixed.

Where possible Höch's original work has been accessed through visits to collections and galleries. There was a major exhibition of Höch's photomontage in London in 2014. Reproductions and secondary materials are also referred to. A large amount of original work in public collections in Europe is accessible in Germany. There are few examples of Höch's work in public collections in the UK. A considerable amount is in private collections, or outside of Europe, for example, in the US or Australia. A comprehensive technical analysis of Höch's materials or processes was not undertaken. There are existing studies that make detailed technical examinations of her work. For example, Lavin has identified the origin of the print reproductions of photographs that Höch sourced and Boswell has examined details of the papers used

(Mills and Boswell, 2003, p.18).<sup>18</sup> Such a concentration on detail could displace the importance Höch attached to emotion, freedom and to the unconscious and imaginative aspects of her work. This study avoids a focus on technical detail, being concerned instead with issues of meaning and intention, and the ideas underpinning the work. For example, formal analysis is important to an understanding of the relationship between space and imagination; it forms the basis for an examination of the way Höch works with pictorial space and how she treats space in her work. However, her treatment of space is also considered together with her engagement with the concept of creative indifference, which there is evidence she was familiar with, and also in relation to other theorists. Psychoanalytic theory is included as a key influence on Höch's concept of imagination.

Imagination is an exceptionally large field and the intention here is not to undertake an exhaustive study. The aim is to understand how Höch could have theorised and activated radical imagination, having already narrowed the inquiry to the more specific context of her lifetime, and the possible ideas and influences that could have affected her understanding. For example, ideas about the embodied character of imagination were drawn on in an analysis of Höch's frequent focus on the body; the importance to Höch of the relation between imagination and spatial representation was explored together with her depictions of space and discussion of reality. Imagination is discussed here within the context of the philosophy of art, in which context imagination had a contested role during, and immediately preceding, the period that was formative for Höch as a young artist. Höch is, I argue, involved, through her art, in the development of theories of imagination. Thus, her understanding of imagination forms part of an important articulation of ideas with importance beyond the discipline of Fine Art. This analysis of Höch's radical imagination therefore contributes a new interpretation of her work as well as an understanding of the implications of her ideas about imagination for art, and to the

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<sup>18</sup> Höch sourced her photomontage material from popular magazines such as *Die Dame*. A detailed examination of Höch's practice is found in Kay Kallos, *A woman's revolution: The relationship between design and the avant-garde in the work of Hannah Höch, 1912-1922* (Kallos, 1994). An in-depth analysis of the relationship of Höch's work to mass culture is found in *The Misogynist Machine: Images of Technology in the Work of Hannah Höch* (Makela, 1997, pp.106–127), and also in *Cut with the kitchen knife: the Weimar photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Lavin, 1993).

broader study of imagination. It is necessary to ask what Höch meant, when writing and speaking in German, by terms such as *Fantasie* or *Phantasie*, *Fantasievollsten*, *Vorstellung* or *Einbildung*. Imagination can also be implied indirectly even where she does not use a specific term because Höch infers an act of imagination through her paintings, photomontage and other work. I have translated the German word *Fantasie* as imagination even though the terms *fantasy* in English and *Fantasie* in German do not exactly correspond. In English I do not make a firm distinction between *fantasy* and *imagination* but use ‘*imagination*’ as an enveloping term that includes *fantasy*. I use *imagination* to include mental processes, as well as practical creative activities and their implied associated mental processes.

The theorisation of imagination in this thesis takes its viewpoint from Höch herself, and from her contemporaries; Friedländer, Freud, Benjamin, and her colleagues and associates in Dada and other avant-garde art movements. While interpretations that emphasise, for example, the social context, Höch’s biography, gender or political propaganda, may at times exclude or contradict Höch’s statements of intention and ideas, social context is not ignored. Neither is the important influence of her experiences within the Berlin Dada group. The focus has been narrowed to writers for whom a case can be made for potential influence or affinity. These include writers who Höch may have read, such as Henri Bergson and Carl Einstein, whose books she possessed, or others with whom she had a direct or indirect connection, such as, Friedländer who was a close friend, or Freud whose ideas Höch engaged with through the Friedländer-Segal gatherings. Benjamin is included as a writer who is contemporary with Höch, sharing some background context. Identifying differences between the respective concepts of image and imagination from these writers, alongside Höch’s work and statements (allowing for the development of her ideas over time), provides some context to the consistent engagement with imagination underlying Höch’s work. Some collaborative work with Brugman is included because Brugman was a key influence on Höch’s work from 1926 onwards. Friedländer is similarly afforded significant treatment because of the evidence of his influence. A broader aim of this study is the inclusion of Höch within Fine Art research, with an emphasis on her agency as a cultural producer, her theoretical priorities and practical achievements, and their implications for future research.

The starting point for this thesis is Höch’s expressed intention for her art to change the viewer. In a text written in 1949 for an exhibition in Berlin at the Galerie



Franz, Höch refers explicitly to imagination as part of a method to create change, writing:

I am a human being; I can, however, by virtue of my fantasies, be a bridge. I wish to convey that what seems impossible is possible. I want to help people experience a much richer world, so that we can engage more benevolently with the world we know (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311).<sup>19</sup>

There are other indications, discussed in the next chapter, that imagination was important to Höch's project. This thesis asks how Höch might have thought such a transformation could be achieved and whether the concept of radical imagination proposed here could provide mechanisms for the intended effect of her work. Höch's reference to imagination has been noted by others. For example, by Aliaga, as shown above. Melissa Johnson also foregrounds the above quotation from Höch in her thesis about Höch's scrapbook (Johnston, 2001).<sup>20</sup> It is not argued here that Höch was exceptionally imaginative, for example, by comparison to her peers. Rather, this study is concerned with Höch's activation of radical imagination through her work as a means to achieve particular aims. Höch's development of methods to enact radical imagination can be understood as akin to contemporary practice-based research. Her practice was informed by the close study of relevant theory through reading and discussion, practice, publication and performance. Höch uses a discourse of research, speaking of how her ideas are developed and the aims, achievements and discoveries of art. In developing a practice of radical imagination, this study argues that Höch identified particular methods and techniques that together activate imagination in its different aspects, using different mechanisms. The resulting account of Höch's enactment of imagination through her art comprises of four elements. These are, firstly, the way Höch represents space is related to and supports her theorisation of reality, which in turn is based on her understanding of imagination. Secondly, Höch's use of text and language, and her sensitivity to synaesthetic experience, are consistent

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<sup>19</sup> Höch's exhibition text for Galerie Franz is discussed further in Chapter three in relation to the bridge metaphor. It is translated in *Hannah Höch: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía* (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311). There is a note: 'Text produced from the catalogue of the show *Hannah Höch*, Galerie Franz, Berlin, 1949. Quoted by Götz Adriani in "Biografische Dokumentation" in *Hannah Höch. Collagen, Institute für Auslandsbeziehungen*, 1984, p. 52. The original version of this text was published in *Hannah Höch. Fotomontagen, Gemälde, Aquarellen*, Cologne, DuMont Buchverlag, 1980.' (Aliaga, 2004a, p.320 n.3).

<sup>20</sup> Höch's scrapbook is published as *Album* (Luyken, c2004).

with a notion of imagination in which language and imagination are inseparable. Thirdly, psychoanalysis was an important theoretical influence on Höch's idea of imagination. Her use of imagination includes the unconscious and her work models and describes some unconscious processes and structures. Finally, the account of imagination given here argues that the body is a site of action where imagination can have transformative effect.

Imagination is discussed in detail in the first chapter where it is considered as part of a wider theoretical framework, with a long history. The four following chapters examine issues relevant to Höch's use of imagination to create change, asking whether and how different propositions of imagination could map onto the evidence from Höch's work. The first chapter about imagination is necessarily speculative, narrowing the theoretical context for imagination to Höch's immediate environs. Taking Höch's own emphasis on imagination or fantasy as a starting point raises questions, such as; what possible concepts of imagination could Höch have been familiar with? How might she have understood imagination to have the potential to change the way people see things? Does imagination have radical potential? Chapter one briefly traces the development of concepts of imagination up to Höch's time before focusing on her immediate context and examining connections between imagination, reality and radical transformation. Chapter two draws on the writing of Friedländer and in particular assesses the influence of his concept of creative indifference on Höch's concept of imagination, as evidenced by her depiction of reality and space. This chapter continues an argument from Chapter one about the importance of ideas about reality and the subject. It argues that representation of space in Höch's work position her ideas in relation to debates about the status of imagination that form the foundation for choices about how the idea of space is articulated in art. In Chapter three, Höch's combining of language and image is considered in relation to Benjamin's writing on language and his concept of the dialectical image. It is argued that the characteristic combinations of language and image, and language as image and vice versa, in Höch's work results from the way imagination and language use interrelated processes. In this chapter, Höch's use of language in a range of mediums and forms is examined together with her stated aim to use imagination as a bridge to change people's perception. Freud's writing is engaged with in Chapter three in relation to language, metaphor and imagination. Freud's psychoanalysis also underpins the argument in the final two chapters, the first of which presents evidence Höch that closely studied and engaged with psychoanalytic theory. This leads to a different interpretation of Höch's work, proposing that Höch incorporated her understanding of psychoanalysis into a practice

of radical imagination, modelling a connection between seeing and imagining. Chapter four proposes the figure of an unconscious eye to represent the radicality of imagination at the root of experience. Höch's work was informed by a politicised understanding of the unconscious drawn from Freud and other early psychoanalysts. Chapter four demonstrates the importance of psychoanalytic ideas to Höch's understanding and use of imagination through examples in her work. This analysis, using psychoanalytic theory, is continued into the final chapter, which focuses on perception and the body. Freud's diagrams of the perceptual apparatus are discussed here, alongside my diagrams of radical imagination and an argument that Höch's art creates a model of the psyche.

Definitions of the term 'imagination' are approached here with care and without preconceptions. While the term imagination can be used, especially in relation to art, to mean a creative imagination, it is imagination as an everyday process considered in this study. That is, the imagination involved in perception, and in the understanding and construction of reality on a daily basis. Imagination is conceived of here in terms of appearances: as fundamental to interpreting what is seen, felt, and touched, and to the integration of the content of conscious and unconscious mental activity into a world view, an image of the self, interactions with others, cognition, belief and emotion. In addition to the radical intention to create a fundamental shift in values and perceptions, rather than being more narrowly aimed at specific political outcomes, 'radical' is also understood here to mean that imagination, as a process or force, is a fundamental field for mental activity, including being primary to the perceptual processes affecting social interactions. The term 'imagination' is used, often broadly, in a number of different fields, such as in psychology, philosophy, science, psychoanalysis and art. This study avoids committing to a narrow definition of imagination to retain a degree of openness. Not using a fixed definition of imagination from the start places limits on immediate certainty but is necessary because there are two strands of argument. The first aims to illuminate the question of what radical imagination meant to Höch. In view of Höch's rejection of categorical reduction, working definitions of imagination are considered based on their contextual and methodological importance to Höch (and their value in interpreting her work). Secondly, there is a more speculative proposal about what radical imagination could be, now and in the future. This separate question is distinct from attempting to assess, as far as is possible, how Höch conceived of and enacted radical imagination. It is concerned with how a practice of radical imagination in art can be formed and applied in the present context. This second understanding of radical imagination is investigated

through the related practice. Reflections on the practical investigations, carried out alongside the written thesis, feed into the research about Höch's radical imagination.

The related practice in this thesis models different proposals for imagination and reflects on issues raised in the written thesis. In the related practice I began by treating imagination as series of mental acts or events. For example, the appearance of images in the 'mind's eye' or as visual thought-pictures, similar to, but distinct from, the images in memory or dreams. The starting point was a list of image producing mental states taken from Bergson's *Time and Free Will*, 1889. This was an arbitrary starting point, although Bergson's writing was discussed in Höch's Dada circle and she would have been familiar with his philosophy, or at least its interpretation by artists. Additionally, Bergson's discussion of 'psychic states' is inclusive, providing scope for a wide range of investigations (Bergson, 2001) [1889]. He includes sensation, emotion and aesthetic feelings or feelings of beauty, alongside the more commonly accepted image-based mental states such as dream, hallucination and illusion:

The poet is he with whom feelings develop into images, and the images themselves into words which translate them while obeying the laws of rhythm. In seeing these images pass before our eyes we in turn experience the feeling which was, so to speak, their emotional equivalent: but we should never realize these images so strongly without the regular movements of the rhythm by which our soul is lulled into self-forgetfulness, and, as in a dream, thinks and sees with the poet (Bergson, 2001, p.15) [1889].

With Bergson's references to poetry, language, emotion and dream, all of which feature here in relation to Höch's work, it seemed an apposite starting point from which to begin an exploration of imagination through art. Although it was the mental image considered initially, further examination of the philosophical context led to a shift in emphasis towards an idea of imagination as part of perception, rather than restricted to forms of mental image outside of or beyond perception. This is key to understanding how Höch might expect her intention to create change to be realised, in the context of differing responses by some artists to Immanuel Kant's transcendental aesthetic, and informed also by the political upheavals and tensions of the early 20th Century. The related practice later developed away from asking what imagination is, in a process of categorising and organising products or outputs of imagination, and toward questions about what imagination does, what mechanisms might be at work, and how different methods, techniques and approaches in art can potentially bring those mechanisms into effect. The related practice eventually incorporated models and diagrams, animations, drawings, paintings, performance and writing. It was not a conscious intention to mirror the varied mediums and range of

types of art made by Höch but it lends support to the conclusion that an art practice including a varied range of mediums is consistent with the idea of radical imagination. While it is possible retrospectively to assign particular work as being more relevant to issues in a particular chapter or section, both parts of the thesis affected the other, with the relation between the two more organic than systematic.<sup>21</sup> As a consequence, any initial compartmentalisation between the written thesis and related practice became unsustainable. Although the research is presented as a written thesis and, separately, documentation of related practice, there is some crossover. For example, the diagrams within the written thesis and animated diagrams within the related practice. Most of the related practice is visual, including painting, drawing and animation. It also includes some writing and performance.

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<sup>21</sup> There is a more detailed explanation of the relationship between my art practice and the written thesis in Appendix 6.

## Höch's radical imagination

This chapter will briefly set out the development of ideas about imagination up to the contested state in which the subject of imagination is found during the early years of the twentieth century, and in Weimar Berlin, where Höch cut her artistic teeth. It will then explore how imagination could have been understood by Höch as having transformative potential. There are two parts to this, firstly different meanings of imagination and the range of ways to understand it need to be narrowed to Höch's context. Secondly, in considering concepts of imagination Höch might have been familiar with, and how she might have reached the idea that imagination can create change, this chapter will consider the debate among Höch's art contemporaries in Berlin Dada and beyond, as well as the wider theoretical debate to which the art context is linked. The aim is to show that the idea of imagination as a transformative force was adopted by Höch and developed into a unique set of strategies, techniques and choices of subject as part Höch's intention to enact imagination in her art as a means to create transformation.<sup>22</sup> This chapter begins by discussing a series of work that acts as a micro-retrospective of Höch's ideas and brings together a collection of issues relating to imagination.

### Imagination and Höch

At nearly 80, Höch repeated a technique of creating collage from print that she used early in her life, such as in *Weisse Wolke*, 1916, Figure, 9. Maria Makela discusses Höch's 'first mature work in the medium' as being *Nitte unterm Baum* ('Nitte under a Tree'), 1907 (Makela, 1996, p.58). In 1967-1968 Höch created a collage series called *Motivationen* ('Motivations'), using a linocut exhibition poster, for an exhibition at the Nierendorf Gallery in Berlin in 1964-1965. This exhibition coincided with her 75th

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<sup>22</sup> Höch's imagination is not discussed here in the restricted meaning of a quality or value connected to creativity. The scope of investigation includes the content of her work, as well as imagination as a creative methodology, and including the everyday processes of imagination connected to perception, thought, and communication.

birthday and is referred to by Höch in a note as 'Meiner Ausst' (my exhibition).<sup>23</sup> Four years after this show, Höch revisited the advertising poster she had made, taking advantage of the multiple copies to create a new series of collage. Apart from some glossy red printed paper in *Motivationen* II and an assortment of 'H's, the original linocut poster contains all the elements from which every collage in the series is made. The poster itself, with the text about the exhibition removed, is the last item in a folio of ten. The return to the past through this work, the title and the content, combine to create a sense of reflection on Höch's work as a whole. Within the fictional folio space, Höch creates an imaginary exhibition.

Many of the issues discussed in this thesis can be found in this folio, namely: the experience and appearance of space and landscape, the concreteness of material, the use of printed text as image, a focus on forms of consciousness, and references to the body. The title, *Motivationen* ('Motivations'), suggests it contains a series of reasons behind Höch's work. The first in the series is called *Eröffnung*, meaning opening or inauguration. In this collage an expansive architectural space with a high vaulted ceiling is suggested, populated by tiny milling figures. This imagined space is not literal, but there is sufficient information to tip the viewer's perception into a reading of figures in space. The added information from the title suggests a grand exhibition opening in a new type of exhibition space, one with a magical quality. Another in the series, *Motivationen* IV is readable as a landscape with water, trees, a bridge, and five flying carpets, which geometrically suggest the oblique projection of a flat object in space. This visual illusion is enhanced by white 'edges', some of which are part of the original linocut, but two having been cut from elsewhere and re-attached. In the lower part of *Motivationen* IV, the printed black is contrasted with black paper emphasising the material quality of the resulting object. The object qualities of Höch's collages resist purely graphic readings; the torn or cut edges, and the relief of the layering all emphasise the object. No reproduction could do justice to the delicacy, texture and freshness of these pieces in their original form. The titles in the *Motivationen* series use the language of imaginative experiences: flying and floating are forms of movement associated with imagination, dream or hallucination. There are also landscape references and references to memory. *Motivationen* VIII, ...*Denk an Olevano* ('...Think of Olevano'), has the monumental quality of an Italian hillside town appearing as one

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<sup>23</sup> This folio of collages can be found at the Akademie der Kunst, art collection, Berlin.

figure against the ground. Höch travelled to Italy, but the title suggests thoughts about a town, bringing the subject back to the realm of the imagination.<sup>24</sup>

*Motivationen XI* marks an abrupt break from the contemplation of landscape in the rest of the series. *Maskē* ('Mask'), is made from parts of the poster removed from all the other collages: the text advertising the exhibition at the Nierendorf gallery, giving the dates and times. The face is difficult to see immediately. Part of a quadrant shape becomes an arching eyebrow. Overlaying strips of dark paper, up to five layers deep, define the jaw-line. There is an obscuring matrix of vertical strips of paper containing generally illegible text. The whole is so heavily textured, it is at first difficult to read as a face, the most recognisable of forms. The symbolism of the mask in relation to the exhibition details in the text could suggest the exhibition is a mask for the ideas behind Höch's work. The mask connotes deception and disguise as well as entertainment and storytelling. As the only collage of the series to use text, it is perhaps significant that the text is used as a transformative shield with allusions to theatre, to the performance of self and the unconscious.

There are indications in Höch's writing and statements showing imagination to be important to her thinking. For example, Höch describes herself as an 'imaginative' artist saying, 'I suppose that every imaginative artist has some recurring obsessions' (Höch, 1959b, p.71). In a gallery text from 1929, Höch's discussion of her work includes imagination:

Of course, the aesthetic element in a work of art should not be neglected for the sake of the idea, the imagination or the object. [...]

We have to confront the work of art without prejudice i.e. the comfortable behaviour towards art that is inherited without reflection, and thoroughly give a general overhaul (as otherwise any ability to imagine is undermined) (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Höch wrote a short story, *Italienreise*, which she performed at the Berlin Secession in 1921, alongside Raoul Hausmann and Friedländer (Höch, 1995a) [1921].

<sup>25</sup> 'Natürlich darf das ästhetische Element in einem Kunstwerk nicht um der Idee, der Phantasie oder des Gegenstandes willen vernachlässigt werden. [...] Wir müssen uns ohne Voreingenommenheit dem Kunstwerk gegenüberstellen, d. h. ein zu bequemes, nämlich ohne eigenes Nachdenken übernommenes Verhalten gegenüber Kunst im allgemeinen gründlich revidieren (da sonst jedes Vorstellungsvermögen untergraben wird)'



In another gallery text, *Fantastische Kunst* ('Fantastic Art') Höch presents a complex analysis of reality using a dynamic approach to ideas of image, in which she uses some of the terminology of different theories of imagination (Höch, 2008) [1946].<sup>26</sup> Höch often uses imaginative subject matter such as dream, hallucination and vision.<sup>27</sup> For example, in a small watercolour, *Die Versuchung des heiligen Antonius* ('The temptation of Saint Anthony'), Figure 10, 1928, Höch refers to a story where different psychic states and forms of mental imagery are confused and indistinct from one another to the point where the character, the hermit St Anthony, can no longer be sure what reality is, which images are produced by him, and which are visions sent to him. Höch repeated this subject in 1940 with a larger oil painting called *Die Versuchung* ('The Temptation'), Figure 11. In these paintings Höch creates the vivid imaginary world of St Anthony's dreams, hallucinations and visions. The story of St Anthony is commonly found in painting, a well-known example being by Matthias Grünewald (Figure 58) or in more recent history the subject is treated by Odilon Redon and in literature by Gustav Flaubert (Flaubert, 1983) [1874]. Flaubert's version of the *Temptation of Saint Anthony* leaves open the question of whether Saint Anthony sees divine visions sent to him, or alternatively experiences internally created visions. Höch's repeated return to this subject suggests an interest in understanding what imagination is.

Imagination, and imaginative states are more than subject matter for Höch. She also connects the idea of imagination to freedom and reality. During an interview conducted and translated by Roditi, in 1959, Höch describes John Heartfield as being 'didactic and orthodox rather than truly free in his fantasies and humor' (Höch, 1959b, p.70), a comment seeming to counter Heartfield's didactic political engagement, with imagination or fantasy, as well as freedom and humour. Höch explains, in the same interview, 'in an imaginative composition, we used to bring together elements borrowed from printed books, newspapers, posters or leaflets, in an arrangement that no machine could yet compose' (Höch, 1959b, p.69). There follows an exchange in which Roditi presents the assumed objectivity of the camera in contrast to hallucinations, which he sees as false. He uses the examples of Francisco Goya and Pieter Brueghel whose paintings he opposes to the assumption of fact associated with the camera. It is, according to Roditi, 'generally admitted' that cameras record a

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<sup>26</sup> *Fantastische Kunst* is discussed in more detail in Chapter two (Höch, 2008) [1946].

<sup>27</sup> References to dream are numerous in Höch's work, as will be detailed in later chapters.

verifiable reality in front of their lens (Roditi, 1990, p.69). In his question to Höch, Roditi suggests that her photomontages create hallucinations appearing to have been made by machine, challenging the idea ‘a camera can photograph only what is actually there, standing in the real world before its lens’ (Höch, 1959b, p.69). Höch agrees, saying:

Yes, our whole purpose was to integrate objects from the world of machines and industry into the world of art. Our typographical collages or montages also set out to achieve similar effects by imposing, on something that could only be produced by hand, the appearances of something that had been entirely composed by a machine (Höch, 1959b, p.69).

In spite of her agreement, rather than adopting Roditi’s suggestion that the alternative to ‘the real world’ is a hallucination, Höch instead introduces the ideas of ‘appearances’ in contrast to the visual certainty of Roditi’s proposed objectivity (Höch, 1959b, p.69). In this reference to appearances, Höch sidesteps Roditi’s assumption of a verifiable factual reality created by the camera and opens the possibility for alternative and subjective appearances. There is a subtle but important disagreement in Höch’s apparently positive response which reveals a larger difference in their respective assumptions about how images appear to us, and how reality is conceived. This difference will be examined shortly, as it is key to an argument in favour of imagination’s transformative potential. In addition to referring to different forms of mental imagery, and the statements suggesting imagination is important to Höch aims, in her choice of techniques, materials and methods, Höch creates openings for imagination, which the later chapters of this thesis will attempt to elucidate. These techniques and practices (Höch’s imagination based methodology) have been organised here into four areas. These are, the treatment of space; the use of language; the incorporation of psychoanalytic ideas into her work; and representations of the body. The remainder of this chapter deals with the theoretical and philosophical context relevant to concepts of imagination in art, especially in Dada and Surrealism, looking particularly at how these ideas about imagination could have been understood by Höch to create the possibility of social change through her art.

Figure 9.

Figure 10.

Figure 11.

Figure 12.

## Part 1. Meanings of imagination

There are conflicting accounts in the history of imagination, which Höch and her contemporaries negotiate. Höch was an artist of the twentieth century who encountered ideas about imagination produced by a post-enlightenment, modern, and industrialised context. Höch refers to imagination in subject matter that includes mental imagery and in statements about her work, but, what is imagination? Or, what is being referred to when imagination is discussed? This section considers some potential meanings of imagination and is followed by a discussion of how conflicting theoretical approaches to imagination could impact the prospect of imagination creating transformation through art. Differences are found as to what is included as imagination; whether or not imagination is distinct from fantasy; how imagination fits within the psychic architecture that includes sensation, perception, and thought; and even as to what a mental image is.

Jana Noel provides one common definition for imagination, writing, ‘we speak of those who have imagination as people who have the capacity for creating or recognizing images’ (Noel, 1997, p.290). Aristotle’s concept of *phantasia*, found in *On the Soul*, is translated using the word ‘imagination’. Aristotle writes: ‘imagination is different from either perceiving or discursive thinking, though it is not found without sensation, or judgement without it’ (Aristotle, 1984a, p.680). He asks if imagination is single entity:

If then imagination is that in virtue of which an image arises for us, excluding metaphorical uses of the term, is it a single faculty or disposition relative to images, in virtue of which we discriminate and are either in error or not? (Aristotle, 1984a, p.680)

Aristotle distinguishes imagination from sensation, writing, ‘[s]ense is either a faculty or an activity, e.g. sight or seeing: imagination takes place in the absence of both, as e.g. in dreams’ (Aristotle, 1984a, p.680). He explains that the sense most associated with imagination is sight, writing, ‘as sight is the most highly developed sense, the name *Φαντασία* (imagination) has been formed from *Φάος* (light) because it is not possible to see without light’ (Aristotle, 1984a, p.682). The origin of the word ‘imagination’ in English is from the Latin *imaginare* – to form an image of (Oxford, 2002, p.295), whereas, ‘fantasy’ is from the Greek *phantasia* - and also means ‘imagination’ (Oxford, 2002, p.943). Richard Kearney writes that Latin authors ‘generally translated *phantasia* as *imaginatio*’ (Kearney, 1991, p.3). Anne Sheppard explains that:

‘Imagination’ is one of the standard translations of the Greek word *phantasia*. Although the word does appear in this sense in Plato, it was Aristotle’s usage, particularly in *On the Soul (De Anima)*, that was of crucial importance for later thought (Sheppard, 2015, p.1).

While *phantasia*, from Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, is the root of the word fantasy in English, the translation of *phantasia* as imagination does not uncomplicatedly represent the meaning that Aristotle assigned to imagination (Noel, 1997).<sup>28</sup>

Some writers on imagination make a distinction between imagination and fantasy, while for others they can converge. Herbert Read makes a distinction between imagination and fantasy by separating thought from sensation, thus separating two different functions of image production – one in sense perception and one in the creation of images otherwise than via the senses:

Fantasy is a product of thought, Imagination of sensibility. If the thinking, discursive mind turns to speculation, the result is Fantasy; if, however, the sensitive, intuitive mind turns to speculation, the result is Imagination. Fantasy may be visionary, but it is cold and logical. Imagination is sensuous and instinctive. Both have form, but the form of Fantasy is analogous to Exposition, that of Imagination to Narrative (Read, 1952, p.125).

In his categorisation of different mental processes, Read sets up a dichotomy between imagination and fantasy, which differentiates between the discursive logic of fantasy and an intuitive, speculative imagination of the senses. Other writers make different distinctions. Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis explain that Freud implied a differentiation between daydreams, fiction and narratives, created by the waking subject, and unconscious phantasies:

It is thus possible to distinguish – although Freud never did so explicitly – between several levels at which phantasy is dealt with in Freud’s work: conscious, subliminal and unconscious (B). Freud’s principal concern, however, seems to have been less with establishing such a differentiation than with emphasising the links between these different aspects’ (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.316).

The separation of imagination and fantasy has historically been partly a question of translation (Kearney, 1991). The difficulty of translating words like imagination, fantasy and image is not confined to attempts to transpose understandings of Höch’s and other writers’ ideas between languages. For example, in Höch’s writing fantasy is

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<sup>28</sup> Noel argues that while *phantasia* is commonly translated to mean imagination, this is not how Aristotle defined *phantasia*, and that, in scholarship on Aristotle, the term is often left untranslated (Noel, 1997, p.290).



spelled both as Phantasie and Fantasie. Laplanche and Pontalis explain that: “The German word ‘Phantasie’ means imagination, though less in the philosophical sense of the faculty of imagining (*Einbildungskraft*) than in the sense of the world of the imagination, its contents and the creative activity which animates it’ (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.314). They also suggest that because in English the word ‘fantasy’ has eccentric and trivial connotations, ‘most English psycho-analytic writers have preferred to write ‘phantasy’” (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.315). They explain a potential drawback of this preference to separate ‘fantasy’ from ‘phantasy’:

In her article of 1948, ‘The Nature and Function of Phantasy’ (9), Susan Isaacs proposes that the two alternative spellings *fantasy* and *phantasy* should be used to denote ‘conscious daydreams, fictions and so on’ and ‘the primary content of unconscious mental processes’ respectively [...] In our view, however, the suggested distinction does not do justice to the complexity of Freud’s views. In any case, it would lead to problems of translation: if, for every occurrence of ‘Phantasie’ in Freud’s writings, a choice had to be made between ‘phantasy’ and ‘fantasy’, the door would be open to the most arbitrary of interpretations’ (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.318).

Similar problems might arise from an attempt to interpret Höch’s spelling of Phantasie and Fantasie, even leaving aside the potential for these spellings to have been edited in her published writing. The complex entanglement of different terms associated with imagination as used by different writers means that precise translations and definitions of terms may be misleading and risk losing the intricacy of the whole.

Noel distinguishes two different meanings of *phantasia* in Aristotle. The first is the interpretation of perception to create an individually perceived reality. In this version of *phantasia*, imagination is connected to the senses and is involved in the original encounter with experience, rather than being associated with later weaker images (Noel, 1997, p.290). Noel identifies a second meaning of imagination in *phantasia* as the faculty of image production, outside of perception, for example in dream and hallucination (Noel, 1997). Bergson, similarly suggests that there exists an interpretative function beyond the process of sight (or other senses): ‘[p]erception is never a mere contact of the mind with the object present; it is impregnated with memory-images which complete it as they interpret it’ (Bergson, 2005, p.133) [1896].<sup>29</sup> Imagination, then, has been considered in a narrower sense as a faculty of image production, separate from perception (and after perception) or more broadly to include involvement in the process of perception.

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<sup>29</sup> Perception is discussed further in Chapter five.

Imagination can be thought of in relation to perception and to the formation of mental images, for example, during the process of perception or in memory images, dreams and hallucinations, but this creates further complexity as writers, such as Bergson, Freud and Gaston Bachelard, who have understood the idea of the mental image differently. Bergson distinguishes pure memory from both the images of memory and from perception. Memory, for Bergson, is not the act or faculty of creating images; memory-images represent memory but are not pure memory:

[t]o *picture* is not to *remember*. No doubt a recollection, as it becomes actual, tends to live in an image; however the converse is not true, and the image, pure and simple, will not be referred to the past unless, indeed, it was in the past that I sought it' (Bergson, 2005, p.135) [1896].

Freud distinguishes the images of dream from images of memory and image perceptions, writing:

what are truly characteristic of dreams are only those elements of their content which behave like images, which are more like perceptions, that is, than they are like mnemonic presentations (Freud, 1953a, p.50) [1900].

Both Bergson and Freud separate memory images and the images of perception and Freud makes a further distinction between the visual images in dreams and other sense images (visuellen Bildern) and mnemonic presentations (Erinnerungsvorstellungen) (Freud, 1953a, p.49) [1900].<sup>30</sup>

In addition to discussing what mental images are and distinguishing between different types of mental image, the imagination is considered by some writers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Bachelard, to concern interactions with mental images in the moment of their appearance. Bachelard describes the 'poetic act itself' as 'the sudden image, the flare-up of being in the imagination', arguing that in the poetic image there is a duality of subject and object (Bachelard, 1994, p.xviii) [1957]. In Bachelard's conception of imagination, the poetic image 'has an entity and dynamism of its own', it cannot be explained fully by psychology or psychoanalysis because it is independent

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<sup>30</sup> The idea of imagination as involving mental images is opposed in analytic philosophy, for example in Wittgenstein. Anne Sheppard argues that this has influenced modern interpretations of Aristotle's *phantasia* leading to claims that 'Aristotle is concerned with the logic of the verb *phainesthai* ('to appear') rather than with mental images (Sheppard, 2015). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to enter this debate, but it is noted that disagreement exists concerning whether mental images are involved in Aristotle's *phantasia*, or in imagination.

of causality (Bachelard, 1994, p.xvi) [1957]. Aristotle considers the possibility that 'imagination is that in virtue of which an image arises for us' (Aristotle, 1984a, p.680). Sartre begins his discussion of imagination, in *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination* with appearances: 'The object itself is the synthesis of all these appearances' (Sartre, 2010, p.8) [1940]. Bergson describes images being presented to consciousness (Bergson, 2005) [1896]. In Bachelard, images appear suddenly and we are called on to be receptive to them (Bachelard, 1994) [1957].

In spite of the difficulties of translation and differences in what is included by the term 'imagination' a common core of ideas emerges. Common threads appear in spite of the varied uses of terms such as image, perception, memory, appearance, imagination and fantasy. The idea of an action, faculty or process is common to many definitions, as is the idea of forming something that may be described as a thought, idea, vision or some type of internal representation, for example of an object not present to consciousness, something that may be thought of as a mental image. The notion of formation, creation or construction or of an ability to form and transform, to propose the new from existing experience, knowledge or sensation, links imagination to change, potential and possibility. While some of the content of these differing understandings of image and imagination is apparently similar, encompassing to varying extents sensation; perception; mental images of different sorts (dream, memory images, hallucinations, and perceptual appearances); and the relationships, interactions and behaviours occurring between and within these, they differ in the emphasis and priority they give to different elements. Examples from writers considered thus far, including Aristotle, Bachelard, Bergson, Freud, Read and Sartre, have been chosen because they illustrate some immediate areas of difference such as how broadly or narrowly mental processes are included or how different types of mental image can be distinguished. These writers all negotiate questions of what imagination is, whether it is divisible, whether it has constituent parts and how its functions can be understood. They are included here in order to open a discussion and narrow the question of what imagination, and its potential to effect transformation through art, means to Höch. However, it is not argued in this thesis that a definition or understanding of imagination is a neutral question of what is to be included or not, and in what relation to other processes. On the contrary, as will be set out in the following section, the argument here is that during the history of ideas about imagination there have developed clear divisions in how imagination is conceived, connected to distinct metaphysical positions which in turn have implications for

Höch's proposal that imagination can have transformative effect. It is to this contested history of imagination that this chapter will now turn.

## The contested field of imagination

The theorisation of imagination has been conducted against a long history of opposition, culminating most recently in postmodernist reports of imagination's demise (Kearney, 1988). Cornelius Castoriadis argues that imagination, in spite of being discussed in ancient philosophy, 'never won its proper place' and finds that 'the radical instituting imaginary, has been totally ignored throughout the whole history of philosophical, sociological, and political thought' (Castoriadis, 1997b, p.319). Imagination is given a negative account in both the biblical and ancient Greek heritage of Western culture (Kearney, 1988, pp.39–40). In the biblical tradition, imagination is implicated in the negative consequences of the fall:

The sin of imagination leads to the fall of Adam and Eve into a historical time where the spirit is no longer at one with itself as in the Garden of Eden. Imagination enables man to think in terms of *opposites* – good and evil, past and future, God and man (Kearney, 1988, pp.39–40).

Imagination, in ancient thought, usurps the gods and is therefore confined by Plato to an imitative function (Kearney, 1988). The history of imagination is related to that of aesthetics and to ideas about how reality is perceived and understood. This close connection means the question of what imagination is has consequences for questions about what reality is and how it is understood. Castoriadis locates the beginnings of a philosophy of imagination in the writing of Aristotle. He briefly summarises the history of imagination as including:

the vacillations of Aristotle in the Treatise *De Anima*, the stoics and Damascius, a long development in Britain going from Hobbes to Coleridge, the rediscovery of imagination by Kant in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the reduction of its role in the second edition, the rediscovery of the Kantian discovery and retreat by Heidegger in the 1928 *Kantbuch*, the subsequent total silence of Heidegger on the subject, the hesitations of Merleau-Ponty in *The Visible and the Invisible* as to what is 'reason' and what is 'imaginary', not to mention Freud, who talks throughout his work about what is in fact imagination, and accomplishes the feat of never mentioning the term (Castoriadis, 1997b, p.319).

Castoriadis's humorous description of a lineage of thought about imagination includes: Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Immanuel Kant, Martin

Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, (and Freud).<sup>31</sup> Castoriadis uses the term ‘radical’ in opposition to ideas that imagination is secondary and also in the sense of creating the new from nothing.<sup>32</sup> Aristotle’s breakthrough is that images derive from experience and sensation, rather than divine inspiration. His imagination, however, remains subservient to reason, as a secondary process. As it is put by Anne Sheppard:

Ancient poetics is predominantly the poetics of the mirror rather than the lamp, and ancient writers treat mental images as pictures *in* the mind, the mind reflecting images either from the world of sense-perception or, sometimes, from a higher, intelligible world (Sheppard, 2015, p.2)

This idea of mental images reflecting the world rather than a projection into the world is a key distinction: until Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, imagination is always secondary to something, whether sensation; the empirical recording of an objective external reality, as Roditi suggests to Höch is the case with photography in contrast to the hallucinations of Brueghel; or to a source beyond humanity. Roditi’s suggestion that the alternative to the factual truth of the camera is hallucination stems from the assumption in an empirical approach that imagination is false whereas objective reality is true and accessed via sensation, like the camera recording the real world (Höch, 1959b, p.69). So while imagination is humanised in Aristotle’s empirical realism, becoming a psychological phenomena, mental image in *phantasia* remains as a secondary copy rather than an independent original (Kearney, 1988). A revolutionary shift in thinking about imagination therefore occurs with Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, when imagination gains a primary position before both sensation and reason. This is the crucial juncture at which Kant overturns the idea of imagination as a secondary process so it becomes the root (Kearney, 1988, pp.156–157). The response of Höch and other artists is the crux of what follows because the subsequent debate on imagination is an important aspect of the broader philosophical context.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Although *Phenomenology of Perception* is a significant study of vision involving the body and perception, for the purposes of considering a theoretical basis for Höch’s formulation of ideas about imagination and change, Merleau-Ponty falls outside of the timescale of writers whose work could have influenced her earlier thinking (Merleau-Ponty, 2014) [1945].

<sup>32</sup> The term ‘radical’ is discussed further later in this chapter.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Hume compares Coleridge’s writing on imagination to that of Kant in *Kant and Coleridge on Imagination* (Hume, 1970).

Kant's transcendental imagination is significant here in so far as it provokes a response from thinkers such as Salomo Friedländer, Heidegger and Ernst Mach. Their critique of Kant does not seek to overturn the revolutionary shift in which imagination becomes a primary and subjective human process, but rather is concerned with implications stemming from this shift. Friedländer, whose important influence on Höch will be expanded on in Chapter two, belonged to a school of thought with a critical stance on Kant's transcendental imagination. He was a follower of the German neo-Kantians and influenced by the neo-Kantian, Ernst Marcus (Zipes, 1991a, pp.116–117). Friedländer's doctorate was on Arthur Schopenhauer's interpretation of Kant (Taylor, 1990b, p.120). Schopenhauer differed from Kant on the issue of Kant's treatment of imagination (Schopenhauer, 1969a) [1818-1859].<sup>34</sup> Another writer associated with the division of thought since Kant's transcendental imagination is the social theorist Georg Simmel whose writing is identified by Ellen Maurer as one of the main theoretical influences on Höch (Maurer, 1995, p.92). It is important, therefore, to explore how Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, (Kant, 1998a) [1781-1787], containing, in Castoriadis's words, a 'rediscovery of imagination' created such strong division among Höch's intellectual milieu, and how this concerns the potential for imagination to create change (Castoriadis, 1997b, p.319). An important point briefly flagged in Castoriadis's summary of the history of imagination is that Kant changed his mind on the subject of imagination. This is also noted by Kearney who points to Heidegger's *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 1929 (Kearney, 1988, pp.189–195).<sup>35</sup> Kant's development of the idea of imagination is revolutionary in that imagination is presented as having a human origin (as it is in Aristotle's psychological interpretation of imagination, in contrast to ideas that imagination is divine or inspired by the gods). Crucially, in Kant's original version, and unlike in Aristotle, imagination is given a primary place or function and is not, as in Aristotle, a mediated reflection of an external reality. It is this primacy that, in Heidegger's interpretation, Kant recoils from.

The revolutionary leap made by Kant in putting imagination before both cognition and sensation is modified in his second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1998a) [1781-1787]. This is described by Castoriadis as the 'Kantian discovery

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<sup>34</sup> Schopenhauer's critique of Kant's transcendental imagination is found in an appendix to Volume I of *The World as Will and Representation* (Schopenhauer, 1969a) [1818-1859].

<sup>35</sup> Kearney devotes an appendix to chapter 4 of *The Wake of Imagination* to Heidegger's portrayal of Kant's change of mind about imagination (Kearney, 1988).

and retreat' (Castoriadis, 1997b, p.319). Heidegger's reading is, according to Kearney, controversial. It prioritises Kant's first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in which Kant sees imagination as 'the 'common root' of the two stems of sensible and intelligible experience' (Kearney, 1991, p.136). Heidegger asks '[b]ut why did Kant shrink back from the transcendental power of imagination?' (Heidegger, 1997, p.116) [1929]. Heidegger sees the original version of the transcendental imagination as the important and revolutionary contribution. He describes Kant's transcendental imagination as having the character of a root (Heidegger, 1997, p.97) [1929]. The revolutionary aspect of Kant's original version of imagination is that it is the root for both sensation and cognition. Rather than three stems as the basis for the human mind, imagination is fundamental. In this version of Kant's imagination the 'essential constitution of humankind' is rooted in imagination (Heidegger, 1997, p.112) [1929]. However, Heidegger attributes Kant's reduction of imagination from this fundamental root, in the second version of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to his apprehension of the implications of this revolutionary and original idea. Heidegger writes that, 'Kant shrank back from this unknown root' (Heidegger, 1997, p.112) [1929], explaining that:

In the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the transcendental power of imagination as it came to light in the impassioned course of its first projection was thrust aside and given a new interpretation – one favouring the understanding (Heidegger, 1997, p.113) [1929].

Heidegger describes imagination in the first version as the 'disquieting unknown' grounding both sensibility and understanding and mediating between the two (Heidegger, 1997, p.115) [1929]. But, in the later version, imagination 'falls, so to speak, between the two separate grounding sources for the mind' (Heidegger, 1997, p.115) [1929]. Heidegger sketches Kant's dilemma in terms of fear, writing:

In the radicalism of his questions, Kant brought the "possibility" of metaphysics to this abyss. He saw the unknown. He had to shrink back. It was not just that the transcendental power of the imagination frightened him, but rather that in between [the two editions] pure reason as reason drew him increasingly under its spell (Heidegger, 1997, p.118) [1929].

The implications following from Kant's major change in how imagination was understood led him to rewrite, to put imagination back into a secondary mediating role (Kearney, 1988). It also led to the debate that followed in art.

## Part 2. Imagination and radical transformation

So far this chapter has considered some different potential meanings and understandings of imagination that Höch could have been influenced by in formulating her own concept of imagination. It has briefly explored some of the contested history of imagination, including two key moments, firstly, in Aristotle's writing, when imagination becomes a human faculty, and then in the modern period when Kant's revolutionary shift overturns the idea of imagination as secondary to reason and sensation. The second part of this chapter will focus in more detail on the how this debate was reflected in art, and how Höch's work intervenes. Additionally, it will consider how concepts of imagination are relevant to transformation and therefore to Höch's proposal that she can change people's perception through her work. Following Kant, responses to the idea of a transcendental imagination fall into roughly realist and idealist groups, with realists focusing on sensation and idealists on spiritual and visionary sources of image. The aim here is to explore how this divide manifested itself within Berlin Dada and other art movements with which Höch was associated, and how, subsequent to a combination of political events and the philosophical context, the theorisation of imagination became aligned with different aesthetic approaches. I argue that this offers an interpretation of Höch's work differing from those resulting from a biographical approach or one based exclusively on the social context.

In order to concentrate the discussion more closely on Höch's immediate context, two related pairs of concepts at the heart of the Berlin Dadaist imagination will be considered. These are: matter and image, via the proxy separation between material and spirit. Physical matter was a current topic of debate in the early 1900s in Berlin, for example, in the writing of Bergson and in the new discoveries in physics by Albert Einstein. In *Matter and Memory*, 1896, Bergson defines image as 'a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realist calls a *thing* – an existence placed halfway between the "thing" and the "representation"' (Bergson, 2005, p.10) [1896]. There is some evidence Höch was familiar with Bergson's writing; Richard Sheppard notes that Höch's library included a copy of Bergson's *Das Lachen* [1900] (Sheppard, 1979b, p.203 n.65). Bergson's understanding of perception is in opposition to an idealist claim that objects do not exist unless they are perceived. Although there were divisions and nuances, the Dadaists tended to reject the transcendental in favour of material, although, as will be seen, the picture is complex. In their engagement with aesthetics in relation to the



Ideal, to subjectivity and matter, Berlin Dada was critical of Kant, with Raoul Hausmann treating Kant's concept of the thing-in-itself as 'an object of mirth' (Sheppard, 2000, p.176). Sheppard explains also that Richard Huelsenbeck was 'contemptuous of Kantian metaphysics' (Sheppard, 2000, p.176). Sheppard explains Dada's treatment of reality as stemming from their critique of modernity. This involved a rejection of the idea of reality as being anthropomorphic, with humanity at the pinnacle. It also involved a rejection of the humanist belief in the supremacy of reason. It did not represent, however, a complete opposition to reason. Dadaists opposed the view that reason is at the apex in a fixed model of reality, and preferred a dynamic model in which reason is engaged by perception and unconscious drives (Sheppard, 2000, pp.175–182). Dadaists 'assimilated the view of several leading psychoanalysts that reason needed first to understand and then to guide, as far as that was possible, the unconscious drives within human nature' (Sheppard, 2000, p.181). In Sheppard's analysis of Dada, rejection of Kantian metaphysics relates to an engagement with psychoanalysis, Bergson and Friedrich Nietzsche (Sheppard, 2000). Hausmann and Johannes Baader aligned Dada with Mach's anti-metaphysical philosophy (Benson, 1987b, pp.9–10). Höch demonstrates a degree of opposition to the Ideal when she explains that the purpose of the official photographs of the Prussian army, which superimposed heads onto uniformed bodies was 'to idealize reality, whereas the Dada photomonteur set out to give to something entirely unreal all the appearances of something real that had actually been photographed' (Höch, 1959b, p.69). Sheppard writes that Dada was a 'very specific and penetrating attack on post-Renaissance Humanist culture' (Sheppard, 1979b, p.175). Hausmann stated that Dadaist were against humanism (Benson, 1987a, p.55, n49). Sheppard explains that this opposition to humanism stemmed from a political objection to the art of classical humanism, which was seen either as conservative or removed from politics (Sheppard, 2000, p.346).

Höch and the other Berlin Dadaists identified a political position from the divide between idealism and realism. Höch's *Mausoleum für eine Utopie* ('Mausoleum for a Utopia'), 1967, Figure 13, suggests a pessimistic attitude towards the utopian ideas associated with German Idealism. Berlin Dadaists opposed idealism because they viewed it as leading to the elevation of particular individuals as more able to perceive and understand, which they saw as hierarchical, elitist, and 'apolitical' in the sense of being reactionary or leading to authoritarian conclusions. Further, the First World War and subsequent events in Germany had shattered utopian ideals for some artists, leading to an insistence on the importance of material political conditions, carried out

through their preference for contact with found material in their art. Höch's processing of photographs as relics of reality is characteristic of an anti-idealist strand. Wassily Kandinsky, by contrast, took an anti-materialist approach, prioritising spiritual revolution, writing that:

Our minds, which are even now only just awakening after years of materialism, are infected with the despair of unbelief, of lack of purpose and ideal. The nightmare of materialism, which has turned the life of the universe into an evil, useless game, is not yet past; it holds the awakening soul still in its grip (Kandinsky, 2006, p.6).

In counterpoint to the transcendental art of Expressionism, the Berlin Dada group emphasised the empirical and the material above the intuitive and spiritual.

Höch connects a call for revolutionary art with particular aesthetic choices and practices. In 1921 she signed an open letter, appearing in *Der Gegner II* and published in Berlin by *Malik Verlag*, in which a group of artists opposed the Novembergruppe leadership's lack of commitment to 'the Revolution' (Dix et al., 2003, p.269) [1921]. The Novembergruppe was, according to the signatories, 'founded ostensibly by artists who wanted to *realize a revolutionary desire*' (Dix et al., 2003, p.267) [1921]. It was set up as a radical art organisation, formed in response to the revolution in Germany of November 1918, following the end of the First World War (Harrison and Wood, 2003a, p.265). A draft Novembergruppe manifesto from 1918 insists on unlimited freedom of expression and demands the reorganisation of art education and the 'transformation of museums' from biased collections of works of scholarly value into 'people's art centres' (Harrison and Wood, 2003b, p.266). However, by 1921 the revolutionary desire and commitment of the Novembergruppe was doubted by some of its members. The Novembergruppe was criticised by Dix et al, including Höch, for submitting to the authorities' political demands that they exclude paintings by Rudolf Schlichter and Otto Dix in their annual November exhibition (Dix et al., 2003, p.268) [1921]. This was not a local dispute over the specific content of one exhibition, but extended to criticism of the '*aesthetic-formalistic pedantry*' of the individualist Expressionism of some Novembergruppe members. The dissenters called for a new objectivity or non-objective art-as-protest (Dix et al., 2003, pp.268–269) [1921]. The criticism of the Novembergruppe connected revolutionary art to an emphasis on material and against idealism. They rejected some aspects of Expressionism, such as those described by George Grosz as 'the old rigmarole about the sublimity and holiness and transcendental character of art' (Grosz, 2003, p.273) [1920]. They also sought to associate art with the productive base rather than the superstructure of

institutions and culture to bring it into alignment with a Marxist (materialist) framework. Höch further connects the social order to aesthetics in a reference to the *Monistenbund*. Speaking about her friend Otto Freundlich, who was murdered by the Nazis in 1942, Höch recalled that:

Otto sympathized with us from the very start, because he shared our pacifist views, those of the *Monistenbund*, and also our determination to reject all the moral and aesthetic standards of the existing social order, which then seemed to us to be doomed (Höch, 1959b, p.67).

The *Monistenbund* was an organisation formed to combine science and religion, against idealist ideas of mysticism and transcendence. It was part of a movement that aiming to replace orthodox or traditional religion with science as a secularised spiritualism.

Positioning Dada and Höch as material realists, however, is not a straightforward conclusion. Timothy Benson argues in *Mysticism, Materialism and the Machine in Dada*, 1987, that Dada set about overturning Expressionist assumptions with almost an antithetical embrace of materialism in place of the spiritual emphasis of artists like Kandinsky, but what developed was an accommodation of materialism which nonetheless attempted to secularise spiritual and mystical beliefs (Benson, 1987a). Benson describes this as:

an exceptionally shrewd strategy that accommodated and promoted materialism and – contrary to materialism as a philosophy – served the secularization of the mystical beliefs among artists in a time of great artistic and social crisis (Benson, 1987a, p.47).

Expressionists and Dadaists shared anti-militarist ideas and rejected reactionary culture and economics, but they disagreed over an effective response. Dada is therefore both a rejection and a continuation of Expressionism; some Expressionist ideas were rejected as inconsistent with Dadaist aims and others were further developed.

In Dada the division between realism and idealism, consequent to the Kantian imagination, is reflected in tensions between the treatment of material and spirit. Within Dada there were divisions between rational and materialist concerns and the irrational, psychic and mystical interests of some. Sheppard explains that:

Where Christian mysticism tends, in the end, towards a dualism, stressing a final distinction between God and Creation, soul and matter, Dada is, on the whole, monistic, affirming the unity of life-force and material world and the dependence of the human psyche on the rest of creation (Sheppard, 1979a, p.100).

The monistic idea that both spirit and matter comprise one substance resolves an apparent contradiction in the Dadaists' position. Sheppard describes a complex relationship between materialism and spiritualism in Dada and a clear split. One group has an interest in mysticism, while still rejecting the Expressionist 'cult of ecstasy' for fear it would 'destroy their sense of balance amid opposites, or take them away from the realities of society and politics, or lead them towards totalitarianism of one kind or another' (Sheppard, 1979a, p.99).<sup>36</sup> Further, Sheppard identifies Berlin Dada as inclined toward an interest in mysticism: 'The mystical interest is less evident in other Dada centres but it was certainly there in Berlin' (Sheppard, 1979a, p.96). Sheppard argues that while Dada was not a religious phenomenon, it was 'fed by an interest' in mysticism and religion (Sheppard, 1979a, p.93). The Zürich artists Sheppard identifies as interested in mysticism are Arp, Huelsenbeck, Hugo Ball and Tzara. All used religious imagery; Arp and Tzara both used the 'mystical image of the dark light, the light that is so bright that it seems like a deep darkness'; Ball and Huelsenbeck used religious sounding language in their poetry (Sheppard, 1979a, p.95). Höch possessed a copy of a German translation of the *Tao Te Ching* (Sheppard, 1979a, p.96). Baader wrote a book titled *14 Letters of Christ*. The mathematician and mystic Blaise Pascal features in Friedländer's *Schöpferische Indifferenz* ('Creative Indifference') (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918]. Benson writes that Hausmann and Baader were 'vitaly interested in the mystical understanding of conscious experience' in spite of an abhorrence for the occult (Benson, 1987a, p.47). Sheppard points out that an interest in mysticism is not a uniform characteristic of Dada but is peculiar to one branch (Sheppard, 1979a, pp.92–100). He identifies a division between New York, Paris and Cologne Dada and elements of Zürich and Berlin Dada, centred on the issue of whether there is a pattern within the flux of reality. An interest in mysticism is found among those Dadaists who affirmed a secret pattern among the chaos of Nature (Sheppard, 1979a, p.98). The mystical strand of Dada, including Höch, searched for the divine within material.

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<sup>36</sup> The idea of balance amid opposites will be returned to in detail in Chapter two in a discussion of Friedländer's concept of creative indifference, which finds a creative principle at the mid-point between polar opposites.

Figure 13.

## Art, reality and change

Art, historically, has attached itself to power, or vice versa. Totalitarian power creates myths, controls images and directs emotions through art. Art is used to spread ideas, to convince, deceive, and to undermine opposition or critical thought. Harrison and Wood find:

a wider tendency within the Modern Movement to transfer the concept of revolution from the sphere of practical politics to the sphere of art, and to associate both with an absolute freedom of thought and imagination (Harrison and Wood, 2003a, p.360).

At *The First International Dada Fair*, 1919, at which Höch exhibited, slogans proclaimed that Dada was ‘on the side of the revolutionary proletariat’,<sup>37</sup> while imploring people to open their heads, ‘for the demands of the age’, Figure 14.<sup>38</sup> In another of these slogans, Dada is declared to be the ‘voluntary destruction of the bourgeois world of ideas’ (Höch, 1959b, p.68).<sup>39</sup> Revolution and opening the mind, while rejecting bourgeois intellectualism, go hand in hand.

The underlying premise behind Höch’s radical imagination creating concrete transformation is that art has effect. One way it has been proposed that art can create change is through changing attitudes and understandings of reality. The term ‘imagination’, and especially ‘fantasy’ can suggest a negation of reality, or an illusory construct, either incorrect or unreal. However, Carl Einstein associates a denial of reality with the adoption of rational concepts, rather than fantasy, in contradiction to suggestions that fantasy is a negation of reality.<sup>40</sup> He saw the conceptualisation of experience as a defence against an overwhelming fear of complexity, arguing that people are ‘especially fearful of hallucinatory processes that condemn [them] to a role

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<sup>37</sup> ‘DADA steht auf Seiten des revolutionären Proletariats!’

<sup>38</sup> ‘Sperren Sie endlich Ihren Kopf auf!

Machen Sie ihn frei für die Forderungen der Zeit!’

<sup>39</sup> Translated by Eduardo Roditi in Dialogues from ‘DADA ist die Willentliche Zersetzung der Bürgerliche Begriffswelt’ (Roditi, 1990).

<sup>40</sup> Lavin writes that ‘[b]oth Hausmann and Höch probably knew Carl Einstein personally. Given Höch’s interest in ethnography, chances are that she had read Negerplastik and his later Afrikanische Plastik (1921)’ (Lavin, 1998, p.346).

of suffering endurance' (Einstein, 2004, p.170). Reality is denied through conceptualising and rationalising, which is seen, by Einstein, as defending a partially shared (and false) construction of reality. He argued that, out of fear, people struggle against the concrete world by conceptualising and rationalising it so it becomes more general and abstract. He sees the impetus to rationalise as arising from fear and a need to control 'the overpowering mass of events' (Einstein, 2004, p.171). Einstein understands the idea of inner and outer reality as part of a conceptualisation where reality is split into subjective and objective spheres, to be measured rationally in order to assuage people's fears. Rational conceptualisation leads to a standardisation, achieved by eliminating 'the conflicting, irrational, irritating – i.e., irreconcilable' (Einstein, 2004, p.173). For Einstein concrete experience 'repels deadly fixities and generalities' (Einstein, 2004, p.174). Einstein associates the concrete with hallucinatory and visionary experience rather than material and sees concept as causing a diminution of the Real and a concealment of the dynamic unmediated experience prior to conceptualisation, in order to 'mitigate the plunge toward death' (Einstein, 2004, p.173). Einstein gives the image a key role in transformation, seeing visual images as part of the cultural and historical baggage, or ballast, that must be jettisoned to make way for new images as a pre-requisite for the new (Haxthausen, 2004, p.60). He believed in the responsibility of cultural images for sustaining the traditional values that he and others opposed. Einstein saw inherited or given experience as coercive because of its overvaluation of external facts. Existing art was therefore a 'formidable impediment to the refiguring vision that, in his view, was a precondition to remaking the world' (Haxthausen, 2004, p.54). Einstein argued that the forms of the past continued to influence the present because all the art that people had seen was retained in their memories, affecting their vision of the world and also of new art.

In his argument for art to destroy and then regenerate reality, Einstein refers to the ancient history of aesthetics, both to Plato's contempt for works of art, other than when they participate in the Idea, and to the consequences for art of Aristotle's writing on imagination, which were that art was dependent on a rational reality:

In every case congruence is being sought, whether it is with the Idea or with the Real. This belief in a complete identity of the human being with the rationalized Real dominates the aesthetics of the Renaissance and of classicism' (Einstein, 2004, p.175).

In place of a choice between the rationalised Real or the Idea, Einstein proposes a 'metamorphic revolt' where art is 'directed against the identification with given objects and conventional experiences' (Einstein, 2004, p.175). He calls for the creation

of new visionary objects and a shift from a passive, servile art repeating comforting normalised experiences, so that '[a]rt becomes a human means for shaping and altering reality' (Einstein, 2004, p.175). This revolt would entail a shift away from both logic and from the imitative Aristotelian dependence on a rational real. The text in which Einstein makes this proposal was not published during Höch's life.<sup>41</sup> However, Einstein was involved with the *Malik Verlag* publishing company that published the work of the Dadaists and their associates, and he co-edited *Der blutige Ernst* ('Bloody Serious') which published writing from the same circle (Haxthausen, 2003).

Surrealism, a movement with which Höch became associated with to some extent, was an overtly revolutionary art movement in which André Breton appropriates the insights into imagination from psychoanalysis, in particular Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900, for artists and poets. They included Karl Marx in their intended revolution: 'Conjoining the ideas of Marx with those of Freud, the Surrealists saw themselves as working for what Salvador Dali called "a revolution in consciousness"' (Harrison and Wood, 2003a, p.360). In *What is Revolutionary Art?* Read writes that Surrealism was one of two revolutionary movements, the other being abstract or non-figurative art (Read, 2003). Religion, philosophy and art combine to create an ideology that needs to be overcome, because through this ideology people can deny the facts of war, poverty, and social injustice. Read explains that:

writers like André Breton – realise this very clearly, and the object of their movement is therefore to discredit the bourgeois ideology in art, to destroy the academic conception of art [...] The particular method they adopt, in so far as they have a common method, consists in breaking down the barriers between the conscious reality of life and the unconscious reality of the dream-world – to so mingle fact and fancy that the normal concept of reality no longer has existence' (Read, 2003, p.513).

The cultural heritage of the past, for Surrealism, is 'the greatest obstacle to the creation of this new social reality' (Read, 2003, p.513). The idea of a rational reality is opposed by Breton, who positions imagination as taking on realism, materialism and the extremes of spiritualism:

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<sup>41</sup> Einstein's *Gestalt and Concepts* is translated by Haxthausen as a fragment of a larger manuscript which Haxthausen suggests was written around 1934 (Einstein, 2004).



It is not the fear of madness which will oblige us to leave the flag of imagination furled.

The case against the realistic attitude demands to be examined, following the case against the materialistic attitude [...] It should above all be viewed as a welcome reaction against certain ridiculous tendencies of spiritualism' (Breton, 1972, p.6) [1924].

Breton's Surrealist imagination is critical of materialism and of an idealist understanding of imagination as transcending reality. In explaining how Freud uses the term 'Phantasie', Laplanche and Pontalis write that it evokes a distinction between imagination and perceived material reality, but this distinction 'cannot be sustained when it is confronted with a correct apprehension of reality' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.315). Freud's concept of a psychological reality is 'everything in the psyche that takes on the force of reality for the subject' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.363). In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900, Freud writes that:

The unconscious is the true psychological reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs* (Freud, 1953b, p.613) [1900-1901].

Read argues that Surrealism carries out a revolutionary function in relation to a form of social reality dependent on culture.

Figure 14.

## Höch's radical imagination

Höch's art can be linked in multiple ways to an intention to create change. These include her direct references to political events and social conditions, as well as an aesthetic position in relation to realism and idealism. Photomontage as an innovative technique could be considered an example of radical intervention through art, and a challenge to form and subject matter. The satirical use of photomontage by artists such as Höch and Heartfield subverts many conventions of representation. However, Joanna Drucker questions the assertion that 'radical innovation in form constitutes a subversive strategy' sufficient in itself, even where it does not set out the terms of radicality or link to social activism:

there is an intellectual tradition in the twentieth century that links the subversion of the norms of symbolic form with the subversion of the norms of social form – making them equivalent – which has typically formed one of the cornerstones for arguments about the political nature of avant-garde art (Drucker, 1993, p.83).

Maud Lavin has argued that Höch's photomontages are highly political, even where specific 'and often prescriptive political messages' are missing (Lavin, 1993, p.159). Drucker explains that '[f]or Lavin, the lived experience of the personal is an inflected form of the social – the private imaginary links to the social imaginary through processes of identification, negation and projection' (Drucker, 1993, p.84). The diagram below, Figure 15, shows a model for different potential routes for imagination to create political and social effects. All involve a number of steps. For example, the top arrow represents the idea that art creates change through the subversion of the norms of symbolic form leading to a change in visual culture and potentially leading to political and social effects. In Drucker's understanding of Lavin, private and social imaginaries are linked (Drucker, 1993, p.83). Propaganda also makes a direct connection between art and the political. In comparison, Höch's radical imagination, in this model, inserts additional steps. Her approach surpasses the more direct routes because it includes fundamental changes in perception. It is radical in attempting to create a wholesale transformation of how reality is understood.

*Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands* ('Cut with the Dada kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly cultural epoch of Germany'), 1919-20, (Figure 4) contains a number of topical political and social references. It contains symbols of a Marxist superstructure with politics represented by figures such as Marx, media found in the newspapers and magazines,

culture and art shown through the inclusion of artists, and science represented by Albert Einstein. This work includes images of the recently murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, as well as Friedrich Ebert and Gustav Noske, considered by many at the time to be substantially responsible for their deaths.<sup>42</sup> These two political leaders (President and Defence Minister respectively) were depicted by Höch elsewhere, for example, in *Staatshäupter* ('Heads of State'), 1918-20, Figure 16, which shows an irreverent view of the pair in their swimming trunks against a backdrop of embroidery. *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands* appeared in the same exhibition as Grosz's *Prussian Archangel*, 1920, a suspended figure in military uniform topped by a pig's head, the exhibition of which led to Grosz and Wieland Hertzfelde being fined for defamation of the military (White, 2007, p.434).<sup>43</sup> By mixing topical political references with examples from art, such as the Expressionist Käthe Kollwitz, Höch suggests a connection between the political events and the artists. Höch presents this work in a context in which women were not encouraged to adopt a public role. Even before the Nazi takeover of power there was an expectation that women's activities should be restricted to 'Kinder, Küche, and Kirche' (children, kitchen and church)

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<sup>42</sup> Ebert and Noske were depicted on the cover of the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* in August 1919, paddling in the Baltic. Their appearance in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands*, 1919, is therefore topical. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht had been members of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Germany, but, critical of the compromises made with the conservatives, formed the Spartacus League in 1916 leading to the Spartacist uprising. After months of street battles the uprising ended in 1919 after the deployment of the right wing paramilitary group, the Freikorps. Friedrich Ebert, President of the new republic and his Defence Minister, Gustav Noske, led the government side of street fighting in Berlin. The importance of this political context to Berlin Dada is detailed by J. C. Middleton in "Bolshevism in Art": Dada and Politics (Middleton, 1962). Charles Haxthausen discusses the 'arrests and summary executions by the Freikorps carried out under the Majority Socialists (SPD) throughout Germany' (p.111) describing Noske as 'synonymous with the bloody counterrevolution' (p.117) in *Bloody Serious: Two Texts by Carl Einstein* (Haxthausen, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Dada began as an anti-militarist response to the First World War, opposed to the political ideologies and cultural values that were seen by Dadaists as having led to war. It was an anti-art movement that used a variety of tactics to shock the public including the issuing of manifestoes and staging of chaotic performances which enraged audiences (Sheppard, 1979b).

(Bridenthal, 1973). Höch's reference to the kitchen knife here subverts and parodies the fulfilment of domestic duty. Further to her adoption of practices from the domestic realm, specifically the kitchen, Höch's inclusion of the 'Kitchen Knife' of the title is informed by the politics of food in an economic context of endemic hunger. Höch invokes an idea of the body as a consumer of images together with images of industry, capital and ideology. She translates the raw material of mass culture and transforms it for her Dadaist purpose. Ideas of food, consumption and the body are joined in an image which presents an astute cross-section of contemporary events. This suggests subjective experience is transformable through the consumption of images.

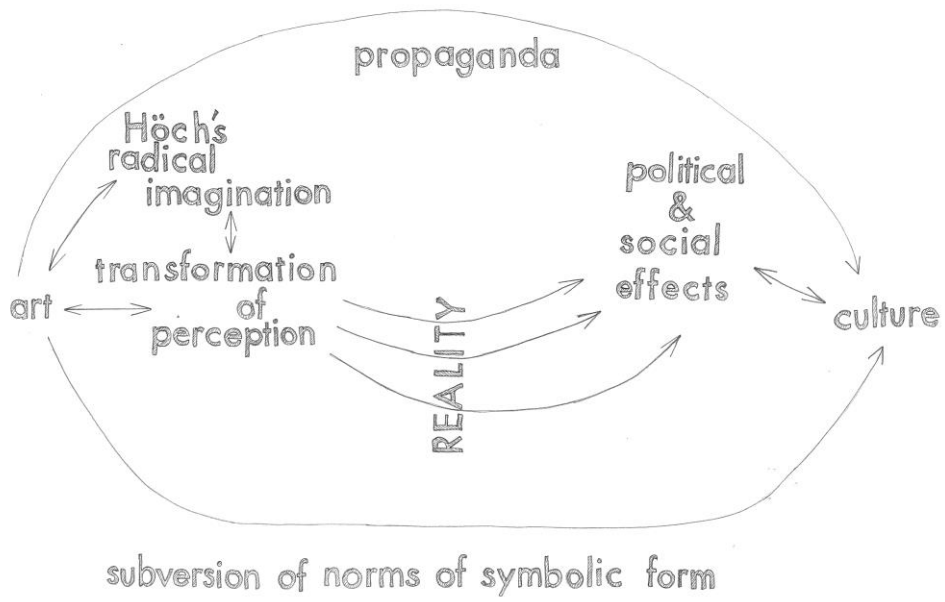


Figure 15. Diagram of potential routes for imagination's political and social effects.

Figure 16.

## Radical imagination

Castoriadis, the French social theorist who founded the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group, uses the term ‘radical imagination’ as a key concept in his social theory. ‘Imagination’ in this usage refers to psychical representation (Tovar-Restrepo, 2012). Radical imagination, for Castoriadis, has a role in the social world:

History is impossible and inconceivable outside of the *productive* or *creative imagination*, outside of what we have called the *radical imaginary* (Castoriadis, 1997d, p.146).

In Castoriadis’s writing, radical imagination is a fundamental precondition for the presentation of the real. It ‘precedes the distinction between “the real” and “the imaginary” or “the fictitious”’ (Tovar-Restrepo, 2012, p.35). Castoriadis’s concept of radical imagination is a development of Freud’s unconscious and psychoanalytic ideas about the representation of reality (Tovar-Restrepo, 2012, p.34).<sup>44</sup> Castoriadis examined Freud’s work on representations in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and found in it the possibility for imagination to be undetermined and not produced by logic (Tovar-Restrepo, 2012, pp.39–41). The ‘radical’ part in Castoriadis’s term differentiates radical imagination from a secondary or reflective imagination, the faculty to form images secondary to sensation, which he finds in Aristotle’s concept of imagination. In Castoriadis’s concept of imagination, it is before sensation and not reflective but constitutive of reality.

## Conclusion

Several proposals are set out in the following chapters. As a primary process – from the unknown – imagination creates the new; it is radical in the sense of *being* the root. Heidegger describes Kant’s transcendental imagination as having the character of a root, one that Kant recoiled from, preferring to locate imagination instead as a mediating force between sensation and thought. Leaving aside issues of location or sequence, radical imagination is also transformative. My use of ‘radical’ is intended to indicate a potential for fundamental change in the perception of reality, and the creation of concepts of the self and the world. The term includes Höch’s overtly political references, as well as her pioneering approach to photographic images in

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<sup>44</sup> Castoriadis discusses imagination in relation to psychical reality, an affective reality that psychoanalysis is concerned with, in *Psychoanalysis and Philosophy* (Castoriadis, 1997a) and in greater depth in *Crossroads in the Labyrinth* (Castoriadis, 1984).



photomontage, which are also, as argued by Lavin, subversive in form. It includes, in addition, an attempt to create change on a fundamental level, through a revolution in consciousness and an attack on existing cultural images. Radical imagination acts through the continual process by which reality appears. It acts on the body through perception, using the bodily organs of the eye and the brain. Transformations can include negation, displacement, distortion, translation or disguise; Höch's work reveals and conceals. There is a covert and therefore coercive quality to her intention to change people's perception so they might have less destructive relationships with the world. Höch's work can lure the viewer into a radical process of looking in which her imagination acts on the viewer's imagination. The next chapter will ask how Friedländer's idea of creative indifference may have influenced Höch's theorisation of imagination. Creative indifference is a pervasive metaphysical force bridging the divide between the phenomenal and the transcendent, operating equally in the abstract as in the concrete. Höch's gallery text *Fantastische Kunst* will be examined in relation to ideas about reality and space, the representation of which reveals Höch's understanding of how radical imagination constructs the world. The target for a radical imagination is not merely an adjustment of the prevailing order, but its wholesale destruction and simultaneous replacement.

## Reality and space: Höch's metaphysical imagination

*So that if we were to hold on to the letter of what metaphysicians and scientists say, and also to the material aspect of what they do, we might believe that the metaphysicians have dug a deep tunnel beneath reality, that the scientists have thrown an elegant bridge over it, but that the moving stream of things passes between these two artificial constructions without touching them (Bergson, 1913a, p.68) [1903].*

This chapter asks what inferences can be drawn about Höch's conception of imagination from the depiction of reality and space in her work. Space is an essential element in the overall thesis that Höch enacted a radical imagination in her work in order to transform reality. Salomo Friedländer's concept of creative indifference was influential in Höch's practice in regards to polarity, infinity and balance, all of which relate to a particular understanding of space and reality, and by extension, imagination. Space is a key issue in the theorisation of imagination because space is perceived, imagined and represented. It is therefore treated here as diagnostic of Höch's thinking about imagination. Varied treatment of space is a significant feature of Höch's work, suggesting that space is important in her work. Space is strongly represented in the idea of creative indifference, as is the creative quality of a productive imagination (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918]. There are common issues and themes between Höch's and Friedländer's art which are relevant to imagination, for example, their use of the grotesque form, which will be examined in Chapter three. The argument here is that the way Höch represents space in her work describes her ideas about how reality and space are imagined.

Höch's arrival as an artist is coincident with a philosophical context in Expressionism and Dada in which Immanuel Kant's transcendental imagination is under critique. Imagination had undergone a revolutionary change during the modern era to become a productive and creative human faculty, in a change from ideas of imagination as a mere reflection of an externally fixed reality. As a result, imagination became separated from the phenomenal world, and was unable to act on matter. This creates a potential problem for Höch's stated intention to use her imagination to change people's perception. Kant's transcendental imagination is powerless to act,

because of the separation between appearances and things.<sup>45</sup> The theorisation of imagination by philosophers such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Nietzsche addresses the ineffectiveness of this restriction of imagination to the noumenal, and recognises imagination's action in the world. Höch's theoretical position in relation to imagination is therefore formed in the context of this contestation of representation: as appearances in the mind and in relation to a subjective self on the one hand or in relation to an empirical external world on the other.

One intention for this thesis is to contribute an analysis of Höch's work based on the attribution of agency to Höch and thereby create new interpretations of her work, consistent with what is known of her beliefs and intentions. Her ideas and practices in regards to imagination are formed in the context that she worked in. Ellen Maurer's study of Höch's oil paintings *Jenseits fester Grenzen – Das malerische Werk bis 1945* (*Beyond fixed boundaries – the painterly work up to 1945*), identifies Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Georg Simmel and Friedländer as major philosophical influences on Höch (Maurer, 1995). A map of influence is set out in the diagram below, Figure 17. Höch refers to Friedländer's ideas in her work, and further to this, Höch and Friedländer develop their ideas through art in order to create change. Friedländer developed his ideas about subjectivity through grotesque stories.<sup>46</sup> He used the grotesque to 'offset the chaos in the world around him' by 'creating balance and sobriety' (Zipes, 1991a, p.119). Friedländer sees that which many people assume to be an empirical and rational reality as a hypocritical 'positivist doctrine' (Taylor, 1990b, p.129). Modern culture is therefore implicated in a false dogma. He attempts, in his philosophical writing and fiction, to expose the propaganda of rationality. Höch encountered the idea of polarity through Nietzsche and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and additionally through Friedländer's writing. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, in turn, influenced Friedländer in his revision of Kant. Friedländer's doctorate, completed in 1902, examined Schopenhauer's interpretation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Friedländer also undertook to write a biography of Nietzsche, published in 1911. In 1918 he published *Schöpferische Indifferenz* ('Creative Indifference') the work that will be

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<sup>45</sup> The representation of space (and time) is important in Kant's transcendental aesthetic. Kant's idea of space is transcendently ideal, but also dependent on the mind in its representation, and therefore subjective (Kant, 1998b) [1781-1787].

<sup>46</sup> The grotesque form is discussed in Chapter three.

discussed here in relation to the importance of space in Höch's radical imagination (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918].

Beginning with a short introduction to Friedländer's concept of creative indifference and its relation to imagination, this chapter considers how both Friedländer and Höch brought elements of this philosophy into practice in their art. Höch wrote a short text in 1946 discussing reality in relation to art's purpose. This is examined here alongside paintings which Höch agreed with Edouard Roditi had a similar perspective to Giorgio de Chirico's metaphysical landscapes (Höch, 1959b, p.71). Ideas from creative indifference are then identified in Höch's work; those of polarity, infinity and balance. This includes a discussion of gestalt principles, and the connections between Fritz Perls's gestalt therapy and Friedländer's creative indifference. Finally, the subjectivity in Höch's treatment of space is examined in relation to imaginative modes of presentation and to symbolic and diagrammatic depictions of landscape.

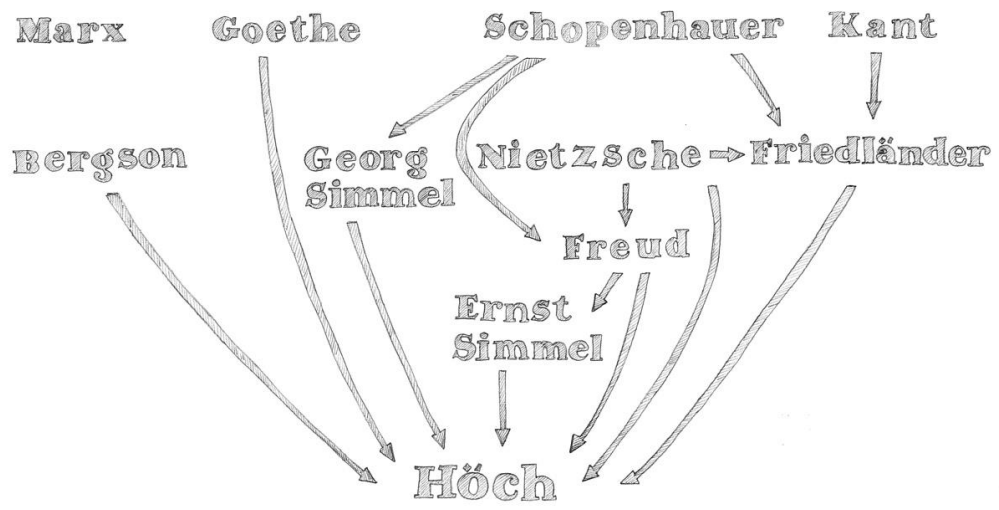


Figure 17. Theoretical influences on Hannah Höch's concept of imagination.

## Salomo Friedländer

Friedländer and Höch were friends. They met and corresponded until at least 1930. Friedländer's idea of creative indifference was a prominent feature in the Berlin Expressionist, Dada and post-Dada theoretical landscape: '[i]f Otto Gross was Expressionism's psychoanalytic theorist and Kurt Hiller its political activist, then Friedländer was its philosopher' (Taylor, 1990a, p.118). Friedländer was born in Gollantsch, near Posen in 1871 (Zipes, 1991a, p.114). During his childhood he preferred to read 'a great deal of fantasy – the works of Jules Verne, the *Arabian Nights*, and fairy tales' (Zipes, 1991a, p.114). He moved to Berlin in 1906 and became involved in the Berlin Expressionist scene:

[n]ot only his grotesque tales but also his philosophical articles were a ubiquitous feature of Expressionist periodicals. In fact, Franz Pfemfert dedicated the first issue of *Die Aktion* in 1913 to him' (Taylor, 1990a, p.117).<sup>47</sup>

Friedländer published in *Der Sturm*, *Die Aktion*, *Neue Jugend*, *Die weißen Blätter*, *Jedermann sein eigener Fussball* and co-founded *Der Einzige* with his cousin Anselm Rüst (Zipes, 1991a). He is described by Anson Rabinbach as 'an extraordinary figure on the fringes of the Oskar Goldberg circle of modern Jewish "Kabbalists" ' and a 'Jewish Nietzsche' (Rabinbach, 2005, p.141). His philosophy is summarised, by a journalist who met Friedländer, in the Association of Jewish Refugees journal, as being scathing of German Idealism and strongly influenced by Max Stirner's individualism (Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain, 1971, p.5). He wrote under two names, publishing literature under the pseudonym Mynona (Anonym backwards) and his philosophical writing as Friedländer. His prose works include *Rosa, die schöne Schutzmannsfrau* ('Rosa the beautiful policeman's wife'), 1913, *Graue Magie* ('Grey Magic') 1922, and *Das Eisenbahnglück oder der AntiFreud* ('The Railway Un-accident or the Anti-Freud'), 1925, illustrated by Hans Bellmer, Figure 18.<sup>48</sup> Friedländer moved to

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<sup>47</sup> Taylor devotes a chapter to the importance of Friedländer to German Expressionism (Taylor, 1990b). He describes Friedländer, with Rüst, as a 'dissenter from the political orientation of late Expressionism' (1990a, p.38).

<sup>48</sup> The title may refer to Thomas Mann's short story *Das Eisenbahnglück*, ('The Railway Accident') (Mann, 2004a) [1909]. The 'Anti-Freud' in the title is used in the context of the expressions 'anti-Dada' and 'anti-art'. It also brings the idea of opposition between 'Freud' and 'Anti-Freud' into play.

France in 1933. He escaped being sent to a concentration camp in 1943 because he was too ill to be moved (Zipes, 1991a, p.126). He died in France in 1946.

There are numerous references to Friedländer in Höch's work. The collage *Meine Haussprüche* ('My Proverbs'), 1922, Figure 19, contains a quotation from Friedländer along with quotations from Hans Arp, Johannes Baader, Kurt Schwitters, Raoul Hausmann, Hüelsenbeck, Goethe and Nietzsche. Höch, Friedländer and Hausmann were on the same billing at the Berlin Secession in 1921, performing grotesque stories (Burmeister, 2004, p.340).<sup>49</sup> Höch made many portrait sketches of Friedländer, including the silhouette collages *Dr S. Friedländer, Mynona*, 1923-1925, Figure 20, and *Dr. S Friedländer Mynona*, c. 1922, Figure 21. She also created a portrait drawing in 1922, Figure 22. This is unusual, '[o]ther than Raoul Hausmann and herself, there was no other person of whom Hannah Höch made so many portraits' (Burmeister, 2004, p.341). Höch studied Friedländer's writing closely, transcribing his texts and making notes in the margins, '[t]he Friedlaender existential exegesis had a permanent influence on Hannah Höch's thinking' (Burmeister, 2004, p.340). Their correspondence includes a postcard from Friedländer to Höch in 1928, in which Friedländer repeats short sentences in different word orders which change the meaning, Figure 23, reproduced here in German:

Liebe, sehr verehrte Hannahhöch: Alte Liebe rostet nicht.Alter Rost liebt nicht.Rostende Liebe altert nicht.Liebendes Alter rostet nicht.Rostendes Alter liebt nicht.<sup>50</sup>

Höch also supported Friedländer's fiction writing. In 1924, on a visit to Paris, Höch recorded in her notebooks a plan to find a publisher for Friedländer's *Rosa, die schöne Schutzmannsfrau*, 1913 ('Rosa the beautiful Policeman's wife'):

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<sup>49</sup> The poster for this event is reproduced in Chapter three (Figure 61). Höch's story *Italienreise*, performed alongside Friedländer and Hausmann at the New Secession, is discussed in Chapter three (Höch, 1995a) [1921].

<sup>50</sup> 'Dearly, dear Hannahhöch:Old love does not rust.Old rust does not love.Rustless love does not age.Loving age does not rust.Rusting age does not love'.

When Hannah Höch, despite the new experiences and the numerous encounters in her first stay in Paris, attempts to find a translator, perhaps from among the artists, for the texts of Salomo Friedlaender/Mynona, and even a publisher, it is a matter that is close to her heart (Burmeister, 2004, p.339).

Three years later, in 1927, a contract was signed between Friedländer and Til Brugman for the translation of *Rosa, die schöne Schutzmannsfrau*, indicating a continued concern on Höch's part for the wider dissemination of Friedländer's work (Burmeister, 2004, p.344n5).<sup>51</sup>

Friedländer was a significant theorist in Dada circles. Richard Sheppard writes that *Schöpferische Indifferenz* 'must have reinforced ideas that were already well formed in the minds of Berlin Dadaists' (Sheppard, 2000, p.248). In *Dadaist Subjectivity and the Politics of Indifference*, Hubert Van den Berg equates Friedländer's creative indifference to the idea of nothing in Dada, writing:

It was actually his conception of "creative indifference", a "schöpferische Indifferenz", that was appropriated and elaborated by the Dadaists as the crux of their state of mind. According to Friedlaender, a new subjectivity had to be situated in a "Nothing" characterized by absolute indifference, not a "Nothing" as opposed to "Anything", but rather a *Nihil neutrale* (1915: 859), a zero point mathematically situated in the exact middle between plus and minus (van den Berg, 2000, p.39).<sup>52</sup>

The anonymity of his literary pseudonym was a philosophical position, to be nobody (Zipes, 1991a, p.118). Jack Zipes quotes Friedländer here from *Präsentismus*, published in *Der Sturm* in 1913, in which Friedländer (through a fictional character) declares he is everybody and nobody – undifferentiated (Friedländer, 1913, p.253). Constantin Parvulescu explains Friedländer's pseudonym as the author's disappearance behind the text: 'As the God of the twentieth century has died, so has the Author. The reader cannot benefit from transcendent guidance' (Parvulescu, 2006, p.161). Parvulescu

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<sup>51</sup> Burmeister acknowledges the Harmut Geerken Friedlaender/Mynona Archiv in noting that there was a contract from 1927 between Friedländer and Brugman for the translation of *Rosa, die schöne Schutzmannsfrau* into Dutch, English and French. This story is also referred to by Höch in her unpublished manuscript *Julie* (Höch, 1995b).

<sup>52</sup> Sheppard argues that the idea that nihilism is central to Dada is mistaken, and reflects the influence of Paris Dada on how Dada is understood (Sheppard, 1981, pp.3–6). The idea of nothing does appear in Dada, for example, Tzara writes in the *Dada manifesto*, 'I want nothing, yet I say certain things, and in principle I am against manifestos, as I am also against principles' (Tzara, 1989, p.76) [1918].



describes *Präsentismus* as a manifesto of ‘anti-humanist revolt’ (Parvulescu, 2006, p.80). It advocated indifference to overcome the ‘binary differences upon which the individual’s sense of reality is constructed’ (Parvulescu, 2006, p.81 n. 23). This is in place of a utopian idealism in which the individual is separated from the outside and from others. The Idealist Geist is part of a post-Kantian spiritualism rejected by some Expressionists and later Dadaists. According to van den Berg, creative indifference is secular – God is replaced by “Gott ‘ich’ ” (Friedländer and Kubin, 1986, in van den Berg, 2000, p.42). The journals, *Neue Jugend*, and *Die Freie Straße*, were critical of Expressionism, and especially ‘their mystical concept of *Geist*’ seeing it as originating in the German culture that needed to be overcome, seen as having led to the First World War (Taylor, 1990a, p.191). Friedländer interprets Nietzsche’s historical method as re-evaluating all values so that the supernatural, God, the idea or reason are no longer given a higher status (Taylor, 1990a, p.124). Creative indifference is secular, against idealist utopianism and correlates with a strand of Expressionism and Dada that is anti-humanist, critical of Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, and articulates these positions through art’s engagement with reality.

Figure 18.

Figure 19.

Figure 20.

Figure 21.

Figure 22.

Figure 23.

## *Creative Indifference*

The idea of creative indifference is detailed in *Schöpferische Indifferenz* ('Creative Indifference') (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918]. *Schöpferische Indifferenz* translates as creative indifference, which, in English, has an older history with an existing and different meaning. It was used by John Fiske in *The Destiny of man, viewed in the light of his origin*, 1884, and has since been associated with other discussions of natural history. Its meaning in the natural history context is connected to ideas about humanity's place in the universe. Fiske compares Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, 1859, to the Copernican revolution, asking, 'how can we say that the same process of evolution that has produced mankind may not by and by produce something far more perfect?' (Fiske, 1884, p.21).<sup>53</sup> In contrast to the idea of deliberate design, Fiske writes that Darwin interprets phenomena, such as the colour of butterfly's wings, not as 'contrivance', with its analogy to human art, but as creative indifference. The butterfly's wing is, in other words, the result of an evolutionary process which has no aesthetic oversight involving beauty or design, '[t]he infinite and eternal Power which is thus revealed in the physical life of the universe seems in nowise akin to the human soul' (Fiske, 1884, p.23). Darwin's theory of Natural Selection, in its exclusion of a benevolent and purposeful deity, is neither good nor evil but indifferent. Friedländer's creative indifference is the productive force constituting the world rather than being an indifferent quality of creation as in Fiske's discussion of *On the Origin of Species*. The term 'indifference' was already commonly used in the eighteenth and nineteenth century; Friedländer's contribution was the 'creative' part (Moran, 2011). Friedländer moved away from the idea of creative indifference, during his life, correspondingly moving away from Nietzsche and towards Kant. To mark the centenary of his death the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain published an article about a visit to Friedländer's house in Berlin, during which Friedländer advised his visitor to return from Schopenhauer to Kant (Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain, 1971, p.5). However, Höch's engagement with Friedländer is with his earlier writing, including the articles preceding the publication of *Schöpferische Indifferenz* in 1918. It was during the early 1920s that they shared the form of the grotesque story, which they

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<sup>53</sup> Darwin writes: 'Nothing at first can appear more difficult to believe than that the more complex organs and instincts should have been perfected, not by means superior to, though analogous with, human reason, but by the accumulation of innumerable slight variations, each good for the individual possessor' (Darwin, 1996, p.371) [1859].



performed together. It is fair to foreground, therefore, that aspect of Friedländer's philosophy most relevant to Höch and narrow the focus to his earlier work.

*Schöpferische Indifferenz* argues that reality is polar and can be resolved to opposites, differentiated only at the mid-point of indifference, a creative value at the centre of reality (Frambach, 2003, p. 118). Friedländer gives many examples of polarities, for example, between nature and spirit, appearance and thing, representation and will, or natural drives and reason (Taylor, 1990a). The aim is not to reconcile; the polarities remain, as does the null point between them containing the productive force:

Since time immemorial, in regards to Polarisation, more attention has been paid to the Poles than to the Indifference. However in this lies the actual secret, the creative will, the polarising itself, which objectively is just nothing. But without it there would be no world (Friedländer, 2009, p.436).<sup>54</sup>

Imagination has a role in creative indifference, but Friedländer differentiates it from a distorted form, the pseudo-imagination:

The human pseudo-imagination is the inhibition of the real, the world of the senses, of waking dreams [...] Reality is poetry, the art of the individual (Friedländer, 2009b, p.484) [1918].<sup>55</sup>

The misattribution of the pseudo-imagination is implicated in distortions of the real, which Friedländer is concerned to change. Creative indifference has an intended application in art: Friedländer believed distortions in subjective experience could be overcome through an awareness of polarity created by art, particularly through the shock created by the grotesque.<sup>56</sup> Friedländer explains in *Grotesk*, 1922, that 'the genuine life of the natural instincts has been distorted through the evolution of norms of behaviour which are no longer perceived as distortion' (Taylor, 1990a, p.120). Both creative indifference and the grotesque are relevant to Höch's enactment of a radical imagination – an imagination with effect.

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<sup>54</sup> 'Seit Alters hat man beim Polarisieren mehr auf, die Pole als auf deren Indifferenz geachtet. In dieser aber erst steckt das eigentliche Geheimnis, der schöpferische Wille, der Polarisierende selber, der objektiv eben gar nichts ist. Ohne ihn aber gäbe es gar keine Welt.'

<sup>55</sup> 'Die menschliche Pseudophantasie ist die Verhindererin der echten, der Welt der Sinne, des wachen Traums [...] Wirklichkeit ist die Poesie, die Kunst des Individuums.'

<sup>56</sup> The grotesque is discussed in Chapter three.

The language used by Friedländer to discuss creative indifference reflects his study of Kant, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Schopenhauer had been Friedländer's first philosophical influence; he later wavered between Nietzsche and Kant, ultimately rejecting Nietzsche after the First World War (Taylor, 1990). Friedländer was critical of the extent to which Nietzsche critiqued western rationalism. But he discovered in Nietzsche a concept of polarity linking subject and object (Taylor, 1990a, p.118). For example, in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, Friedländer was influenced by the relationship of polarity between Apollo and Dionysus (Nietzsche, 2000) [1872]. Taylor explains that creative indifference is a pervasive metaphysical force bridging the divide between transcendent and phenomenal worlds. He quotes Friedländer:

The body was the shell of an inner will and the will was the interior of nature, the expansion of the body into the infinite. Not a physical, [but] a metaphysical connection is between shell and core. Nature renders itself in a double way: as the text of representation, as the interpretation of will (Friedländer, 1911, in Taylor, 1990a, p.126).<sup>57</sup>

In bridging the realms of spirit and nature, Friedländer answers the problem of separateness of a transcendental imagination that had trapped imagination into a position of ineffectiveness, Figure 24.

The relationship of the individual subject to reality is contested within Dada. In Zürich, reality is subordinated to the subject, whereas, in Berlin, reality is found outside the subject who is erased as an individual (van den Berg, 2000, pp.47–48). Van den Berg finds that Zürich Dada insists on a 'profound spiritual dimension' involving eastern spirituality, medieval and early modern mysticism and shamanism. He ascribes the difference between the abstraction in Zürich Dada and the political in Berlin Dada to differences in their respective concepts of reality in relation to the subject (van den Berg, 2000, p.43). Although Richard Huelsenbeck's arrival in Berlin politicised and changed both Expressionism and Dada, Friedländer and Rüst eventually reverted to an earlier Expressionist idea that 'the way to a better society begins not with a revolution of social conditions but with a spiritual revolution of the individual' (Taylor, 1990a, p.226). However, in his earlier writing, including in *Schöpferische Indifferenz*, Friedländer's emphasis on the individual is merely a starting point. Eliminating divisions within the individual causes 'a lightning strike that starts fires burning

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<sup>57</sup> Quoted in Taylor from *Der Sturm* 2, 1911.

everywhere' (Friedländer, 2009b, p.307) [1918].<sup>58</sup> Friedländer describes the revolution of the individual as paradoxically 'ghostly' ('geisterhaft') because it is impossible to mobilise against divisions within the human subject (Friedländer, 2009b, p.307) [1918]. In *Schöpferische Indifferenz* Friedländer asserts that there is yet no real individual. He argues against attempts to reach society from the pseudo-individual. The starting point instead is to resolve the estrangement of the individual from their creative indifference, their genuine imagination and real self (Friedländer, 2009b, p.306) [1918]. The aim in doing so is to achieve a self with no differentiation, leading to a position from which it is possible to achieve social change. In the open letter to the Novembergruppe, 1921, to which Höch was a signatory, the difference from other Expressionists is identified in part as being between the pursuit of individual spiritual change, as an end in itself, and explicitly left political change. The letter specifically expresses support for communism (Dix et al., 2003) [1921]. The aesthetic revolution necessary to achieve change was to be produced by either '*a new objectivity, born of disgust with exploitative, bourgeois society; or by the explorative preliminary attempts of a non-objective art form*' (Dix et al., 2003, p.268) [1921]. Individual change is not rejected, but it is the compromises and lack of commitment associated by the signatories to the letter with a form of individualism in Expressionism in which only an aesthetic revolution is required.

The mental and spiritual dimension to Friedländer's creative indifference originates from its intuitive and visionary beginnings. Zipes describes Friedländer as undergoing a 'major spiritual crisis' in 1897, which made clear the mystical side to his philosophy:

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<sup>58</sup> 'einem einzigen Blitzschlage zu treffen, der das überall um sich greifende Feuer entzündet.'

While studying certain chapters of physics at school, especially Schopenhauer's theory of colour followed by Goethe's theory, I came across the formula of polarity. It seemed to me that it mysteriously contained the meaning of life. I had tasted the affirmation of life as a pole only much too drastically. In order to make my decision I also had to experience the opposite pole. Due to these internal experiments and guided by ascetic intention as well, I almost completely forgot to eat and drink for weeks and experienced fantastic ecstasies. These raptures contained visions of a polar life in which my floating "I" moved more and more blazingly like the sun between all the poles of life, between the yes and no of the will. I conceived a philosophy, which I called "On the Live Indifference of the Polarity of the World" (Friedländer in Zipes, 1991a, p.116).<sup>59</sup>

Creative indifference is characterised by Friedländer as the indivisible individual (Moran, 2011, p.307). Some examples of creative indifference such as in mathematics or light, relate to the phenomenal, for example, it acts in magnetism and light, but Friedländer especially emphasises its action in relation to identity and self. This has political implications in that creative indifference becomes a liberatory force: 'Such neutral value, something all relativity is redeemed of, frees the person, soul, heart, mind, life and will' (Friedländer, 2009b, p.119) [1918].<sup>60</sup> Creative indifference is a path to an undifferentiated personal centre: 'Indifference is only the naked soul. The human soul, the psychical differences have a relationship similar to that of the dress to the body' (Friedländer, 2009b, p.450) [1918].<sup>61</sup> Friedländer was also influenced by Nietzsche's concept of will as producing the creativity of creative indifference (Moran, 2011, p.307). In Friedländer's development of creative indifference the will is exceptionally exempt from measurement, demonstration, incorporation or location, such that the indifferent will is the creator of everything: at the null point of creative indifference, self and world converge (Moran, 2011, p.308). Creative indifference treats the relation between a perceived inner and outer world as a polar relation, with the subject at the neutral or null point, rather than as a duality, for example, of mind and

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<sup>59</sup> There is a possible connection here to Freud's opposition of drives, the death drive and eros, as set out in *The Ego and The Id* (Freud, 1961b) [1923]. Freud writes of reality testing: 'The polarity of judgement appears to correspond to the opposition of the two groups of instincts which we have supposed to exist. Affirmation – as a substitute for uniting – belongs to Eros; negation – the successor to expulsion – belongs to the instinct of destruction' (Freud, 1961b, p.239) [1923].

<sup>60</sup> 'Eine solche neutrale Größe, so etwas von aller Relativität Erlöstes, Freies ist Person, Seele, Inneres, Geist, Leben, Wille'

<sup>61</sup> 'Indifferenz ist erst die nackte Seele. Die menschliche Seele, die psychischen Differenzen stehen zu ihr ähnlichem Verhältnis wie das Kleid zum Leibe.'

body or spirit and matter. Friedländer writes about a world-creative principle experienced with our own 'inside' (Inneren):

In order to distinguish the inside from the outside precisely, we characterize the exterior as the difference, as polarity, as self-estrangement from the exuberance of the inner, hence the interior as a central, indifferent, *neutral value* (Friedländer, 2009b, p.119) [1918].<sup>62</sup>

Creative indifference thus emphasises the complexity of reality and its interrelatedness, overcoming the problems created by separating the human mind from a material understanding of reality in dualistic and idealist philosophies. People are estranged from their imagination and therefore unable to perceive reality without distortion, but this estrangement is shared and culturally produced. Consequently, Friedländer rejects the idea of perceptual hierarchy, a feature of more idealist Expressionism, as well as other hierarchies between individuals. The division required to be overcome is instead between the creative principle and its distortion during perception.

Friedländer pursued the idea of creative indifference through fiction and poetry as well as philosophy because he found philosophy alone insufficient (Haakenson, 2009, p.123). He brings his ideas into art through fiction, for example, in *A Child's Heroic Deed*, 1913, a story about a boy born as a hedgehog who sells himself to a museum in a jar. The fantastical aspect of this story emphasises subjectivity and the ability to imagine crossing between existential categories like hedgehog and boy. In Friedländer's account of the relationship between perception and reality, perception is a subjective human action and a productive imagination is linked to the productive polarity of creative indifference. What people subjectively perceive is not only the result of empirical observation: it is subjective and contingent on the difference between the pseudo-imagination and the undifferentiated self. Friedländer connects the perception of an internal 'I' to reality and also to culture. In this way he links art and culture to science, philosophy, and spirituality. Creative indifference is enacted as a practice by artists who object to the idea that the noumenal is separate from the phenomenal, because of the restriction implied by such a separation to the effectiveness of art to intervene in reality, including in politics. Creative indifference has this in common with Höch's idea that imagination, through art, is potentially

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<sup>62</sup> 'Um das Innere vom Außen präzise zu unterscheiden, charakterisiert man das Außen als Differenz, als Polarität, als Selbst-Entzweiung aus Überschwang des Innens, folglich das Innen als zentrale, indifferente, neutral Größe.'

transformative. The capacity to transform is found in work that is explicitly political and externally directed to social critique, as well as in work addressing notions of internal resistance and the creative use of unconscious processes.<sup>63</sup> Some of Höch's art and writing explicitly deals with external events, but her work also generates radical images through the processes of imagination. In formulating a concept of radical imagination that is enacted through art, Höch's project has some similarities to creative indifference. Moreover, her work demonstrably refers to some of the ideas that Friedländer addresses in *Schöpferische Indifferenz*, those of polarity, balance and infinity, as will be explored later in this chapter.

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<sup>63</sup> The importance of unconscious processes to radical imagination is developed in Chapters four and five.

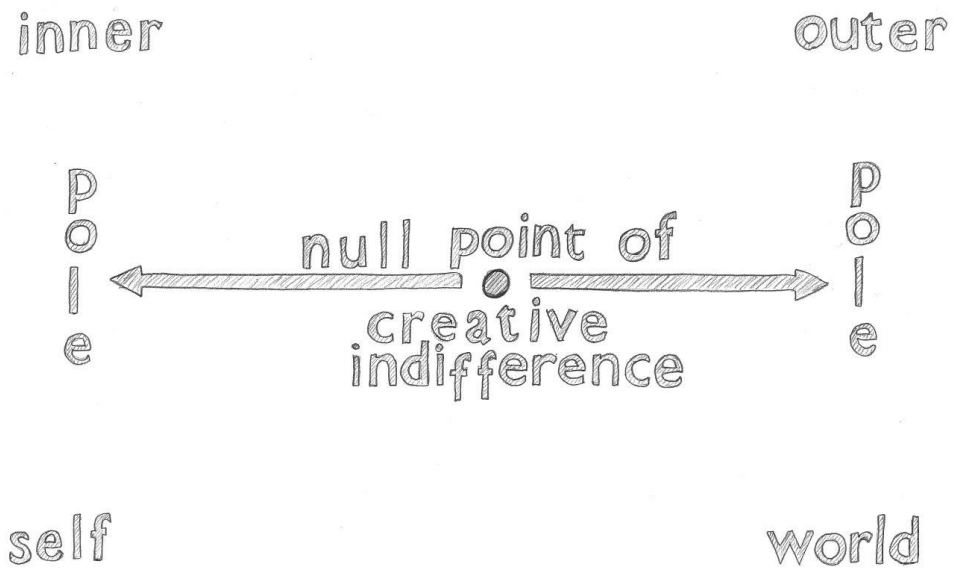


Figure 24. Creative indifference as the null point between polar opposites, bridging the difference between subjective and objective realms.

## Höch's metaphysical space

Höch's representation of space connects her engagement with Friedländer's theoretical work to her own and illuminates her ideas about imagination. To take a view about imagination requires that the issue of space perception be addressed. Space is discussed, for example, in Kant's transcendental aesthetic as different to geometric space. In Kant, space is a representation rather than an empirical reality (Kant, 1998b) [1781-1787]. The problem of space and its perception was topical during Höch's early life as an artist with the challenge to Euclidian space by Albert Einstein. Einstein's exposition of the theories of general and special relativity for the non-specialist reader begins with a discussion of geometry (Einstein, 1920). Geometry is relevant to the depiction of space in visual art and relates to a broader debate about space. Planes, points, and lines, are associated by Einstein with 'definite ideas', 'axioms' and 'propositions' (Einstein, 1920, p.2). In 1919, Höch exhibited *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands*, a photomontage that includes a photographic reproduction of Einstein. Earlier the same year, Einstein had become more famous after his theory of general relativity was confirmed by astrological observations during a solar eclipse (Einstein, 1920, pp.123–132, Appendix III). Höch's theorisation of imagination is underpinned by an understanding of reality as subjective, informed by Friedländer's ideas in particular. Her paintings and other visual works speak to, in Erwin Panofsky's sense, an understanding of 'the external world, as an extension of the domain of the self' (Panofsky, 1991, p.68). The argument here is that Höch's treatment of space implies a philosophical and a political position. Additionally, the philosophical influences on Höch's approach to space suggest a particular conceptualisation of imagination, which is consistent with her depiction of space. Höch's visual articulation of space can be understood therefore as a key method through which she elaborates her thinking about imagination.

Höch's ideas about reality in relation to the role of art are set out in the gallery text *Fantastische Kunst*, 1946, ('Fantastic Art').<sup>64</sup> The assumption here is that Höch's theorisation of reality and imagination in *Fantastische Kunst*, a text specifically intended to provide insight into her art's purpose, can be expected to correlate with the theorisation of reality and imagination in her art, and this should also be seen in her treatment of space. Space is represented in art in ways associated with deliberate choices of pictorial construction, according to ideas about space and by extension,

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<sup>64</sup> *Fantastische Kunst* is reproduced in full in Appendix 3.



reality and imagination. Like imagination, the depiction of space in art has a history. Panofsky wrote about different types of perspective as being meaningful in *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, 1924 (Panofsky, 1991). Panofsky writes that although perspective is subject to mathematical rules, these rules refer to the psychological and subjectively human point-of-view:

Thus the history of perspective may be understood with equal justice as a triumph of the distancing and objectifying sense of the real, and as a triumph of the distance-denying human struggle for control; it is as much a consolidation and systematization of the external world, as an extension of the domain of the self (Panofsky, 1991, p.67).

The ‘fully rational’, in Panofsky’s writing about perspective, is associated with an ‘infinite’ space (Panofsky, 1991, p.28). Panofsky challenges the idea that rationalised perspective is correct by drawing attention to some abstractions such as the idea of a single fixed eye when sight involves two moving eyes, and the idea that the renaissance window view of a flat two dimensional painting can be equivalent to the subjective perceptual image. He points out that perspectival systems in art are abstract mathematical versions of perspective and ‘quite unlike the structure of psychophysiological space’ which does not include the mathematical concept of infinity (Panofsky, 1991, p.30). He further argues that the way perspective has been constructed has changed through time, and makes a pertinent observation about the effect of the treatment of space in antique art: ‘as soon as space is included in the representation, above all in landscape painting, that world becomes curiously unreal and inconsistent, like a dream or a mirage’ (Panofsky, 1991, p.42). The way Höch represents space is likely connected to her criticism of a rationalised view in *Fantastische Kunst*. The question here, then, is how does the depiction of space in Höch’s work position her ideas in relation to subjective experience and reality, and by extension to representations, appearances and a radical imagination?

In *Fantastische Kunst*, Höch sets out a transformative, complex and dynamic relationship between the image and its apprehension as part of an understanding of reality (Höch, 2008) [1946]. This is a gallery text written for a group show in which she showed paintings alongside Surrealist artists.<sup>65</sup> It therefore provides insight into how her ideas are integrated within her practice. *Fantastische Kunst* was written for a show called *Fantasten-Ausstellung* (Dreamers/visionaries-exhibition) at the Galerie Gerd

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<sup>65</sup> These were Stephen Anderson, Hans Thiemann, Hans Uhlmann, Max Zimmerman and Heinz Trökes (Sawelson-Gorse, 1998, p.642).

Rosen in Berlin. In *Fantastische Kunst*, Höch identifies art as concerning things beyond the real. She repeats an emphasis found in other statements about her art having a role, which she associates with a philosophy of reality. This is explored through the spatial metaphor of the abyss, contrasting what she terms ‘fantastic art’ with an art that gives the false appearance that the world is fully-rationalised. Höch includes Cubism, Expressionism, abstract art and Surrealism within the umbrella of fantastic art. She describes fantastic art as being the characteristic expression of art in the first half of the twentieth century. It is an art ‘higher than reality’ or supra-reality (Höch, 2008, p.14) [1946].<sup>66</sup> Her gallery text sets out the idea of art having a task, the discovery of which is ‘one of the great spiritual events of our time’ (Höch, 2008, p.12) [1946].<sup>67</sup> Art itself is not the great spiritual event, although art is, for Höch, the source of a richness of ideas beyond compare; neither is its discovery the great event, but the discovery of its task. In 1946, Höch was writing in defence of modern art following the years of National Socialist control. She writes in *Lebensüberblick* (‘Life-overview’), an unpublished manuscript from 1958, that in the period from 1942:

Art, painting, literature, music, the one imaginativeness beyond compare, had vegetated in a macabre wasteland. Architecture in Germany developed in a bombastic style. We were hermetically sealed from what was happening outside of Hitler’s influence and only the illusionary world of National Socialism raced noisily around us against its doom (Höch, 1989d, p.199) [1958].<sup>68</sup>

There is the suggestion here therefore of a refreshed purpose in Höch’s work following the end of the Second World War, and a reapplication of radical imagination, with Höch asserting its continued relevance in a changed context.

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<sup>66</sup> ‘Eine Kunst über dem Realen.’

<sup>67</sup> ‘eins der großen geistigen Ereignisse unserer Zeit’

<sup>68</sup> Published in Moortgat and Thater-Schultz, Hannah Höch 1889-1978: ihr Werke, ihr Leben, ihre Freunde 1989, pp.195-219.

‘Die Künste, Malerei, Schriftstellerei, die Musik, die einen Ideenreichtum sondergleichen aufgeworfen hatten, vegetierten in makabrer Öde. Die Architektur wurde in Deutschland in bombastischem Stil ausgebaut. Von dem, was sich außerhalb des Hitlermachtbereichs abspielte, waren wir hermetische abgeschlossen, und nur die Scheinwelt des Nationalsozialismus raste geräuschvoll um uns, dem Verhängnis entgegen.’

*Fantastische Kunst* points to a divide between the real world and the idea. Höch compares the previous reality to ‘an ideal image of a new thoroughly rationalised world’ (Höch, 2008, p.12) [1946].<sup>69</sup> She creates a strong visual image of an abyss between the idea and the real world, with the ideal image rising far above as the previous reality lies smashed on the ground. Furthermore, the abyss is of hitherto unknown dimensions. Höch describes it as ‘loaded with tragic, grotesque, destructive tensions’ (Höch, 2008, p.11) [1946].<sup>70</sup> In describing a chasm between the idea and the real world Höch echoes the problem of an imagination trapped in a transcendental aesthetic, and thereby unable to interact with the phenomenal. *Fantastische Kunst* is a rejection of a transcendently ideal reality. The opposition involved also correlates with ideas of polarity. Friedländer criticised Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* as evading the issue of the relationship between humanity and the infinite, because of the implication that follows from Kant’s inference of the universal morality of a God as moral designer (Taylor, 1990a). Höch also appears to involve a critique of Kant in *Fantastische Kunst* by placing fantastic art among ‘the ruins of a departed world and a god-related reason’ (Höch, 2008, p.14) [1946].<sup>71</sup> The term used by Höch is ‘gottbezogen Vernunft’, which I have understood as reason or rationality related to or obtained from God. In another possible reference to the metaphysical debate, Höch describes fantastic art as bringing the fantastic into the thing itself, or bringing the fantastic back into things. This may refer to the potential elimination of the difficult gap between an imagination of appearances and a phenomenal world in which concrete action can take place. It suggests instead that appearances and things have a relationship in which one can affect the other. The image of ruins and of a previous reality smashed on the ground gives a sense of history Höch’s ideas. At the same time, however, Höch twice suggests an eternal or timeless quality to fantastic art. She writes that it has always existed and it has an ‘eternal task’ which is to regulate the difference between the target of a fully-

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<sup>69</sup> ‘das Idealbild einer neuen, einer durchrationalisierten Welt’. The abyss might also refer to the ancient Greek idea of primeval chaos and the division of darkness and light in ancient Greek creation beliefs.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Noch nie war dieser Abgrund so geladen mit tragischen, grotesken, zerstörerischen Spannungen.’

<sup>71</sup> ‘Dieser Kunst ist Anruf und Aufruf zwischen den Ruinen einer dahingegangenen Welt und gottbezogener Vernunft.’

rationalised reality and its achievement (Höch, 2008, p.12) [1946].<sup>72</sup> It is thus a form of calibration of our engagement with reality. The idea of a fully-rationalised reality is treated dismissively in *Fantastische Kunst*. The world will never be completely rationalised according to Höch. She uses the term ‘Ostrich-art’ for art pretending that the full rationalisation of the world has already been achieved (Höch, 2008, p.14) [1946].<sup>73</sup> In her use of a spatial image, the abyss, with its inclusion of the vertical plane in the description of the ideal image rising high above, and the repeated references to both time and timelessness, Höch incorporates both space and time within her metaphysical aesthetic.

There are other examples of Höch’s incorporation of metaphysical ideas of space in her art. She discusses her painting in relation to de Chirico and *pittura metafisica* in an interview with Roditi in 1959 (Höch, 1959b). Höch said her work in 1917 was ‘already to some extent surrealist and also had something in common with a few of those puzzling paintings of Giorgio De Chirico’ (Höch, 1959b, p.71). She confirmed that by this she meant those of de Chirico’s *pittura metafisica* period (Höch, 1959b, p.71). Roditi describes her work as having ‘the same agoraphobic effect as in some of the metaphysical landscapes of Chirico and Carrà’ (Höch, 1959b, p.71). The *pittura metafisica*, or *scuola metafisica*, is a supernatural approach to representing a reality of the unconscious, characterised by an unreal or haunting visual quality. The sharp contours and dreamlike perspective in *pittura metafisica* influenced *Die Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) and later Surrealism. For example, *L’Incertitude de poète* (‘The Uncertainty of the Poet’), 1913, Figure 25, uses a dream-like distorted perspective. A similarly haunting, psychological space is found in *Bürgerliches Brautpaar* (‘Bourgeois Wedding Couple’), 1920, Figure 26, which contains distorted perspectival space with a smooth and tilted ground plane, overlooked and described by an architecture with arches. The presentation of space is similar to that found in de Chirico. Both also contain a white torso; in de Chirico this is a classical sculpture or cast with missing limbs and head, whereas in Höch it is a tailor’s dummy. The classical arch is also found in *Rom (Zu Fuß in die Heilige Stadt)* (‘Rome [To set foot in the Holy City]’), 1921, Figure 27. Importantly, Höch accepts Roditi’s use of the term ‘metaphysical’ to describe and explain her art, specifically in relation to *ER und Sein*

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<sup>72</sup> ‘Die immerwährende Aufgabe solcher Kunst entdeckt zu haben, ist eins der großen geistigen Ereignisse unserer Zeit’

<sup>73</sup> ‘Vogel Strauß-Kunst’

*Milieu* ('HE and His Milieu'), 1919, Figure 28, and *Mechanischer Garten*, ('Mechanical Garden'), Figure 29. In *Roma* ('Rome'), 1925, Figure 30, there are further echoes of the *pittura metafisica* style, involving the fictional space of an altered perspective. Two strange landscapes are included in *Roma*, including one that one merges into the flat orange ground and into two-dimensions. Spatial expectations are confounded in *Roma* by the overlap between the road, with its projection point and figures disappearing into the distance, and a second landscape simultaneously 'over' the orange layer and 'under' the pointing arm. This illusion also involves the idea of multi-stability where it is impossible to fix on one visual understanding or another. The street curves round behind the flat orange layer but then cut out edges sit on top of the orange ground.<sup>74</sup> *Roma*, as with *Rom*, differs from the de Chirico example in that it also fragments space, incorporating the practice of montage, a prominent feature of avant-garde film, and demonstrated in the practice of photomontage, the development of which Höch is closely associated.<sup>75</sup> In an example of the overdetermination of meaning in her work, Höch connects her representation of space and the ideas represented in that way, ideas of montage through her combined use of different approaches. The principle of overdetermination is also found in relation to the symbolism in her work. Within any individual work can often be found many possible interpretations and multiple references to ideas and issues, all adding to the richness and complexity.

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<sup>74</sup> The gestalt principle of multi-stability is discussed in relation to creative indifference and Höch's work in the following section.

<sup>75</sup> Höch's showed an interest in the form of montage beyond photomontage, such as in modernist and experimental avant-garde film. Her possessions included a ticket for the fifth matinee of Eisenstein's first film, *Stachka*, 1925 ('Strike') at the Hague Film League (Filmliga) which showed avant-garde European film and films from the Soviet Union (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.325). Montage is discussed in more detail in Chapter three.

Figure 25.

Figure 26.

Figure 27.



Figure 28.

Figure 29.

Figure 30.

## Creative indifference, gestalt and space

When Höch refers to Friedländer it is to specific ideas, some of which relate to space: those of polarity, infinity and balance. References to these ideas appear as direct quotations, through symbols (such as the use of the infinity symbol) or visually, as with balance.

### Polarity

Höch's proverb from Nietzsche in *Meine Haussprüche* (Figure 19) is from *Ecce Homo*, 1908: 'Acoustic fallacy, that, where nothing is heard, nothing is there . . .'.<sup>76</sup> She also paraphrases Friedländer, from his biography of Nietzsche, *Friedrich Nietzsche: Eine Intellektuale Biographie* (Friedländer, 2009a) [1911]: 'Does a person also bring a star-like status into their morality?' It is through the idea of polarity that Friedländer overcomes problems of aggression associated with the will to power in Nietzsche, so that, for example, good and evil are neutralised through being part of the same instinct. Polarity in creative indifference is a complex system including matter, spirit and self. The use of figure and ground in Höch's visual work, such as in her silhouette collages or in many examples of her photomontage can be understood as a visual reference to the idea of polarity. It will be seen later in this chapter that creative indifference has been understood spatially in relation to the idea of figure and ground in Perls' gestalt therapy. Maurer also summarises Friedländer's ideas in a spatial way:

For Friedländer it is the exciting response relationship between entities and bodies in the foreground that are undergoing a constant operation of attraction and repulsion and gain by differentiation of shape (Maurer, 1995, p.190).<sup>77</sup>

This operation of attraction and repulsion between bodies recalls the dynamic encounter produced by Höch's work when the viewer's attention shifts between elements.

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<sup>76</sup> In *Meine Haussprüche*: 'Akustische Täuschung, dass, wo nichts gehört wird, auch Nichts da ist . . .'. In *Ecce Homo (Why I Write Such Good Books)*: 'In this case simply nothing will be heard, with the acoustic illusion that where nothing is heard nothing is there, either...' (Nietzsche, 2009, p. 37) [1908].

<sup>77</sup> 'Für Friedländer steht die spannungsvolle Beziehung zwischen Gebilden und Körpern im Vordergrund, die in einem steten Anziehungs- und Abstoßungsvorgang begriffen sind und durch Differenzierung Gestalt gewinnen.'

## Infinity

A second key idea in creative indifference referred to by Höch in her work is infinity. Infinity is integral to Friedländer's idea of polarity. Friedländer was critical of Kant's transcendental aesthetic because he thought the existence of *a priori* universal ideas trapped humanity between the infinite and the phenomenal (Taylor, 1990a, p.123). Seth Taylor explains the relevance of the infinite to Friedländer:

All philosophy is concerned with the connection between mankind and what Friedländer termed "the infinite". No precise definition of the infinite follows; instead we learn that the infinite is the secret of our own being (Taylor, 1990a, p.122).

In *Schöpferische Indifferenz*, Friedländer uses the infinity symbol in passages where mathematics is the example of creative indifference:

The number is the most precise example for everything. The number is =  $\infty$ , an inexhaustible essence, which is also challenged by minus and plus (Friedländer, 2009b, pp.160–161) [1918].<sup>78</sup>

A reference to creative indifference appears in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* ('Cut with the Dada kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly cultural epoch of Germany'), 1919, (Figure 4). Here, one of Albert Einstein's eyes is replaced by the mathematical symbol for infinity, and in the middle of his forehead are the words 'S. Friedlaender: Der Waghalter der Welt' ('S. Friedlaender: The balance-keeper of the world').<sup>79</sup> By including a reference to Friedländer's early paper about polarity and balance and using the infinity symbol, Höch aligns herself to some extent with Friedländer's early philosophy of experience. This has political implications, firstly, because creative indifference is motivated by a desire for effective political change, and is related to a wider connection between aesthetic and social revolution by some Expressionists and Dadaists. Secondly, it is an ethical position because it returns responsibility to people, in contrast to idealist metaphysics in which morality and ethics are outside of humanity.

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<sup>78</sup> 'Die Zahl ist das präziseste Beispiel für alles. Die Zahl ist =  $\infty$ , ein unerschöpfliches Wesen, also von minus und plus bestritten.'

<sup>79</sup> This is the title of an article published in *Die Weissen Blätter: Eine Monatsschrift* in 1915, in which Friedländer sets out some ideas later published as *Schöpferische Indifferenz* (Friedländer, 1915).

## Gestalt

Polarity, infinity and balance can all be understood spatially and are connected to space and to creative indifference. Polarity and balance are important aspects of Perls's spatial interpretation of creative indifference in his development of gestalt therapy. Barrie Hinksman writes in detail about Friedländer's influence on Perls's gestalt therapy, making connections between gestalt therapy and Friedländer's writing where the balance point between polar opposites, such as good and evil, is a place of possibility 'without *a priori* commitments as to value or outcome' (Hinksman, 2002, p.110). Moreover, Hinksman argues that the polar oppositions undermine mind-body dualism and anticipate 'the binary oppositions of Derrida' (Hinksman, 2002, p.110). Perls names Friedländer in *Ego, Hunger and Aggression*, 1969, identifying Friedländer and Sigmund Freud as helpful to his study of academic philosophy and psychology:

In his book *Creative Indifference*, Friedlaender brings forward the theory that every event is related to a zero-point from which a differentiation into opposites takes place. These *opposites* show *in their specific context* a great affinity to each other. By remaining alert in the centre, we can acquire a creative ability of seeing both sides of an occurrence and completing an incomplete half (Perls, 1992, p.1-3) [1942].

Perls explains the concept of balance between both sides of the differentiation: 'It is by no means identical with an absolute zero-point, but will always have an aspect of balance' (Perls, 1992, p.9) [1942]. Perls then goes on to discuss differential thinking, or thinking in opposites as 'the quintessence of dialectics' (Perls, 1992, p.6) [1942]. He gives many examples, including mathematics and colour:

In the field of color one thinks of white in connection with black, rather than with green or pink. Day and night, warm and cold, in fact thousands of such opposites are coupled in everyday language (Perls, 1992, p.6) [1942].

Perls also points to the language of psychoanalysis where 'we find wishfulfillment/wish-frustration; sadism/masochism; conscious/unconscious; reality principle/pleasure principle, and so on' (Perls, 1992, p.6) [1942]. Perls observes that the oppositions of language often take the same root. He writes that Freud found that 'an element in the manifest or remembered dream which admits of an opposite may stand for itself, for its opposite or for both together' (Perls, 1992, p.7) [1942]. Opposites, as will be discussed in Chapter four, are frequently found in Höch's work,

and can be understood in relation to ideas of polarity from creative indifference and Nietzsche, as well as to psychoanalysis.<sup>80</sup>

Perls's gestalt therapy needs to be distinguished from the gestalt psychology of perception. Gestalt psychology predates both *Schöpferische Indifferenz* and gestalt therapy. Max Wertheimer's Gestalt theory was based on the observation of a stroboscope creating an illusion of movement through a sequence of individual events. The whole experience of movement is what is seen, not each individual part. Gestalt psychology, developed by Wertheimer with Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka in the early twentieth century sets out a series of perceptual principles, including the figure-ground principle in which aspects of the same image are perceived as either foreground or background. Perl's Gestalt therapy was developed after the Second World War and his writing about Friedländer was published in 1947. However, figure and ground is discussed by Perls and this can also be related to the spatial sense in Höch's work of before and behind, and to the balance and wholeness that is characteristic of her work. According to Taylor, creative indifference involves an awareness that 'we are all, in reality, part of a much larger whole' (Taylor, 1990a, p.124). Perl's interpretation of Friedländer in gestalt therapy is spatial. Ludwig Frambach argues it was through his reading of Friedländer that Perls took on the figure-ground concept in gestalt psychology, saying that: 'it is not hard to comprehend foreground and background as the poles of polarity just as we perceive *before* and *behind*. They are structurally analogous to Friedländer's polar differentiation' (Frambach, 2003, p.112). The spaces 'before' and 'behind' are the polar differentiation with a central plane, which is the indifference.

The importance of gestalt perceptual issues to Höch's work is evidenced by frequency with which they are found in her work. Examples include: grouping, pattern, emergence, multi-stability, proximity, similarity, symmetry, continuity and overlap. Their frequent use suggests an understanding by Höch's of gestalt aesthetic ideas. For example, in *Indische Tänzerin* ('Indian Dancer'), 1930, Figure 31, a mask overlaps a face. Whether or not the mask actually overlaps the face, it is read as 'in front', with the viewer responsible for imagining the hidden parts. A similar structure can be found in

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<sup>80</sup> In the Freudian unconscious there is no 'no': The unconscious 'does not believe in its own death; it behaves as if it were immortal. What we call our 'unconscious' – the deepest strata of our minds, made up of instinctual impulses – knows nothing that is negative, and no negation; in it contradictories coincide' (Freud, 1957b, p.296) [1915].

much of Höch's work, often with imbalance and asymmetry in the two dimensional plane, and an ambivalent instability in the appearance of three dimensional space, with different elements fluctuating between prominence and recession. In *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands*, separate cut-out forms are grouped into areas; for example, crowds and Dadaists can be found in distinct groups within the overall composition. The mechanical objects, cogs, wheels, and bearings, are spread over a wide area, with different forms interrupting and overlapping, but they can, nevertheless, be read as a group because with their similar shape they are picked out and perceptually collected. There is a conceptual link between some elements. For example, we understand crowds rather than individual figures. The gestalt principle of visual organisation into patterns is used by placing visually similar forms in close proximity. In an example of the principle of continuity, the 'D' in 'Dadaisten' is read as continuous, even though it is overlapped by a figure, because of the perceptual tendency to read objects as uninterrupted, continuous and complete. The spear is understood to pierce the disembodied head of Käthe Kollwitz because it is read as continuous. Although separated from the dancing body below, the speared head is perceptually associated with the body, because the gestalt tendency is to re-unite separate parts into a whole. The forms that emerge in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* are conglomerate, spatial entities rupturing the surface. This effect is irrespective of the individual detail of each piece of paper, and is produced by the organisation of shapes, tones and colours together. While the relative tonal values have changed with time due to the yellowing of paper or fading of ink, the principle remains that dark colours recede and features such as overlaps or relative size create spatial illusions. Similarly, warmer colours appear to advance, whereas cooler colours recede. While Höch's space not conventionally constructed, this does not remove the tendency for the viewer to read it spatially.

The perceptual principle of overlap applies to Höch just as it does to Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* cartoon, Figure 32, or to Giovanni Bellini's *Dead Christ Supported by the Madonna and St John (Pietà)*, 1460, Figure 33. In Schulz, Snoopy's hand overlaps the roof of his house, which places him in space; the hand of the central figure in Bellini's *Dead Christ Supported by the Madonna and St John (Pietà)* overlaps the foreground wall device, again placing the group of interlocking figures in space. Both artists indicate deep space as a separate layer and concentrate action close to the picture plane using a physical object to situate the figures, such as the wall or, in Schulz, often a doghouse, piano or other object. Both Bellini and Schultz use features of space perception to construct a



subjective account of space as opposed to single point perspective. It is the collaged nature of paintings like Giovanni Bellini's *Dead Christ Supported by the Madonna and St John (Pietà)*, with its incisive outlines giving it a striking sense of depth and space. Höch's collages and paintings similarly use this collage effect to create depth. This is a deliberate perceptual effect perpetrated on the viewer. Although the visual space created in Höch's work is often not as ordered as the examples of Bellini and Schulz, with no clear procession of layers into the foreground to suggest a rational construction, the articulation of space is nevertheless part of the effect of her work.

Höch's photomontages often include the shapes left behind after cutting out. In *Die Sängerin* ('The Singer'), 1926, Figure 34, this idea is simulated to suggest shadows, giving the appearance that the figures of the singer and the piano have been cut whole from the background. On closer inspection it can be seen that the shapes do not match, and that this is a deliberate visual effect. The faking of the cut-out shape is in order to support the idea that these figures were found whole rather than collected from different sources and reassembled. The viewers' understanding of the process of photomontage is thus used to confound their expectations. It is an invitation to imagine 'as if' these figures had been cut whole from a photograph. The assumption of veracity associated with photography lends further weight to the suspension of disbelief. The borders in *Die Sängerin* acknowledge the fiction of presentation, allowing the viewer to enter the imaginary world of the photomontage. They also enclose and limit the ground against the figure, giving it placement and an outline as well as an imaginary world to exist within. The use of remnants and cut-out shapes is found in other works such as *Entartet* ('Degenerate'), 1969, Figure 35, where a dragonfly's head, body and wings are removed and replaced in another area of the same photomontage, leaving behind the space they had been cut from, against a black background. In *Industriellandschaft* ('Industrial Landscape'), 1967, Figure 36, and *Klebezeichnung II* (Glued drawing II), 1955, Figure 37, Höch breaks up the whole and removes or destroys its meaning, but then reassembles it, demonstrating that by separation the parts can become estranged but can create a new whole.

Figure 31.

Figure 32.

Figure 33.

Figure 34.

Figure 35.

Figure 36.

Figure 37.



## Subjectivity, symbolism and space

In 1931 Höch took part in an exhibition in Berlin organised by Kollwitz in support of women's reproductive rights, including the direct demand to repeal Paragraph 218, the law criminalising abortion (Lavin, 1998, p.331). Höch's participation in Kollwitz's exhibition is explicitly political in terms of the demand for a change in the law. Her treatment of the subject of birth began in the decade before this exhibition. She made a series of watercolour paintings dealing with birth from 1921-1931, all of which use a subjective construction of space. Höch's produced the birth paintings during a period in which lurid and objectifying depictions of the sexually motivated murder of women proliferated in painting and visual culture, and they counters these.<sup>81</sup> There is therefore a coincidence between an explicitly political exhibition, Höch's prior treatment of the subject, and her representation of space in these works. Given the views expressed in her later publication of *Fantastische Kunst*, it is possible that Höch associates some of the conventions of linear perspective with the rationalised worldview that she rejected in that text (Höch, 2008) [1946].

The elevated viewing position in *Die Geburt* ("The Birth"), c1925, Figure 38, suggests an imaginatively constructed space, rather than a mathematical abstraction. *Die Geburt*, 1925, employs a higher than naturalistic viewpoint creating a sense of floating unreality. It also connects the viewer with the woman in the bed rather than placing them as a spectator. The floor around the bed is visible, as is the surface of the bed itself, which is tilted towards the picture plane. The tilting of the room changes the dimensions of the space, making it more compact and closer to the viewer. It also allows the viewer to be shown details that would be otherwise unseen, prioritising narrative. Something similar is seen in Vincent Van Gogh's *La chambre de Van Gogh à Arles* (Van Gogh's Bedroom in Arles), 1889, Figure 39, in which Van Gogh's bedroom is painted in a way that displays all of the contents by tilting the perspective of the room. Van Gogh was influenced by Japanese prints; the perspective he adopts is more reminiscent of the type of spatial construction found in Japanese art than of the European academic tradition. Höch was familiar with African art, for example, through Carl Einstein's *Negerplastik*, 1915. Höch also made more detached and stylistic depictions of birth, creating psychological distance. In these more detached paintings, both the women and the newborn baby are relatively expressionless, compared to the

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<sup>81</sup> Numerous examples include Grosz's *Frauenmörder*, 1918; Otto Dix's *Der Lustmörder (Selbstporträt)*, 1918; and Rudolf Schlichter, *Lustmord*, 1924.

more dynamic composition in *Die Geburt*, 1925, where the mother grips the bed and arches her neck. Her placement at a diagonal is also suggestive of movement. In *Geburt*, ('Birth'), 1921, Figure 40, *Geburt*, ('Birth'), 1924, Figure 41, and *Die Geburt (klein)* ('The Birth [small]'), 1931, Figure 42, the main figure faces the picture plane with the midwife moved to the background. There is also an ink drawing, *Geburt*, ('Birth') 1925, Figure 43, in which the raised viewpoint is further pronounced. In this drawing, the woman giving birth is seen from above, while the person in the doorway is seen at eye level. There are therefore at least two different viewpoints, which would be irreconcilable within a conventional, mathematical perspectival construction of space using single point perspective. Combining viewpoints is found to a more exaggerated degree in the photomontages, *Fortgeschritten* ('Advanced'), c. 1958, Figure 44, and *New York*, 1921-22, Figure 45. Multiple viewpoints perhaps demonstrate that experience is shared, corresponding with Friedländer's idea that art can reduce distortions in perception by drawing attention to its subjectivity.

There is a further type of subjective space depiction in Höch's painting that directly addresses imagination and consciousness, through the experiences of dreams, visions and hallucinations. Paintings such as *Die Versuchung des heiligen Antonius* ('The temptation of Saint Anthony'), 1928 (Figure 10) refer to images generated in association with varying degrees of consciousness. As with the birth paintings, *Die Versuchung des heiligen Antonius* takes a slightly raised view rather than the more traditional single viewing point found in Western linear perspective. In the later oil painting, *Die Versuchung* (The Temptation) (Figure 11) the figure is beguiled and menaced by composite creatures, similar to those found in *Ewiger Kampf I* ('Eternal Struggle I'), 1924, Figure 46.<sup>82</sup> *Verführung* ('Temptation'), 1923, Figure 47, is painted almost in orthographic projection, with a limited sense of pictorial depth. In these paintings Höch visits the vivid imaginary world created by Saint Anthony in his dreams, hallucinations and visions. The spatial organisation appears to reflect issues dealt with in the story, which include, in Gustav Flaubert's version, descriptions of intense imagery, as well as grotesque and fantastic figures arising during the experience of sleep deprivation, dream, and visions. These paintings address whether the world exists as representation, or as Friedländer's creative indifference suggests, is both

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<sup>82</sup> This painting is discussed in relation to the grotesque and the composite image in Chapter three.

appearance and thing in a polar relationship in which the individual is the neutral centre of indifference.

Figure 38.

Figure 39.

Figure 40.

Figure 41.

Figure 42.



Figure 43.

Figure 44.

Figure 45.

Figure 46.

Figure 47.

## Symbolism and symbolic space

In many paintings Höch explicitly uses symbolic space or symbols for space. For example, she uses symbolic space in the *Symbolische Landschaft* ('Symbolic Landscape') series, illustrated here by *Symbolische Landschaft I*, ('Symbolic Landscape I'), 1924, Figure 48, and *Symbolische Landschaft III* ('Symbolic Landscape III'), 1924, Figure 49. Another example, *Kubus* ('Cube'), 1926, Figure 50, contains a rational platonic solid, the cube, which is surrounded by, and contains, other symbols. The cube could also refer to Euclidean geometric space, drawn using the circle as a base. *Die Spötter*, 1935 ('The Mockers'), Figure 51, recalls the *Symbolische Landschaft* series. It includes similarly solid and sharp edged curves of colour. Like the *Geburt* series it contains multiple horizons. A solemn, gowned, balding and shoeless figure, surrounded by water, stands on what appears to be a long path with a vanishing point high on the left. The crowd, separated from the water, stand on a different surface with a different horizon vanishing slightly lower to the right. The perspectival anomalies include a curved horizon that expands the angle of view, so that narrative takes priority over a rationalised pictorial space. The viewer is also slightly elevated, looking down on the hats of some of the figures. The impression of height is further reinforced by the high horizon. There are at least two separate spatial constructions within the painting with the main figure existing in a separate space to people who are taunting him. It is as if they are in front of a cinema screen, or perhaps that they have each created their own psychological space that distorts the whole. Höch's symbolic depiction of space and use of symbols for space raises the question of how these can be interpreted in relation to her understanding of imagination. Höch often includes elements of symbolism in her work, for example, the religious figures in *Rom* (Figure 27). She told Suzanne Pagé that her cloth puppets, Figure 52, are 'naturally, a symbol for people' (Höch, 1976, p.28). She expands further that they have probably always played this role in art (Höch, 1976, p.28).<sup>83</sup> Höch then elaborates that she has used puppets in other works, such as in *ER und Sein Milieu* (Figure 28) indicating that nature is symbolised in this painting by plants, and culture by important buildings (Höch, 1976, p.28). The symbol of the puppet is used in other works, such as in *Die Puppe Balsamine* ('The Yellow Balsam Puppet'), 1927, Figure 53. The use of symbolism is shared by different types of mental imagery, imagination and culture. Freud writes:

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<sup>83</sup> 'natürlich ein Symbol für den Menschen und hat, in irgend einer Form, wohl zu allen Zeiten ein Rolle in der Kunst gespielt.'

symbolism is not peculiar to dreams, but is characteristic of unconscious ideation, in particular among the people, and it is to be found in folklore, and in popular myths, legends, linguistic idioms, proverbial wisdom and current jokes, to a more complete extent than in dreams (Freud, 1953b, p.351) [1900-1901].

Just as the puppet symbol adds different meanings, such as those of control, embodiment or inanimateness, and brings connotations of theatre and ventriloquism, Höch's symbolic use of space has meaning. Similarly, just as Höch uses different ways to represent the idea of people, for example using the puppet symbol or by using photographs of crowds in her photomontage, in her use of different symbols for space, symbolic representation of space, Höch opens different and un-exclusive possible meanings.

Other paintings, such as *Auf dem Weg* ('Along the Way'), 1942, Figure 54, and *Der Weg* ('The Path'), 1927, Figure 55, are more diagrammatic in their placing of symbolic elements within a visual scheme. In *Auf dem Weg*, the movement of ideas is indicated by the direction of travel of figures within an imagined geography. Orthographic projection is mixed with areas of single point projection. The painting includes symbols for gravestones and coffins, and the ghostly presence of clothed figures with skulls.<sup>84</sup> These figures recede toward the horizon, suggesting perhaps a transcendental journey's end as they are situated in a space with a vanishing point, which is a symbol for infinity. The treatment of space, including both linear perspective and a narrative, temporal sequence with figures passing left to right, and then, below, from right to left is mixed. Overall the space within the painting is constructed within a flat plane on which sequential symbols are placed, similarly to writing. The painting follows the visual convention of text with figures standing on the line. In *Der Weg*, by comparison, there is more personal symbolism, with figures that can be recognised from other paintings by Höch. In *Der Weg* the depiction of space is naturalistic in the sense that the figures are given plastic form. The journey by contrast appears more abstract, perhaps suggesting a journey through life, rather than suggesting actual journeys carried out in the context of war, as is suggested by *Auf dem Weg*. In both these paintings Höch creates a directional, diagrammatic and linguistic logic. Pictorial space in both paintings proposes a period of time, rather than a snap-shot moment as suggested by some of her photomontage. While the creation of pictorial space in both

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<sup>84</sup> There are other watercolour paintings from this period with similar use of symbols and imagery in Appendix 1.

*Auf der Weg* and *Der Weg* is different to that found in *Rom*, all contain symbolic visual language.

It is possible to interpret a narrative in *Der Weg* in which Höch moves through her life. The idea of ‘the path’ or ‘the way’ might reflect a Taoist outlook. Taoism, like creative indifference structures reality as a series of polar opposites. Taoism had been influential in Berlin Dada (Benson, 1987a, p.48). It was also familiar to Höch, Sheppard notes that Hausmann gave a German translation of the *Tao Te Ching* to Höch in 1916 (Sheppard, 2000, p.142). He argues that Dada can be divided metaphysically into roughly two groups. While both groups ‘subscribed in one way or another to the idea of subjectivity as balance amid conflicting opposites’, one group saw nature as chaotic and patternless, whereas the other he describes as ‘akin to a Westernized, secularized Taoism’ in which the world is chaotic and at the same time has a hidden pattern or order (Sheppard, 2000, pp.192–193). *Auf der Weg* and *Der Weg*, through their titles, perhaps refer to a Taoist concept of ‘the way’ Kristofer Schipper explains:

The first meaning of the character Tao is “way”: something underlying the change and transformation of all beings, the spontaneous process regulating the natural cycle of the universe. It is in this process, along this way, that the world as we see it, the creation of which we are an integral part, finds its unity (Schipper, 1993, p.3).

Sheppard is not referring to Friedländer’s creative indifference here, but the language in his analysis suggests there is some crossover between these different philosophies in their interpretation by Berlin Dadaists. Sheppard also points to differences between Dada and Taoism, including, for example, that in Dada the conflict of opposites is accepted rather than transcended (Sheppard, 2000, p.286). Both creative indifference and Taosim deal with the issue of opposites and, it is argued here, both Taoism and creative indifference are referred to by Höch through the visual language of space representation.

*Auf dem Weg* has the obviously available interpretation as a reflection on the events of the Second World War. The different possible metaphoric meanings of journey are additional to this. The spatial aspects of the representation can lead to additional or alternative interpretations, so that there is an over-determination of meaning. The idea of over-determination found in Freud’s writing about dream is useful here. Works of art are different to dreams because dreams are, in Freud’s view ‘not made with the intention of being understood’ (Freud, 1953b, p.341) [1900-1901]. But dreams are interpreted, and Freud argues that there are multiple possible meanings that can be attached to any element within a dream. Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand



Pontalis describe over-determination, in psychoanalysis, as due to the dreams and other manifestations of the unconscious being formed according to a plurality of causes (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.292) The idea of over-determination offers a potential insight into the possible interpretations that can arise from Höch's use of different spatial ideas and methods. When analysing Höch's work it may be possible to find a multiplicity of meanings, intersecting in multiple ways. Freud writes:

In interpreting any dream-element it is in general doubtful

(a) whether it is to be taken in a positive or negative sense (as an antithetic relation)

(b) whether it is to be interpreted historically (as a recollection)

(c) whether it is to be interpreted symbolically, or

(d) whether its interpretation is to depend on its wording (Freud, 1953b, p.341) [1900-1901].

Similarly, in considering the meaning of the construction of space in Höch's work, questions are raised such as, whether the reference to linear perspective in the lower right corner of *Auf Dem Weg* should be taken 'in a positive or negative sense' (Freud, 1953b, p.341) [1900-1901]. It could also be asked whether the subject of the painting is a subjective recollection or recreates historical events so that space is organised to correspond to memory or vision. Or perhaps the meaning includes the logical diagrammatic flow of elements connected here using the metaphor of a journey.

Figure 48.

Figure 49.

Figure 50.

Figure 51.

Figure 52.

Figure 53.

Figure 54.



Figure 55.

## Conclusion

The way that Höch conceives of space is important to how she might have conceptualised radical imagination because space is perceived, imagined and represented in art. Her depiction of space, together with the philosophical context and specifically the influence on her thought of Friedländer's concept of creative indifference, produces some inferences about her idea of imagination. The diverse approach to the representation of space by Höch suggests a visual discussion of space, and how it might operate. Höch's metaphysical aesthetic, positions her philosophically and politically, as does her theorisation of reality in relation to the role of art in the gallery text *Fantastische Kunst*. In creative indifference, appearances and things are not separate but equilibrated by the dynamic force at the centre of the self. Höch's representation of space shows that her concept of imagination is not an idealist one where morals are outside of humanity, but one that can inform ethical choices. It is subjective, but its subjectivity overcomes the inability of a transcendental imagination to act. The ineffectiveness of the noumenal is escaped leading to an imagination with material effect. Dada was critical of the idea of an aesthetic revolution alone, of individual spiritual change without concomitant political change, so Höch's notion of change involving the individual is complex. Individual subjectivity is changed by radical imagination, but this is in order to effect societal change. Friedländer, in his earlier writing, understood modern culture to be implicated in a distortion of the real. But the starting point for change is the individual because it is the undifferentiated self, free of distortion, who has to reach out to society. Creative indifference is thus empowering and facilitates change.

Höch often uses gestalt perceptual principles, particularly in her photomontage. It is difficult to conclude definitively that the principle of multi-stability is Höch carrying out the method of polarity in its spatial understanding. But if the conceptual context is considered, in combination with Höch's writing on reality in relation to her painting, and in addition to the numerous examples in her work, this conclusion has more support. Höch's tendency to bring theoretical ideas into her practice, from philosophy, sociology and psychoanalysis is an additional factor in support of such a conclusion.<sup>85</sup> Höch's work refers to ideas from *Schöpferische Indifferenz*, in particular the interrelated concepts of polarity, balance and infinity. Her use of the concept of polarity is developed from Goethe, Nietzsche and Friedländer into a set of

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<sup>85</sup> Höch's engagement with psychoanalytic theory is detailed in Chapter four.

methods, processes and content in her art. The fully rational is associated with infinite space, but in *Fantastische Kunst* Höch rejects the idea that the world will ever be fully rational. Rational space in Höch's work is often undermined through fragmentation, or by multiple horizons and viewpoints within the same work. When she refers to infinity through the use of a vanishing point it is often contradicted by alternatives such as a symbolic or diagrammatic depictions. Höch creates different types of subjective space. Her presentation of space uses perspectival conventions and departures from convention; she uses figure and ground relationships and symbolic and diagrammatic space. To these different approaches can be added – as will be see in the next chapter – the spatial use of printed text and language.

## Imagination and language

*(...) it is certain that the language of art can be understood only in the deepest relationship to the doctrine of signs (Benjamin, 1979b, p.122) [1916].*

This chapter argues that the interrelation of verbal or written language with the language of image is characteristic of Höch's work because in Höch's thinking, language and imagination both use the same, interrelated, sensory and perceptual processes. This thesis proposes that Höch's concept of radical imagination can be inferred from her work. Therefore, if Höch's work can be shown to demonstrate an intentional interrelation with language, this indicates that her concept of imagination is one in which imagination and language are interrelated. Following on from the previous chapter, situating Höch's concept of radical imagination within a particular metaphysical position, it is further argued Höch theorised a concept of radical imagination through her art that can be characterised as being underpinned by language. Höch's radical, transformative imagination shares the multisensory processes of language and similarly constructs realities through the connected modes of word and image. A more detailed examination will now be made of those mechanisms, to delineate the possible nature of relationships between Höch's radical imagination and language. Her use of printed text and writing can be accounted for within an overarching theme of a multisensory imagination. Language is not limited to writing or speech, however. Before turning to text and written language as it appears in Höch's work there are three further issues to be dealt with. The first is the idea of art itself as a language; this will be considered by reference to Walter Benjamin's writing on language and Höch's reference to an art that speaks, in a text written for two exhibitions of her work. There is some connection here to the argument in the previous chapter about space, because Höch describes an art that speaks using the topographic metaphor of the bridge. The second issue is that of representability in images, that is, how images produce meaning and represent abstract ideas visually, in comparison to written language. An example of such representability is found in jokes, which can be verbal or visual and which connect ideas. The combining of images in the grotesque is linked by Salomo Friedländer to a transformative project aimed at perception, and can also be understood in relation to metaphor and therefore to language.

## An art that speaks

In *On Language as Such and on the Language of Man*, 1928, Benjamin sets out an expanded idea of language to include ‘a language of music and of sculpture’. He writes:

Language in such contexts means the tendency inherent in the subjects concerned – technology, art, justice, or religion – toward the communication of mental meanings (Benjamin, 1979b, p.107) [1916].<sup>86</sup>

The languages of sculpture or painting are referred to by Benjamin as ‘nameless, nonacoustic languages, languages issuing from matter’ (Benjamin, 1979b, p.122) [1916]. He differentiates two spheres – one of the mental entity itself and one of the medium. Explaining further, Benjamin writes: ‘that which in a mental entity is communicable *is* its language’ (Benjamin, 1979b, p.109) [1916]. If the expressions ‘mental entity’ and ‘mental meaning’ are included in the complex of psychic processes that might be associated with imagination, this statement by Benjamin connects imagination with language. Paul Ricoeur considers imagination as having both a ‘quasi-optic aspect’ and a ‘quasi-verbal aspect’ (Ricoeur, 1978, p.149). He points to Gaston Bachelard’s *Poetics of Space*, 1957, to argue that the pictorial dimension of imagination is its second aspect, following the semantic aspect (Ricoeur, 1978, p.149). Höch links art and language in a text written in a catalogue for a solo exhibition in 1929, at Galerie de Bron in the Hague, in which she writes: ‘The more vitality, the fuller intuition and deeper empathy on which a work of art is based, the more strongly it will speak to us’ (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>87</sup> This is a text in which Höch explicitly refers to imagination (Fantasie), and it shares with Benjamin’s writing a combination of a communicating art together with some concept of mental activity. In Höch’s case this is ‘Fantasie’ and in Benjamin’s ‘geistiger Inhalt’ (Benjamin, 1955b, p.401) [1916].<sup>88</sup> Both terms pertain to the mind: they are concerned with thoughts, mental images and meanings. While there may be differences between imagination and mental content, they at least pitch their tents in the same field. In Höch’s text for the De Bron show

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<sup>86</sup> Quoted from *Einbahnstraße* (‘One-Way Street’), 1928, written 1916 (Benjamin, 1979c).

<sup>87</sup> ‘Je mehr Lebendigkeit, je stärkere Intuition und tiefere Einfühlung dem Kunstwerk zugrunde liegen, desto stärker wird es zu uns sprechen’

<sup>88</sup> ‘Sprache bedeutet in solchem Zusammenhang das auf Mitteilung geistiger Inhalt gerichtete Prinzip in den betreffenden Gegenständen: in Technik, Kunst, Justiz oder Religion’ (Benjamin, 1955b, p.401) [1916].

the ideas of a speaking art and imagination are connected to a wish for art to be a transformative force. Höch's art speaks with radical purpose. It is through her transformative imagination, with its empathy, intuition and life-force that art speaks most strongly.<sup>89</sup> The intended outcome is to transform perception, leading to the transformation of society. A triangulation between art, language and imagination underpins the rest of this chapter.<sup>90</sup>

Connections between Friedländer and Benjamin further suggest the potential relevance of Benjamin's ideas to an interpretation of Höch's project. Benjamin knew Friedländer and read his work: '[s]ince the days of the Neopathetisches Kabarret he had been acquainted with Benjamin, who frequently spoke of him in rather positive terms' (Scholem, 1982, p.46). Benjamin presented Gershom Scholem with Friedländer's *Schöpferische Indifferenz* ('Creative Indifference'), 'which he esteemed highly' (Scholem, 1982, p.101). Benjamin quotes from Friedländer: he includes a twelve line quotation from Friedländer in *Old Toys*, 1928, concluding that 'Mynona is probably right in his views of 1916' (Benjamin, 1999a, p.101) [1928]. Friedländer had argued that children are inclined to play happily at destructive pursuits involving weapons and murder (Benjamin, 1999a, p.101) [1928]. Anson Rabinbach highlights Benjamin's interest in and approval of Friedländer's review of Bloch's *Spirit of Utopia*, 1918 (Rabinbach, 2005, p.114). Friedländer criticised Bloch's book in a review in *Der Ziel* titled *Der Antichrist und Ernst Bloch* (Friedländer, 1920). Benjamin also refers to creative indifference in his writing. For example, in his review of Anja and Georg Mendelssohn's *Der Mensch in der Handschrift* (Man in His Handwriting), 1930, he discusses Mendelssohn's book in comparison to the 'abstruse arguments' of 'Klages' vitalism', which he sees as an antagonistic opposition, but one which is 'rich in possibilities' (Benjamin, 1999b, pp.132–133) [1928]. Creative indifference is suggested by Benjamin in response to this opposition, as a 'dynamic (nonmechanistic) compromise' (Benjamin, 1999b, p.132) [1928]:

such creative indifference can never of course be found in the golden middle way. It is an unceasingly renewed dialectical compromise; it is no geometric location, but the focal point of a process, the force field of a discharge (Benjamin, 1999b, p.133) [1928].

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<sup>89</sup> Empathy is discussed in Chapter five.

<sup>90</sup> 'Triangulation' is intended here as a navigational metaphor rather than in a methodological sense.

In *Politics of Creative Indifference*, 2011, Brendan Moran asks ‘What does all this have to do with politics?’ The politics identified is based on the discrediting of hierarchies and the challenging of complacency in relation to moral order (Moran, 2011). Moran connects the politics of Friedländer’s creative indifference to ‘such politics in Benjamin and in Agamben’ (Moran, 2011, p.308). He writes that Benjamin adopts the term ‘creative indifference’ in his writing about Kafka (Moran, 2011, p.313). Moran also notes that Benjamin uses the term ‘creative indifference’ in a 1926 review of a collection of letters from Vladimir Lenin to Maxim Gorki (Moran, 2011, p.313). There are three issues from Benjamin to be considered here in relation to Höch’s radical imagination; these are Benjamin’s concept of the dialectical image, his discussion of writing in relation to the body and, later in this chapter, the idea of the cross-section.

Benjamin puts forward the dialectical image as a way to change people’s perception for political ends, an intention comparable to Höch’s aims for her art. In *The Work of Art in The Age of its Mechanical Reproducibility*, 1936, Benjamin describes how perception is changed by the technologies of print, photography, and moving image. His discussion of changing perception is not a passive observation of the effects of modernity, for example through the decay of the aura, but is rather a proposition with political intent; the transformative agency of the dialectical image results from its commitment to the concrete and to visual thinking. The dialectical image appears in the *Arcades Project* (Buck-Morss, 1990, p.33). Benjamin writes: ‘—Only dialectical images are genuine images (that is, not archaic); and the place where one encounters them is language’ (Benjamin, 1999c, p.462). The difficulty in defining the dialectical image has been noted, for example, by Pensky who writes, ‘the *centrality* of dialectical images [...] is matched by the *obscurity* of the notion of dialectical images’ (Pensky, 2004, p.178). Pensky suggests that either the definition had not yet been formulated, or it was not intended as a doctrinal theory (Pensky, 2004, p.178). This leaves a concept referred to, while not being defined, but yet central to the *Arcades Project* (Pensky, 2004). Pensky nonetheless offers a two-fold account of the dialectical image: the dialectical image as a ‘*method* for the conduct of a new mode of critical materialist historiography, on the one hand, and the dialectical image as part of the description of a radically alternative conception of *time* and of historical experience, on the other’ (Pensky, 2004, p.179). Pensky points to the construction from the terms ‘dialectical’ and ‘image’ where dialectical refers to the Hegelian form of analysis and image ‘in terms of immediacy and singularity’ (Pensky, 2004, p.179). Susan Buck-Morss also associates the dialectical image with Georg Hegel, in an explanation echoing Friedländer’s creative indifference in its use of the ideas of polarity and a null point:

His unfolding of concepts in their “extremes” can be visualized as antithetical polarities of axes that cross each other, revealing a “dialectical image” at the null point (Buck-Morss, 1990, p.210).

Benjamin presents the geographical metaphor of a map and compass to explain the idea of the dialectical image. He defines it in relation to a concept of ‘[r]eal time’ and makes a comparison to magnetic north (Benjamin, 1999c, p.867). According to this analogy, Benjamin’s proposes a conceptual navigation: ‘What for others are deviations are, for me, the data which determine my course’ (Benjamin, 1999c, p.456). Buck-Morss develops the idea that Benjamin thought in terms of coordinates, plotting his thinking along axes:

He charts philosophical ideas visually within an unreconciled and transitory field of oppositions that can perhaps best be pictured in terms of coordinates of contradictory terms, the “synthesis” of which is not a movement towards resolution, but the point at which their axes intersect (Buck-Morss, 1990, p.210).

The idea of the dialectical image is illusive. Buck-Morss presents a diagram in which the dialectical image forms the midpoint of intersecting axes, one axis between waking and dream, the other between petrified and transitory nature (Buck-Morss, 1990, p.211).

There are complex sets of relations, oppositions and dependencies found in Benjamin’s thinking involving language, imagination, image and the body. These include a dialectical image described in terms of the metaphorical body as it navigates a conceptual or psychic landscape. There is also a pictorial relation of graphology to the body, not discounting also the literal connection between handwriting and the body – the body that writes. Benjamin notes the comparison the Mendelssohns make between the way children draw the ground as a line, with figures standing on it, and the way writing stands on the line, so letters can be translated into bodily elements such as legs, heads, eyes, mouths and hands (Benjamin, 1999b, p.133) [1928]. In his review of Mendelssohn’s *Der Mensch in der Handschrift*, he explains what he sees as the difference between the approach of Ludwig Klages and of Anja and Georg Mendelssohn:



Language has a body and the body has a language. (...) graphology is concerned with the bodily aspect of the language of handwriting and with the expressive aspect of the body of handwriting. Klages' starting point is language, expression. The Mendelssohns' is the body – that is to say the image (Benjamin, 1999b, p.133) [1928].<sup>91</sup>

Benjamin states that the difference between the two approaches under comparison (Klages's and the Mendelssohns') is 'rooted in the opposition of body [Leib] and language' (Benjamin, 1999b, p.133) [1928]. Language, imagination, image and body can be understood to form an interrelated system where different elements are connected and conceptually opposed or confronted by each other. Describing this in a diagram, Figure 56, creates some interesting consequences, such as the absence of an immediate relation between image and imagination. The connection between image and imagination appears to be mediated by language and the body.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> A note explains Ludwig Klages use of Nietzsche, Bergson and Bachofen is in support of the idea that 'an originary unity of soul and body has been destroyed by rational capacity' (Benjamin, 1999b, p.134 n.1) [1928].

<sup>92</sup> This diagram is further developed in the animation *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017 (Figure 215), documented in Appendix 6.

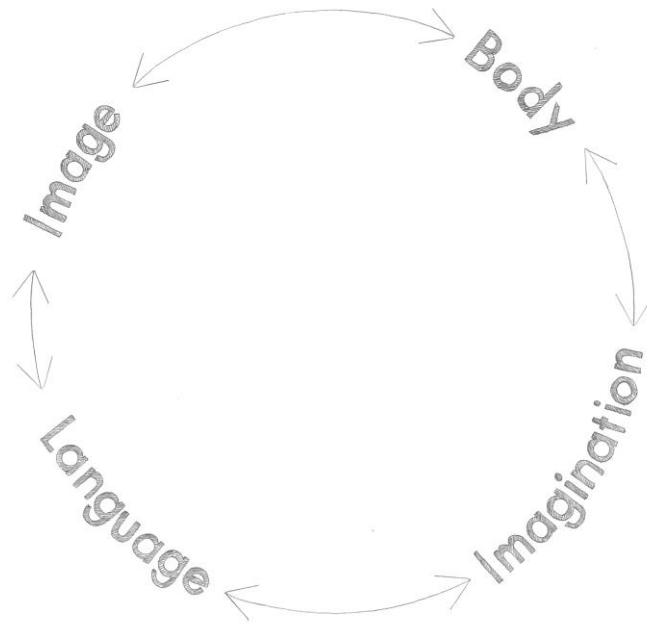


Figure 56. Relationships between concepts of language, imagination, image and body as suggested by Walter Benjamin's writing on language.

## Representability

Art shares with dream the use of pictorial language to represent abstract ideas. Sigmund Freud explains the term 'pictorial' as something '*capable of being represented*' (Freud, 1953b, p.340) [1900-1901]. In an interview with Eduoard Roditi, Höch describes *Mechanischer Garten* (Figure 29) using the expression 'nightmarish' (Höch, 1959b, p.71). She does not say it represents a nightmare but describes the language of the painting. It is the pictorial language that makes this work *nightmarish* or *dreamlike*. The use of pictorial language by Höch creates a potential difficulty, shared by dream, in conveying the conjunctions and arguments of verbal language. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900, Freud asks,

What representation do dreams provide for 'if', 'because', 'just as', 'although', 'either-or', and all the other conjunctions without which we cannot understand sentences or speeches (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900].

He continues that arts such as painting or sculpture labour 'under a similar limitation as compared to poetry, which can make use of speech' (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900]. One way that this limitation is overcome is through connections made in the dream between different elements through collocation, by temporal sequence or by simultaneity:

Here they are acting like the painter who, in a picture of the School of Athens or of Parnassus, represents in one group all the philosophers or all the poets. It is true that they were never in fact assembled in a single hall or on a single mountain-top; but they certainly form a group in the conceptual sense (Freud, 1953a, p.314) [1900].

In place of rhetorical conjunctions, dreams use other means to articulate ideas. Höch uses a similar process in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* (Figure 4) in which Dadaists are grouped together in the lower right of the photomontage in a conceptual grouping. Freud finds that different parts of the complicated structure of dream thoughts represent different elements:

They can represent foreground and background, digressions and illustrations, conditions, chains of evidence and counterarguments. When the whole mass of these dream-thoughts is brought under the pressure of the dream-work, and its elements are turned about, broken into fragments and jammed together—almost like pack ice—the question arises of what happens to the logical connections which have hitherto formed its framework (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900].

The description here of the process of dream-work using the image of compressed pack ice, having been built up in layers, but then subject to pressure, fragmented and distorted, echoes the outcome Höch's photomontage in which many modifications to image are made through distortion, omission, magnification, inversion and juxtaposition.

Jokes demonstrate a close relationship between word and image and share with dream the practice of using composite forms to change meanings, for example, by producing a substitute or by involving double meanings. Substitutions also often occur in Höch's work. For example, in *Die Stiefvaterchen* ("The Little Step-father"), 1932, Figure 57, a small watercolour painting of some pansies, or *Stiefmütterchen*, the visual component concerns a verbal relationship in language, between the name of the flower, the 'little step-mother' and its replacement by the phrase 'little step-father'. The substitution is made in the title and through the visual addition of beards, creating a visual pun through a chain of meaning which connects verbal references with visual representations. While *Die Stiefvaterchen* is an example where a direct chain of connections exists, it is also possible for connections to be indirect. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* such indirect connections are described in Freud's account of a dream called the 'Dream of the Botanical Monograph'. This dream involves an image of a monograph he had written about a plant. In the discussion of the dream, he remembers some incidental pieces of information from the previous day and finds connections between the content of the dream and the apparently meaningless experiences. He concludes that the dream was about something important to him, but dream-distortion, through constructing chains of meaning, had taken place. The image of the botanical monograph in Freud's dream is linked visually to conversations from the previous day. These conversations lead through a series of connections to the significant dream thought. Freud writes: "These must have been the intermediate links, arising from the botanical group of ideas, which formed the bridge between the two experiences of that day" (Freud, 1953a, pp.175–176) [1900]. Meaning in Höch's work can be indirect rather than, or in addition to, being literal.

In *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, Freud writes that a 'thought can in general be expressed in various linguistic forms—in various words, that is—which can represent it with equal aptness' (Freud, 1960b, p.16) [1905]. He exemplifies this with a diagram of text from two words, positioned together in a composite word. The result is an abbreviated and compressed version of the whole. He also gives an English example from De Quincy: 'old people are inclined to fall into their "anecdotage" '

(Freud, 1960b, pp.21–22) [1905]. This joke combines anecdote and dotage to create a composite form incorporating both ideas through the overlap ('do') between the two words. The composite abbreviates, creating a new form which is substituted for the originals. The process of substitution is also important to the meaning of dreams. Freud found 'that every dream deals with the dreamer himself' (Freud, 1953a, p.322) [1900]. His assumption was that where he did not himself appear in a dream, his ego was hidden behind another person, and where he did appear in the dream, some other person was concealed behind his ego (Freud, 1953a, p.323) [1900]. Freud compares jokes with the contrast between the manifest and latent content of dreams, as set out in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Whereas the manifest content of a dream can often appear strange, the latent dream thoughts from which it is derived are 'perfectly logical' (Freud, 1960b, p.28) [1905]. Psychical forces in dream transform the logical dream thoughts into an abbreviated version; jokes similarly create an abbreviated substitute (Freud, 1960b) [1905]. Furthermore, the composite structures produced in dream are often constructed from words. In Freud's writing about dream he sets out how transformations between a thought and its pictorial representation can be verbal, using words with ambiguous or multiple meanings to represent multiple thoughts, 'in this way the whole domain of verbal wit is put at the disposal of the dream-work' (Freud, 1953b, p.340) [1900-1901]. Condensation and displacement are closely related by Freud in his account of the dream-work (Freud, 1953a) [1900]. Condensation is the process through which dreams form a 'multiplicity of connections' by, for example, constructing collective and composite characters, and the development of intermediaries (Freud, 1953a, p.292) [1900]. Displacement is a related process, a form of distortion where an idea is passed on through a chain of association where one element is replaced by another and its meaning is shifted, for example onto a seemingly trivial element. In condensation points of connection are found, in displacement ideas are shifted along a chain of association (Freud, 1953a) [1900]. Jacques Lacan argues that condensation, in the construction of composite forms, is metaphor and displacement, through chains of association, is metonymy (Lacan, 1993, p221) [1956]. In Höch's work, pictorial language can be combined with verbal language, such as in *Die Stiefvaterchen*. In Höch's combining of pictorial and verbal language the effect is to reduce the distinction between visual and verbal modes of thought and its communication. It also creates, through the processes of substitution, an abbreviated version, which is overdetermined for meaning.

The use of humour in Höch's work may relate to her philosophical position with regards to reality. Höch identifies sarcasm as one in a list of ways to 'have contact with the world':

To this day I have tried, with these techniques, criticism, sarcasm, but also sadness and beauty, to express my ideas, as my way to have contact with the world (Höch in Thater-Schulz, 1989a, p.23).<sup>93</sup>

Höch possessed a copy of Henri Bergson's *Das Lachen*, in which the laughable is presented as a product of our sympathy with the comic character (Sheppard, 1979b, p.203 n.65). Bergson explains: 'By this is meant that we put ourselves for a very short time in his place, adopt his gestures, words and actions' (Bergson, 1913b, pp.194–5) [1900].<sup>94</sup> Bergson argues that in laughter we are detached from material, no longer 'in touch' with a material world of the senses (Bergson, 1913b, p.195) [1900]. Nevertheless, while detached from the 'intellectual tension' required to remain in touch with things we 'continue to perceive images, to break away from logic and yet continue to string together ideas' (Bergson, 1913b, pp.195–6) [1900]. Höch employs sarcasm in her short story *The Painter*, where she creates a caricature of an artist whose genius is thwarted by his wife's unreasonable demands for him to wash dishes (Höch, 2003) [1920]. The story is written from the painter's viewpoint but with heavy sarcasm, for example, when she writes that the main character wanted to keep the peace, 'because after all God had created the male to do just that' (Höch, 2003, p.322). Throughout the story Höch pokes fun at the main character. She describes him moved by 'a dark force', using his intellect and instincts with 'a certain complement of mysticism'. The painter 'began to think of himself as on a level with a redeemer – let's admit it, with Christ' (Höch, 2003, p.322) [1920]. After detailing his travails in trying to produce a painting of the female soul, the painter gives up and produces a painting of chives instead. However, on exhibiting the painting it catches the eye of the President of the

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<sup>93</sup> Quoted in *Hannah Höch 1889-1978: ihr Werke, ihr Leben, ihre Freunde* from the Geneva magazine *Skira Annuel*, January 1977: 'Bis zum heutigen Tage habe ich versucht, mit diesen Techniken mein Gedankengut, Kritik, Sarkasmus, aber auch Trauer und Schönheit zum Ausdruck zu bringen, auf meine Weise Kontakt mit der Welt zu haben'.

<sup>94</sup> *Das Lachen* was first published in French in 1900, as *Le Rire*, then translated into English as *Laughter: An essay on the meaning of the comic*, 1911, and then into German in 1914. It is quoted here from the second edition of the English translation, 1913 (Bergson, 1913) [1900].

Republic who declares that it represents the revolution. The painting is bought by the State and the painter tipped for a Nobel Prize (Höch, 2003, p.323) [1920].

Figure 57.



## The imaginary bridge

The gallery text in which Höch refers to an art that speaks, linking imagination and change, was written for a show that included the painting *Imaginäre Brücke* (Figure 7). This painting was exhibited for the first time at the Große Berliner Kunstausstellung in 1926 and was shown again at Höch's first solo show at Galerie de Bron in 1929 (Desmond and Lloyd, 1992). In this short piece of writing, published alongside her visual work, Höch associates her idea of imagination as a route to change with the spatial metaphor of the bridge. This is a text in which Höch sets out the idea of a transformative imagination in relation to her art. If art is considered, in agreement with Benjamin, as a language, then, in this gallery text, in making the connection between art and imagination, Höch also creates a conceptual link between language and imagination.

The gallery text in which Höch puts forward the idea of the imaginary bridge was revised for an exhibition in Berlin in 1949 at the Galerie Franz (Aliaga, 2004b, p.320 n.4). Höch uses the metaphor of a bridge in the revised version:

I am a human being; I can, however, by virtue of my fantasies, be a bridge. I wish to convey that what seems impossible is possible. I want to help people experience a much richer world, so that we can engage more benevolently with the world we know (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311).<sup>95</sup>

An earlier version for De Bron, published in Dutch and translated into German in *Hannah Höch: Eine Lebenscollage 1921-1945*, includes reference to imaginative vision (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.365).<sup>96</sup> Höch concludes the De Bron version: '[w]e have to confront the artwork without preconception, [...] (otherwise any ability to imagine is undermined)'.<sup>97</sup> She describes the creation of art as a 'the organic,

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<sup>95</sup> Translated in *Hannah Höch: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía* (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311). There is a note: 'Text produced from the catalogue of the show *Hannah Höch*, Galerie Franz, Berlin, 1949. Quoted by Götz Adriani in "Biografische Dokumentation" in *Hannah Höch. Collagen*, Institute für Auslandsbeziehungen, 1984, p. 52. The original version of this text was published in *Hannah Höch. Fotomontagen, Gemälde, Aquarellen*, Cologne, DuMont Buchverlag, 1980.' (Aliaga, 2004a, p.320 n.3).

<sup>96</sup> Both 1929 and 1949 versions are reproduced in Appendix 2.

<sup>97</sup> 'Wir müssen uns ohne Voreingenommenheit dem Kunstwerk gegenüberstellen, [...] (da sonst jedes Vorstellungsvermögen untergraben wird)'

independent life of a work' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>98</sup> Höch connects this to time, writing 'from that place is created the one thing that artists of our time want, for the ART OF OUR TIME' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>99</sup> This text is one of a small number of examples where Höch declares straightforwardly the aims of her art. In doing so she collates several issues relevant to a radical imagination that is both multisensory and inseparable from language. These are the idea that art speaks; the idea of a transformative imagination changing people's experience, and consequently their attitudes and behaviour towards the world; the idea that imaginative vision (Vorstellungsvermögen) is contingent upon a lack of preconceptions and habitual, unreflective bias; and the autonomy of the work together with the idea of its role.

Expressionist connotations of the bridge metaphor are of transcending or passing to higher states of being, and linking past and future. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Friedrich Nietzsche writes that the human is a bridge:

'The human is a rope, fastened between beast and Overhuman – a rope over an abyss.

'A dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and standing still.

'What is great in the human is that it is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in the human is that it is a *going-over* and a *going-under* (Nietzsche, 2005, p.13) [1883].

Expressionist connotations draw on the physical properties and uses of bridges as crossings that connect but also separate. The bridge metaphor is geographic in its reference to bodily position and topographical image, functioning as a map of thought. Höch's identification of herself as a bridge, through her imagination, is a metaphor inhabited by a body. The bridge metaphor has a two-fold connection to the body: firstly the body that moves through an imagined landscape and again, indirectly, in the suggestion of the inscribing hand in the graphical recording of a map. Writing and mapping both communicate an abstraction of mental content through pictorial means including symbols. The '-graphy' suffix in topography and geography relates to the graphically recordable. Just as writing is a graphic codification of language, maps are a graphic codification of space. The bridge is common in speech as a rhetorical

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<sup>98</sup> 'das organische, selständige Leben eines Werkes'

<sup>99</sup> 'auf daß Platz geschaffen wird für dasjenige, was die Künstler unserer Zeit wollen, für die KÜNST UNSERER ZEIT'

connector expressing connectivity and passage, often over something otherwise impassable, such as water. The idea of the bridge is therefore connected to image both through metaphor and symbol as well as to a graphical visual recording system, with distant links to writing. In Höch's creation of herself as the bridge, through her fantasies or 'imagination' she metaphorically embodies the role of radical imagination in altering the way others perceive. In written language, elements of a metaphorical landscape refer both to the body and to the graphical abstraction of concepts into pictorial representation and therefore to language itself. Höch's mental image of the bridge, communicated through written text, contains the diagrammatic, geographical qualities characteristic of a type of thinking which leads to (or from) language.

Höch's catalogue texts for De Bron and Galerie Franz include the geographic metaphors of blurring boundaries and the bridge (in the Galerie Franz version only). Höch writes she wants to 'wipe out the firm boundaries that we people have with misplaced certainty placed around everything that came within our reach' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>100</sup> Höch's text also stresses the importance of point-of-view in relation to the validity of concepts and laws:

I want to show that small can be great and great also small; only the standpoint which we assume to make our judgement is chosen differently ... and immediately any concept loses its validity and all our human laws cease to be valid. I want today to reflect the world from the perspective of an ant, and tomorrow as the Moon perhaps sees it (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>101</sup>

Taking a point-of-view is a positional, spatial way of thinking involving imagining different ways of seeing. The political importance of the idea of boundaries is clear. The bridge metaphor, as a spatial metaphor, also has much in common with other positional metaphors of attitude and direction relating to diagrammatic and relational understandings. There is a further connection between the body and attitudes: Paula Niedenthal argues that embodiment underlies social information, including attitudes

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<sup>100</sup> 'Ich möchte die festen Grenzen auswischen, die wir Menschen mit einer eigensinnigen Sicherheit um alles, was in unseren Bereich kam, gezogen haben.'

<sup>101</sup> The importance of point-of-view is also discussed in Chapter five, in relation to embodiment and scale and to Paul Schilder's discussion of body image.

'Ich will aufzeigen, daß klein auch groß sein kann und groß auch klein ist; allein der Standpunkt, von dem wir bei unserem Urteil ausgehen, muß anders gewählt werden... und sofort verliert jeder Begriff seine Gültigkeit und all unsere menschlichen Gesetze verlieren ihre Gültigkeit. Ich würde heute die Welt aus der Sicht einer Ameise wiedergeben und morgen so, wie der Mond sie vielleicht sieht.'

and emotion (Niedenthal et al., 2005). Niedenthal's study involves a discussion of examples of body positions and movements such as nodding the head or smiling, with different experienced affect. The term 'attitude' can relate to body posture as well as to point-of-view or perspective and as with the terms 'direction' and 'position' it uses the posture and location of the body as a metaphor for thought (Niedenthal et al., 2005). Throughout these gallery texts Höch draws on spatial metaphors emphasising position, direction, viewpoint and attitude. Höch's description of confronting the artwork is also a positional metaphor for her proposed approach to art.

## The grotesque

The grotesque form in modern German art is a development and extension of the historical use of the term in art for, originally, a grotto or cave but later meaning a type of art which created feelings of discomfort or disgust through, for example, using hybrid or monstrous forms. In the grotesque images are combined in unexpected ways to create new forms. In Friedländer's interpretation, the grotesque's action is in the sphere of sensation and perception. He argues that even the most intelligent people have more confidence in 'what they can see, hear, taste smell and feel' (Mynona, 1921, p.55). For Friedländer, the grotesque has a purpose, set out in *Grotesk*, 1921, to shock people out of their false assumptions and reveal what he saw as the real life (Mynona, 1921, p.55). The grotesque has to stand out from the usual pattern that people understand as beautiful, orderly and correctly proportioned, by being 'distorted, disfigured, dislocated, strange, abnormal' and 'ugly', in order to create contrast (Mynona, 1921, p.54).<sup>102</sup> Thomas Haakenson argues that Friedländer believed art contributed indirectly to social change by influencing imagination:

art's real contribution to social change could occur only at the level of cognitive reflection on the a priori limitations of perception: change could only occur insofar as art influenced the imagination and, indirectly, the subject's ability to question the norms and standards of perception (Haakenson, 2009, p.130).

Imagination, in Friedländer's philosophy, is not separate from sensation and experience. Friedländer found knowledge claims based on perception to incorrectly ignore the role of imagination and subjectivity in experience, as did naturalistic art: '[t]he passive consciousness is purely sensual, the active purely conceptual; between

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<sup>102</sup> 'verzerrt, entstellt, verrenkt, als seltsam, anormal, hässlich'

both mediates the imagination, and to every experience these three must work together' (Friedländer in Haakenson, 2009, p.128).<sup>103</sup> According to Friedländer people's minds are softened by habitual assumptions. The grotesque 'cures the softened mind with hardness, the sentimental by cynicism, the habitually stale by paradox' (Mynona, 1921, p.55).<sup>104</sup> It achieves this by exaggerating distortions to the point of impossibility. The 'grotesque humorist' produces an awareness in people of their own selves, which they had forgotten amidst the caricature of the real they perceive: 'He annoys and chokes the most ineradicable philistine in us' (Mynona, 1921, p.55).<sup>105</sup> The grotesque's task is therefore to reveal reality:

We laugh or weep at the distorted image of real life, whose undistorted original form we do not really know, but only suspect, feel, believe, love and hope (Mynona, 1921, p.55).<sup>106</sup>

The grotesque is a 'test-stone, which reveals how close or how remote one still is to the real with one's soul' (Mynona, 1921, p.56).<sup>107</sup> Language is implicated in the false reality Friedländer aims to counter using the grotesque: 'Agreeing with Bergson, Friedländer saw man's conventional thinking and linguistic constructions as facets intervening between himself and reality' (Benson, 1987b, p.11). In *Groteske*, Friedländer makes an explicit connection between the grotesque and language. In a possible reference to the cave and the history of the grotesque form, Friedländer's opening words are: 'The word and its meaning should be taken from the strange, bizarre, fantastic shapes which limestone forms in the so-called drip-stone caves' (Mynona, 1921, p.54).<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Translated by Haakenson from *Kant als Magier* ('Kant as Magician'), 1922.

<sup>104</sup> 'Er kuriert das verweichlichte Gemüt mit Härte, das sentimentale durch Zynismen, das in Gewohnheiten abgestandene durch Paradoxie'

<sup>105</sup> 'er ärgert und chokierte den fast unausrottbaren Philister in uns'

<sup>106</sup> 'Wir lachen oder weinen über das Zerrbild des echten Lebens, dessen unverzerrte Urgestalt wir aber gar nicht eigentlich kennen, sondern nur ahnen, fühlen, glauben, lieben und hoffen'

<sup>107</sup> 'Also ist die Groteske der Prüfstein, der offenbart, wie nah oder wie fern man dem Echten noch mit seiner Seele sei.'

<sup>108</sup> 'Das Wort und seine Bedeutung sollen von den seltsamen, bizarren, phantastischen Formen hergenommen sein, welche die Kalksintersteine in den sogenannten Tropfsteinhöhlen bilden'

Höch's art suggests an interest in the history of the grotesque, for example, as found in Matthias Grünewald's *Temptation of St. Anthony*, 1512-1516, Figure 58. If this painting is compared to Höch's *Ewiger Kampf I* ('Eternal Struggle I'), 1924 (Figure 46) there are a number of corresponding features, Figure 59 and Figure 60. The pictorial space in both is comparable. All the action takes place close to the painting's surface beyond which the space is dark and vague.<sup>109</sup> This leads to the question of what is represented by the formless depth. The composition in both is structured by a complex mass of interacting figures. These figures are, other than St Anthony in Grünewald, composite figures. Similarities between the paintings are striking: a beaked figure to the right, facing left; a clawed foot grasping its perch below; a central figure pulled backwards by the head. It might seem reasonable to interpret *Ewiger Kampf I* in relation to the volatile political situation in 1924: Höch was attempting to capture events visually, explaining, for example, in her interview with Suzanne Pagé, that she was trying to capture the unprecedented times, including Spartakus, militarists, anarchists, and the Suffragettes (Höch, 1976).<sup>110</sup> However, it is also possible to understand *Ewiger Kampf I* as referring to an eternal struggle between different engagements with reality – between a logical, conceptual structuring of reality and an unknown, arrational one, with a further metaphysical question posed in the empty darkness beyond. Early in Höch's career she wrote and performed grotesque stories with Friedländer (as Mynona) and Raoul Hausmann, Figure 61. *Italienreise* ('Italian Journey'), 1921, is the grotesque story which Höch performed, at the Berlin Secession in 1921 (Ohff, 1968). It was also published in *NG*, the November Group Journal (Roters, ed, 1995). The

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<sup>109</sup> If the entire panel of Grünewald's *Temptation of St. Anthony* is considered, the pictorial space is less similar, as Grünewald includes a distant landscape and sky.

<sup>110</sup> Höch mentions Annie Besant during this part of her interview with Pagé (Pagé, 1976, p.25). Besant's contribution to *Fabian Essays in Socialism* critiques utopianism in favour of a continuing transition, 'building forward', an evolution rather than revolution (Besant, 1889, p.150). Besant was also a President of The Theosophical Society, with which Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky were both associated, and whose art was rejected by Höch as being, in Mondrian's case, too restrictive, and in Kandinsky's, too hierarchical and ineffective. Höch's reference to Besant might not suggest agreement, as Höch lists a range of conflicting positions, including for example militarism and anti-militarism.

story is based on Höch's journey to Italy in October 1920 (Roters, ed, 1995).<sup>111</sup> Höch refers to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in this story, via a painting, *Goethe in the Roman Campagna*, 1787 (Figure 146, Appendix 1) and a reference to the Via Appia (Höch, 1995a, p.59) [1921].<sup>112</sup>

A key feature of the grotesque, the use of hybrid figures, is shared with unconscious processes of image formation in dream. Grotesques challenge the construction of reality by using composite forms to disrupt the process by which the world is resolved into separate objects with names. A relationship between language and reality is therefore found in composite forms in which the process of separating oneself from the world, and categorising reality, using nouns, is questioned. Composite figures are a feature of Friedländer's grotesques, for example, *Zur Tödlichkeit des Sachselns* (On the deadliness of the Saxons), Figure 62, is illustrated by Peter Laube with a parrot in a dress, half-bird, half-human (Friedländer, 1980b). Others stories in *Das Nachthemd am Wegweiser am andere höchst merkwürdige Geschichten*, (The nightshirt at the signpost and other highly odd stories) also involve animal-object combinations (Friedländer, 1980a). These are contradictory figures, unpredictable in their incongruity. Höch's and Friedländer's grotesques share some features with the way images are combined in dream. Freud writes that '[t]he psychical process of constructing composite images in dreams is evidently the same as when we imagine or portray a centaur or a dragon in waking life' (Freud, 1953b, p.324) [1900-1901]. Further, he argues, bringing together hybrid elements, which could not have ever been perceived or remembered, is the main way dreams are lent a fantastic appearance (Freud, 1953b, p.324) [1900-1901]. The composite forms in the grotesque bring together ideas, words or images, comparably to the unconscious processes of condensation and displacement in that abbreviated, collective forms can be made, or a chain of associations through which ideas are passed (Freud, 1953a) [1900]. The grotesque is analogous, in this way, to metaphor and metonymy (Lacan, 1993, p.221) [1956]. Friedländer's use of the grotesque is tied to his intention to create social change

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111 In *Erinnerungen an DADA: Ein Vortrag* (Memories of Dada: a lecture), 1966, Höch describes the trip to Rome as a study trip with most of the journey made on foot (Höch, 1989c, p.212) [1958].

112 There is a painting by Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, 'Goethe in the Roman Campagna', 1787, which the Städel Museum reports was made following Goethe's stay with Tischbein, which included a joint 'expedition' to the Via Appia, Figure 146. Goethe wrote about his travels in Italy in *Italienische Reise* ('The Italian Journey') (Goethe, 1999) [1816-1817].

and his theorisation of imagination. This supports an argument that Höch's use of the grotesque and hybrid forms in different mediums, including fiction writing, photomontage and painting, has a social change purpose.



Figure 58.

Figure 59.

Figure 60.

Figure 61.

Figure 62.

## Metaphors and cross-sections

Höch creates strong and shocking new images through juxtaposition in a process akin to verbal metaphor. André Breton discusses image in terms of shock. In the *Manifesto of Surrealism*, 1924, Breton gives Pierre Reverdy's definition, taken from Hegel, in which juxtaposition creates image:

*The image is a pure creation of the mind.*

*It cannot be born from a comparison but from a juxtaposition of two more or less distant realities.*

*The more the relationship between the two juxtaposed realities is distant and true, the stronger the image will be—the greater its emotional power and poetic reality... (Breton, 1972, p.20) [1924].<sup>113</sup>*

Aristotle defines metaphor in *Poetics* as consisting 'in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else' (Aristotle, 1984b, p.2332). Images also categorise and distinguish objects, visually naming them. In metonymy, the association and transfer of meaning constructs a linear sequence or chain of events. As with some jokes, parts of the original are substituted to create another combined form that both refers to and destroys the donor images or words. Ricoeur writes, 'a metaphor may be seen as a model for changing our way of looking at things, of perceiving the world' (Ricoeur, 1978, p.152). In Breton's discussion of juxtaposition, he refers to the poetic, mental image. This is an image perhaps included in Benjamin's 'geistiger Inhalt' (Benjamin, 1955b, p.401) [1916]. In Breton's understanding images are related to reality (Breton, 1972). Höch also makes the clear statement that she wants her art to change the way people perceive reality. Concepts of imagination emerging in these examples have this similarity: in imagination's relation to language is found a potential mechanism for changing perception.

Höch's photomontages are arresting in that they stop a chain of meaning already set in process. In her visual work, the expected visual connections are interrupted to alter meaning. For example, in *Bilderbuch*, 1945, short poems written by Höch are placed next to collages on facing pages, for example, *Boa Perlina*, Figure 63

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<sup>113</sup> Italicised in Breton, 1972.

and Figure 64 (Höch, 2012) [1945].<sup>114</sup> In *Boa Perlina* the categories of snake and pearls are brought together visually. ‘Pearl’ is inserted into ‘Boa Constrictor’, in a substitution and condensation of the two ideas into one. This insertion is manifested in both the collage and the poem. The original categories are broken and, through the combining of language as words and image, a new category is created.

‘Boa Perlina

Trust her not, I say

The beauty in pearl gray

For the ones wearing the nicest vests

Aren’t always the best (Höch, 2012) [1945]’<sup>115</sup>

The message communicated is not to trust appearances but to beware beauty and what it might conceal: an attractive presentation can belie a deadly intent. The poem and collage therefore challenge a visual assumption. The similarity between the pearl necklace and snake is more evident in the collage. Both contrast something valued for its beauty with a symbol of danger. In addition, in the string of pearls, Höch has used an image of concatenation, a series of connected things linked together. Many of creature’s names in *Bilderbuch* are word catenations. For example, Die Rennquicke or Runfast, and Unzufriedel, which Brian Currid translates as ‘Unsatisfedle’. In *Die Stiefvaterchen*, the title is an essential part of the whole.

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<sup>114</sup> Höch created *Bilderbuch* (‘Picture Book’) in 1945 but the printing was technically difficult (Luyken, 2012). Luyken details the early failed attempts to find a publisher, its presentation as an original copy in Berlin in 1975, and its subsequent publication as a limited edition in 1985. It is quoted here from the English translation (Höch, 2012) [1945].

<sup>115</sup> ‘Boa Perlina

Du kannst ihr nicht trauen

der schönen, perlgrauen.

Nicht immer sind sie

mit den schönsten Westen

die Besten’ (Höch, 2012) [1945].

A further means by which image can present relationships between ideas is found in the cross-section. The term 'Querschnitt' or cross-section had a wide use within Weimar culture having been adopted by film from print where it referred to an anthology often as 'Querschnitt durch' or 'cross-section through' the subject in question. The older term 'Durchschnitt' is also referred to in 'Querschnitt'. Michael Cowan argues the term 'Querschnitt' in print and film draws on its history in scientific use, as a visual model (Cowan, 2013, p.9). The Weimar term 'Querschnitt' included its metaphorical use in relation to modernity and to a culture of mass production (Cowan, 2013, p.11). There is also a connection, through its older scientific usage, to technology. It is linked in this way historically to visual knowledge simulating a cut through a body. The cross-section, as visualisation, mental imaging or modelling, can be understood as a form of propositional imagination. As an envisioning method, it reveals hidden information. It is also often coded or schematised for clarity, as in map or a plan.

From 1921 an illustrated journal called *Der Querschnitt* appeared in print. It was produced at first by a small gallery publisher and later by Höch's employer, Ullstein. *Der Querschnitt* published photographs as well as essays, for example, on montage in film, before being banned in 1936 (*Illustrierte Magazine der Klassischen Moderne*, n.d.). Sergei Eisenstein, whose montage in film is referred to by Höch in her 1946 article *Die Fotomontage*, was a contributor. Articles in *Der Querschnitt* also included Friedländer's *Grotesk* (Mynona, 1921). Carl Einstein and Benjamin were among the many Berlin contributors, and there were also international writers such as Marcel Proust, Ezra Pound and James Joyce (*Illustrierte Magazine der Klassischen Moderne*, n.d.). Caygill observes that it is in *Der Querschnitt* that Benjamin develops the theme of the Flâneur (Caygill, 1998, p.67). The *Arcades Project* also began there as a collaborative text with Franz Hessel, the writer who translated Proust's *In search of lost time* with Benjamin into German (Caygill, 1998, p.66). Some of the images used by Höch in her photomontages originate from *Der Querschnitt*, such as the photographs for *Der Heilige Berg (Aus Einem Ethnographischen Museum XII)* ('The Holy Mountain [From An Ethnographic Museum XII]'), 1927, Figure 80, (Makela and Boswell, 1996, p.106). Doherty makes a connection between *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* (Figure 4) and the cross-section in relation to Benjamin's distinction between longitudinal and transverse sections (Doherty, 1998, p.80, n.30). She refers to Benjamin's idea of art as making different cuts through the substance of the world (Benjamin, 2008b, p.219) [1928]. *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* shares the theme of a



cross-section through time with Hausmann's article *Schnitt durch die Zeit* from *Die Erde*, 1919. In the imaginary cross-section – through, for instance, a body, building or machine – relationships, layers, and simultaneous images are revealed. The cross-section reveals what is hidden at the surface and makes connections between otherwise disparate elements, stressing interconnectedness through fragmentation, so that distant phenomena become juxtaposed. The cross-section thereby exposes contiguous elements, otherwise not associated with one another. The implied totality of fragments, simultaneous in time, suggests also an unconscious source of connections, understood through the conjunctions and logic of visual language. It refers to further unseen connections, so that while simultaneous and layered images might not have a linear graphical relationship, or contain the rhetorical conjunctions of verbal language, the associations and juxtapositions can nevertheless reflect hitherto concealed connections, in a similar way, perhaps, to unconscious processes. Freud, as has been mentioned, used the image of compressed pack ice to convey the idea of the mass of dream thoughts, compressed, fractured and distorted, along with their chains of meaning, evidence and counter arguments (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900]. In dreams, the representability of ideas visually overcomes the limitations of the absence of the rhetorical connectors of speech through introducing visual equivalents such as conceptual grouping. There is also no negation, causality or entailment in the unconscious, so multiple meanings can be produced through apparently contradictory images (Freud, 1957b, p.296) [1915].

In *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* the historical association with cutting through a body is reflected in the embodied, beer-bellied form given to the epoch. Cowan gives Béla Baláz's description of cross-sectional montage as showing many images simultaneously, without suggesting any causal relationships between the different parts, but instead attempting to produce a total image (Cowan, 2013, pp.2–3). As well as presenting a total image, Höch at the same time suggests the possibility that this image is incomplete, not through being itself a fragment, but in the implication that this is a cross-section of a whole, an incomplete or distorted reality. At the same time Höch undermines the idea of ordering and categorising material as a means to reach a visual understanding, because the treatment of visual evidence as a categorising form of knowledge was politically antithetical to Höch. The statistical method of random sampling is invoked, suggesting that extrapolations can be made. The reference to statistics is further reinforced by the inclusion of a map of European countries where women have the vote. Visual and statistical material was extensively used in positivist versions of

science, sociology and anthropology, with the cross-section originally applied as an ordering device to cope with the increase in images (Cowan, 2013, p.4). Höch's choice of images in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* concretises some topical abstract themes, those of polarity (dada and anti-dada), crowd culture and technology. This photomontage presents the idea of technological progress alongside political events and topical issues. Höch may have also been attempting to deflate the pomposity of some rhetoric about time by exaggerating the grandiosity by which time is sometimes represented. The idea of the 'Thousand-Year Reich' is also attacked by John Heartfield in *Das Tausendjährige Reich* ('Thousand Year Reich'), 1934, Figure 65. In this work a tower of cards teeters on the point of collapse. Höch was scornful of the Nazi prediction of a 'Thousand Year Reich' dismissing it, in her interview with Roditi, as a delusion (Höch, 1959b, p.69). The cross-section as used by Höch, therefore, suggests a range of ideas: simultaneity in the snap-shot in opposition to the grandiosity of the epoch; the anthropological survey; mental imaging, modelling relationships and connections; and finally the visual connecting of ideas, with the cross-section modelling visual alternatives to the rhetorical connectors of speech.

Figure 63.

Figure 64.

Figure 65.

## Word/image

In Höch's work, word and image can have interdependent meaning – both viewed as image and also read. The presence of words can connote displacement from the flat, linear system in which they are usually read, in sequential order, progressively across the page, down the page and over the page. In displacing words and letters from the context of reading, Höch discourages expectations of orderliness in representation. Text on a page is possibly sometimes considered to be without spatial depth. For example, words on this page are side by side in one plane at or near the paper's surface. In printed text there may be a slight indent, as observed by Benjamin, or the ink may stand proud of the surface. The viewer or reader can approach the text as if it is flat, however, and read it as a sequence of abstract symbols. There is a strong association between printed text and the plane of the page, but in Höch's work it also works as image, creating spatial depth and perceptual affects that add visual meaning. In Höch's photomontage the association between text and flatness often disintegrates when letters are intertwined with other letters, giving them position in pictorial space. In this new context, the text may retain some of its meaning as words and letters. For example, Höch's most well-known work, *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kultperformurrepoche Deutschlands* (Figure 4) contains the words 'DADA', 'Die anti-dada', 'Die Große', 'HH', 'Sten', 'e', and 'komm', – with the text operating both within the overall visual whole, *and* as text. In *Der Zeitungsleser* ('The Newspaper Reader'), after 1925, Figure 66, the text both asserts and denies the flat surface, by being readable as words and viewable as image. The viewer's point-of-view is further confused by the angled head of the newspaper reader, who appears to be looking over the top of the newspaper as well as reading the back where the viewer sees the text. The collaged lines of text do not match the angle of the actual text creating a conflict between the spatial imperative for the picture as a whole, and the newsprint context, which is flat. The way this fictional text is encountered by the figure in the painting is ambiguous. Höch presents both possible ways to understand the newspaper. The title suggests the act of reading, but aspects of the spatial organisation giving priority to the act of seeing. John Cayley asks if the act of reading brings 'texts into the world of language' (Cayley, 2013, p.17). Through using words other than to produce the act of reading, Höch introduces a further source of meaning and an alternative way of engaging with words and letters. Perhaps, through the act of seeing, words are brought into the world of image.

Höch demonstrates an interest in the structure of verbal language in *Ich bin ein armes Tier* ('I am a poor creature'), 1959, Figure 67, in which she conjugates in three columns across the painting:

I am a poor creature.

No one has pity on me,

no one helps me,

no one saves me.<sup>116</sup>

The structure, syntax and meaning of these simple phrases are relevant to meaning, but Höch presents them additionally as visual image. Against a dark background they are written in a light colour and vice versa. The composition is organised in three blocks separated by strong vertical lines, but the background is less rigidly structured. The writing resists the camouflage-like ground, asserting its readability and forming the illusion of a word layer or screen. While it is legible the writing still contributes to the overall image creating a tension between reading the words or seeing them as image. Cayley writes about language as an art medium, and the differences between language and image (Cayley, 2013). Using as an example an out of focus photograph of a book, he writes:

consider the photographic image of the open book. Its pages bear unreadable traces that nonetheless depict linguistic artefacts – we know that they refer, visually, to language, but we cannot read it (Cayley, 2013, p.14).

Word and image categories are disregarded in *Ich bin ein armes Tier*. The distinction between word and image is blurred in three different ways. Firstly, the context is a painting; just as the printed text in a collage is a displacement referring to the printed page, the painting is a context referring to image. Secondly, mixing dark text on a light background and light text on a dark background shifts the work toward being viewed as image due to the perceptual effect that dark colours appear to recede and vice versa, so the act of seeing is added to the act of reading. Thirdly, there is a pictorial meaning

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<sup>116</sup> 'Ich bin ein armes Tier.

Niemand erbarmt sich meiner,

niemand hilft mir,

niemand rettet mich.'

relying on the shape of the letters and words and their overall shape within the composition.

The text in *Dada-Rundschau* ('Dada-Panorama'), 1919, Figure 68, creates structure (Benson, 1987b, p.175). Timothy Benson describes the text as an 'armature' (Benson, 1987b, p.175). The title of Dada-Panorama suggests that this is Dada's response to the historical panorama in which the viewer is surrounded and immersed in an all-round view. The panorama is a precursor to later optical and immersive forms such as cinema; the Dada-Panorama is therefore concerned with the reception of image from the viewer's perspective. The title offers the collage as a work to be experienced, as well as interpreted through reading. The text in *Dada-Rundschau* has formal qualities of colour or size that are used to organise the pictorial space. Whereas some separate letters are combined to form the word 'Dada', other words and phrases are cut out whole, revealing information from their original source in a printed text, for example the spacing between letters. Letters are used as image for their relative tone, shape, colour and hue. Their hard edges contrast with the diffuse smoky background. A diffuse image behind a hard-edged shape suggests depth of field and focus to our perception because of our experience of eyesight and photography. The smoke can be understood as cloud, together with a suggestion of gravity given by the letter 'a' in 'Dada' hanging from the loop of the 'D'. Of course, the 'a' does not hang: this is a visual illusion created through gluing paper shapes onto a flat surface. A long shape passing through the second 'd' of Dada strengthens the illusion of deep space. The image quality of the smoke behind the text transforms the letters into objects rather than abstract symbols to be read. Joanna Drucker identifies in Höch's collage a 'fragmentary assault on the illusions of wholeness promoted by rational systems of representation' in which symbolic systems, including language are challenged (Drucker, 1993, p.84). Perhaps, besides challenging illusions of wholeness there is also a proposition that language, presented as a symbolic system, can also be presented without separation into image based language and word based language.

Höch's use of graphic symbols and signs is not limited to writing or printed text. For example, in *Konstruktion mit Verdi* ('Construction with Verdi'), 1948, Figure 69, Höch includes parts of a musical score. *2 x 5*, 1919, Figure 70, uses the number five, and in *Die Sonne* ('The Sun'), 1968, Figure 71 (which also includes text) there is a hexagonal geometric pattern superimposed onto sign-like shapes and concentric circles. In Höch's work, abstract symbols such as in the astronomical map, *Astronomie* ('Astronomy'), 1922, Figure 72, as well as in musical notation, numbers and



embroidery patterns, combine graphically coded meaning with visual meaning. There is no clear distinction made between abstract symbols and other visual language. In Höch's work language can be presented graphically, as abstract symbol, as image, or both. Höch also uses indexical signs. She made, for example, collaboratively, a series of handprints and silhouette collages, for example, Figure 73 and Figure 74. These are recordings on paper of meetings between Höch and others. There are handprints from Höch, Thomas Ring, Richard Kaufmann and Brugman, each with a signature and date. There are also silhouette collages of Friedländer, Höch and Hans Arp.<sup>117</sup> The silhouette collages have been considered, in Chapter two, with space, in their figure/ground relation. There is also a connection to language. The handprints and silhouettes are indexical signs pointing to the presence of people. This is further recorded in their titles. Both the silhouettes and handprints can be viewed as image and read as sign. They also connect the image to the body through the meaning that this is a representation of Brugman, or Thomas Ring; this is Thomas Ring's hand and this is his signature, both proving he was here, in contact with the paper. They refer to touch to produce an image with an abstract meaning, a mental entity, communicated via the senses, the body, image, writing, sign, and the haptic.

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<sup>117</sup> These are found in Appendix 1.

Figure 66.

Figure 67.

Figure 68.

Figure 69.

Figure 70.

Figure 71.

Figure 72.



Figure 73.

Figure 74.

## Multisensorality in word/image

Writing and text are the constituent parts of written language – letters, words or phrases which having been concretised in some way are recorded graphically. Writing is the inscription, in a meaningful order, of letters and words. But, Drucker writes that it is the ‘phonetic principle which is the unique characteristic of the alphabet’ (Drucker, 1999, p.11). So, letters imply the sense of sound. And the sense of sight is usually required to read them. Writing and reading are therefore multisensory pursuits. Because text or writing can exist as a physical artefact, it can operate outside its initial context in a body of words, as visual language. Written language can use the physiological sense of sight to access the graphical or pictorial image. And it can translate between the senses of sight and sound when reading, as symbol becomes spoken language or music. In addition, handwriting, unlike printed text, has an association with the hand and by extension to the body and to touch.

Multisensorality is characteristic of Dada. The sound poems of Hugo Ball were performed at the Cabaret Voltaire, for example. Even before 1916, the Futurists used typography for its texture and surface (Jones, 2014). Filippo Marinetti produced a concrete sound poem, *Zang Tumb Tuumb*, in 1914 (Perloff, 1986, p.59). In 1922, Höch made a collage and diagrammatic ink drawing with string, called *Poesie* (‘Poetry’), Figure 75, the words cut from existing print material. *Poesie* traverses boundaries between visual art, poetry and spoken and written language referring also to the multisensory art of accompanied song. The poem refers to dream, including fragments of imagery such as ‘dark is the world-conscience’ and the ‘congested night’. It also contains a word, ‘Tandaradei’, from a well-known poem by the medieval lyric poet Walthe von der Vogelweide, *Unter den Linden*. *Unter den Linden* is a poem with ecstatic mystical allusions. ‘Tandaradei’ is the repeated interjection of the nightingale. It is a repeated refrain concealing the coded information of speech, but it reveals images; as humans we cannot translate the song. The word ‘Tandaradei’ is also found in *Dada-Schalmei*, 1920, a poem by Richard Huelsenbeck appearing in *Der Dada* 3, Figure 76, (Huelsenbeck, 1920). A Schalmei is a shawm (a musical pipe), so for both *Poesie* and *Dada-Schalmei* there is the intimation of music and the poem being heard. The subject (poetry) is emphatically repeated in the text, in the title and also in the words ‘poesie’ and ‘Tandaradei’, which functions as a metonymic reference to poetry. ‘Tandaradei’ also refers to the sound of language in the onomatopoeic transliteration of the nightingale. *Poesie* can be understood therefore as a reflection of the wider context, including cinema, which although silent in 1922 was accompanied by live music and

contained written dialogue and narrative. Höch was committed to the written and spoken word. She hosted poetry evenings in her studio in Friedenau, Berlin, attended by Arp and Friedländer, among others, (Figure 3). She took part in collaborative, text related activities, such as the postcard series with Kurt Schwitters in which they exchanged postcards made using writing, images and collaged text. For example, Figure 77, shows a postcard that Höch sent to Schwitters in 1923 using photographic reproductions and pieces of printed text.<sup>118</sup> By comparison to Höch's illustrations, which make a distinction between text and image, this postcard is difficult to resolve as either text or image.<sup>119</sup> In *Collage (Dada)*, 1922, Figure 78, printed text is incorporated within a geometrical abstract collage of coloured papers. Text within her collages and photomontage also includes handwriting, such as in *Meine Hausprüche* (Figure 19) as well as painted or collaged letters, as found in *Die Tragödin* ('The Tragedienne'), 1924, Figure 79. In this photomontage a vertical column of hand cut letters consisting of the words 'DIE TRAGOEDIN' is interrupted horizontally by the diphthongs 'IE' and 'OE'.

Höch's photomontage, *Der Heilige Berg (Aus Einem Ethnographischen Museum XII)* ('The Holy Mountain [From An Ethnographic Museum XII]'), 1927, Figure 80, shares its title with the 1926 silent film, directed by Arnold Fanck and starring the later Nazi propagandist Leni Riefenstahl (*Der Heilige Berg*, 1926).<sup>120</sup> Siegfried Kracauer discusses the mountain film genre, including *Der Heilige Berg*, in *From Caligari to Hitler*, 1947 (Kracauer, 2004, p.112) [1947]. The references in Höch's work to films such as *Der Heilige Berg* demonstrate an engagement with film as a form.<sup>121</sup> Höch incorporates references and figures as diverse as the lyric poem or the latest cutting edge technological media. She argued against censorship in film through the Czechoslovakian journal, *Index* (Makhholm, 1996, p.196). The film form has in common with Höch's work a multisensory character, but this does not indicate support for a

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<sup>118</sup> These postcards are discussed by Stina Barchan in *The House and the Archive: Hannah Höch and Kurt Schwitters*, 2009 (Barchan, 2009).

<sup>119</sup> Examples of Höch's illustration are found in Appendix 1.

<sup>120</sup> Riefenstahl went on to make a series of four propaganda films commissioned by Nazi regime, including *Triumph des Willens* ('Triumph of the Will') (*Triumph des Willens*, 1935).

<sup>121</sup> Dietrich appeared in *Der Blaue Engel* in 1930 (*Der Blaue Engel*, 1930). Höch's photomontage, *Marlene*, 1930, is discussed in Chapter four.

particular political view. In the Nazi propaganda film, the aesthetic beauty, its beautiful vest, serves to conceal its intention. Multisensory forms such as the sound poem or the film are associated with the totalitarian right, in Futurism's links to fascism in Italy, and film's adoption as a vehicle for propaganda in National Socialism, as examples.<sup>122</sup> Both film and the sound poem are also found on the political left, for example in the Berlin Dadaists' sound poems or Dziga Vertov and Eisenstein's films. So, while there is an attempt by Breton, Höch and Friedländer, among others, to use art to change people's perception, through using art that shares the multisensory qualities of imagination and language, these qualities are not in themselves aligned with any particular political programme. Radical imagination can therefore be understood as ethically neutral. Propaganda, as Maud Lavin points out, requires a legible message, but Höch's photomontage has a complexity of meaning lost once it becomes adopted by advertising or other types of propaganda (Lavin, 1990, p.68). It is through the complex combination of methods, the refusal of censorship, and in the space for the viewer's or reader's critical reflection that the effect of Höch's radical imagination is created.

Multisensoriality is also evident in Höch's collaborative work with Til Brugman. Brugman was born in Amsterdam in 1888 and studied languages, literature, philosophy and psychology in London and at the Sorbonne (Brandt, p. 178-180). She contributed her poems to journals such as *De Stijl*, Kurt Schwitter's *Merz* and *Manomètre*, Figure 81. *Manomètre* was a Surrealist journal which published writers such as Tristan Tzara, Arp and Schwitters. The editor, Émile Malespine, was a psychiatrist who wrote about handwriting in a forensic context (US Joint Publications Research Service, 1960).<sup>123</sup> The significance of Höch's relationship with Brugman has been emphasised, for example by Mineke Bosch and Myriam Everard in a special issue of the lesbian literary journal *Lust & Gratie*, devoted to addressing the creative collaboration between the two women with contributions by Bosch, Everard, Delia

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<sup>122</sup> Marjorie Perloff argues that to equate futurism with fascism is a simplification (Perloff, 1986, p.36).

<sup>123</sup> This publication refers to an article 'probably published in Rome, in 1959', and 'the graphographic research of Dr Emile Malespine (6), who recommends "a new type of signature on an apparatus as handy as a typewriter and which, by authenticating signatures, thus becomes a new means of identification' (US Joint Publications Research Service, 1960, p.26).

Güssefeld, Lavin and Ellen Maurer (Bosch and Everard, 1988b).<sup>124</sup> Höch and Brugman published together in 1933, a magazine article in *Atlantis*, and in 1935, *Scheingehacktes* ('Mock Mince-meat'), a short story book written by Brugman and illustrated by Höch (Brugman, 1935b).<sup>125</sup> *Lust and Gratie* reproduces business cards dating from 1926-1931, Figure 82, advertising Brugman's language teaching, with the typography for some, and possibly all, of the cards designed by Höch, (Bosch and Everard, 1988b).

Höch and Brugman had both been independently committed to word/image work before they met while travelling in 1926. Höch began performing short stories in Berlin from 1921 and had produced text collages, such as *Dada-Rundschau* (Figure 68) and *Poesie*. Meanwhile, Brugman had been publishing poems with visual qualities in journals such as *De Stijl* and *Manomètre*. For example, a text poem by Brugman called *Engin d'amour* was included in *Manomètre* 6, (August 1924) (Brandt 1995, p. 13).

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<sup>124</sup> Nero devotes a detailed chapter to Höch and Brugman (Nero, 2013, pp.144–202).

<sup>125</sup> *Atlantis* was an illustrated magazine in which Brugman contributed an article, *Von Hollands Blumenfeldern* ('From Holland's Flower Fields'), illustrated by Höch (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, pp.507–508).

It is reproduced in Brandt, in the main text, similarly to this:

Engin d'amour  
  
engin d'amour  
  
huilé            s  
  
                  a  
  
                  c  
  
t o u j o u r s  
  
                  é  
  
bondieuserie pamée  
  
éclair d'idée  
  
sauvé

*Engin d'amour* was originally printed in a different typography and layout, Figure 84.<sup>126</sup> For example, the word 'ECLAIR' moves diagonally upwards in the *Manomètre* version, whereas in Brandt's main text there is no diagonal and an additional intersection is created between the words 'sacré' and 'toujours', where one does not exist in the original. The typography and visual appearance of *Engin d'amour* is intrinsic to its meaning. The visual qualities reflect a major historical shift in which changes in industrial printing methods, combined with an interest in synaesthesia, led to an explosion of experimental typographic work in visual art and poetry (Drucker, 1999, pp.242–245). Drucker describes there being, amongst 19<sup>th</sup> century artists, a 'keen attention to the visual aspects of letter design and a conviction that the stylistic choices had some impact on meaning' among artists and poets in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Drucker, 1999, p.243). At the same time, importance was attached to 'theories of synaesthesia – the interrelation of the senses in the varieties of aesthetic experience – developed in the late 19th-century Symbolist art, literature and music' (Drucker, 1999, p.243). Drucker uses Stéphane Mallarmé, Victor Hugo, Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Claudel as examples, as well as the Dadaists' use of typography from advertising. While appearing similar, the text and typography in Dada, in *Manomètre*, and other periodicals, such as *De Stijl*, may have different intentions. However, they share an interest in synaesthesia and the idea that the visual component of text points to 'the visual representation of

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<sup>126</sup> The original is published in the back matter in Brandt (Brandt, 1995, p.202).

language as an element in the production of verbal meaning' (Drucker, 1999, p.286). These differing uses of word/image relations have in common the connections of language to image, to the body and to perception through the senses that are key aspects of radical imagination.

In another example from Brugman work, her poem *R*, published in *De Stijl* in 1923, Figure 84, places the letter 'r' amongst other letters in different sizes – 'R', 'REK', 'RAK', 'TREK', 'TRAK', 'STREK', 'STRAK' and 'STREKKEN' – so the letter 'r' is read differently according to the surrounding context of letters and their sounds. An example of Brugman's sound poetry, *SHE HE*, 1917-1922, Figure 85, includes senses of both sight and sound. Brandt gives the first publication as in *5 Klangichte* ('5 Loud Poems') (Brandt, 1995, p. 200).<sup>127</sup> Sound poems appeared in print and performance, so were encountered through different senses. Coincidentally, three years before Brugman's *R* was published, Höch produced a watercolour called "R", Figure 86. Höch's "R" is more distant from the printed context than Brugman's *R*. In this painting the letter 'R' appears in upper case, and, with Höch's typically emphatic doubling, the overall form appears to resemble a lower case 'r'. It associates a visual and tactile sense with an abstract symbolic form of 'r', suggesting a synaesthetic response, albeit in a different way to Brugman's *SHE HE* or *R*. Where Brugman appears to join sight and sound in her poem *SHE HE*, implying the sight of her poem produces the sensation of sound, in Höch's poem "R", the suggestion of synaesthesia comes instead from the sensory interpretation of a symbol as having colour and plastic form. A synaesthetic experience mixes senses rather than separating them.

Brugman and Höch's interest in synaesthesia connects with a shared imaginary world. In a handwritten letter from Brugman to Höch in 1926, Brugman writes that she teaches 1500 languages, including the language of 'Patchamatac' ('Patchamatisch') which she describes as having a taste and a smell, which is yellow (Brugman 1926, in Bosch and Everard, eds, 1988, p. 49). The letter is formatted in blocks of text converging of the centre. Julie Nero observes that the term 'Patschamatak' appears in Höch's *Bilderbuch* (Nero, 2013, p.169). 'Patchamatak' is in *Little Baby Gamma* (Höch, 2012) [1945].<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Brandt also refers to the publication of *SHE HE* in Bosch and Everard, 1988a (1995, p. 9).

<sup>128</sup> There are different spellings in these sources but they are sufficiently similar as to suggest a common origin in Höch's and Brugman's discussions.



‘In Patchamatak dwelled his grandmamma.  
And dined on only fruitgrapes fine.

But this little, gentle Gamma  
was born on the River Rhine  
Where he simply eats forget-me-not  
and knows nothing of the fruitgrape’s lot.’<sup>129</sup>

The rhyme in this poem is important to its sound. Patchamatak is an imaginary place with its own language, and involving multiple senses and cross-sensory experience. In Höch’s reference to Patchamatak, in *Bilderbuch*, the visual properties of text, and the collaged images, connect the imaginary world of Patchamatak to a multisensory use of language.

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<sup>129</sup> There are no page numbers in *Picture Book*. Translated from German by Brian Currid (Höch, 2012) [1945].

‘Der kleine Gamma  
Im Patschamatak lebte seine Grossmama.  
Und sie ass nur Musenpampelein.  
Aber dieser kleine, sanfte Gamma  
ward geboren an dem Rhine.  
Er frisst Vergissmeinnicht da schlicht  
und weiss von Musenpampeln nicht.’

Figure 75.

Figure 76.

Figure 77.

Figure 78.

Figure 79.

Figure 80.

Figure 81.



Figure 82.



Figure 83.

Figure 84.

Figure 85.

Figure 86.

## Conclusion

Höch's art is language, according to Benjamin's definition, insofar as it communicates a mental meaning (Benjamin, 1979b, p.109) [1916]. It shares with imagination and verbal language some mechanisms for representing ideas and the connections between ideas. Visual image and verbal language can be understood as different ways to perform imaginative and unconscious processes, construct meaning and communicate ideas, rather than as opposites or mutually exclusive alternatives. The pictorial structures of visual art-language might be similar to the structures Freud proposes for the representability of dream, those of, 'foreground and back-ground, digressions, illustrations, conditions, chains of evidence and counterarguments' (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900]. Chains of meaning exist in Höch's work, and these can be interrupted, removed, substituted or juxtaposed. The grotesque combines images to produce new figures in order to break down the linguistic conventions that obscure false doctrines in culture. Expected chains of evidence and logic are interrupted. The hybrid creature is comparable to the hybrid words found in jokes because the expected connection between two images is not followed, a substitution is made to create a third image, referring to all three in an abbreviated form. In combining images, Höch refers to the process of constructing reality through naming objects. Meaning is created, and changed through substitutions, omissions, additions and distortions. Höch presents multiple relationships and overdetermined meanings through images, including the meanings from written and spoken language and other abstract signs. The bridge metaphor, appearing with a painting called *Imaginary Bridge*, introduces a topographical element. Höch's erasure of boundaries suggests a map for a terrain inhabited by a body. A body has an attitude and point-of-view, and the bridge metaphor conveys the rhetorical meanings of connection and separation. By over-including senses, and crossing senses, Höch argues against their categorisation, wanting to 'erase the firm boundaries that people have with misplaced certainty placed around everything that came within our reach' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>130</sup>

Multisensory art avoids habitual ways of seeing, shocking people into recognising the subjectivity in their perception. A categorising mode of view, separating the senses would be the habitual, comfortable way to perceive the world and to confront art, which, according to Höch, undermines imaginative vision. Senses

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<sup>130</sup> 'Ich möchte die festen Grenzen auswischen, die wir Menschen mit einer eigensinnigen Sicherheit um alles, was in unseren Bereich kam, gezogen haben'

are not separated because imagination and perception belong to an organic rather than a mechanical system. It has been argued here that the multisensorial form is not itself aligned with a particular political programme. Photomontage as a form is linked with political aims, although, as discussed in Chapter one, Drucker questions the extent this link can be justified (Drucker, 1993, p.83). Imagination relies on processes fundamental to experience in order to facilitate the translation and communication of mental content. Imagination, in this proposition, initially formless, can become written language or image or any mixture of possibilities. Like the stem cell in physiological development it can specialise. Just as the cell is the basic structural form of life, imagination is the primary field of consciousness and experience.

The intention to change perception through art and culture is not unique to Höch. Benjamin observes that new technologies have already changed perception. But Höch's extensive use of writing, printed text, graphemes, and signs, suggests that language is intrinsic to her project. Changing the way reality is perceived means changing the way reality is subjectively created by images and language, through perception, cognition and culture. Perception, in this account, is not passive but is governed by cognition. The construction of reality through the naming of objects is changed through radical imagination. Rather than a singular method, however, radical imagination consists of a range of methods such as the grotesque, the metaphor, and visual puns. Art, for Höch, 'speaks', and transforms (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>131</sup> Transformative art is created from a space of no preconceptions, no boundaries, shifting standpoints, vividness, deep empathy and strong intuition (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929]. Höch puts her art into the service of the age, creating its radically transformative role through a recruitment of all the senses and the whole body, together. The interrelationship with language and the senses is one aspect of a multifaceted radical imagination, alongside others, such as the spatial aspect considered in the previous chapter and unconscious and embodied aspects to be discussed in the following chapters.

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<sup>131</sup> 'sprechen'.

## Radical imagination's unconscious eye

This chapter will try to show that Höch was influenced by a politicised understanding of psychoanalysis and that her concept of a radical imagination includes an unconscious aspect. In 1975, Suzanne Pagé asked Höch what the larger themes of her work were. She answered: 'LIFE. Symbols of growth and decay, of love and hate, of glorification and rejection, but also the search for beauty, particularly hidden beauty' (Höch, 1976, p.32).<sup>132</sup> Höch's reference to hidden beauty in the quotation above paradoxically connects beauty with a negation of seeing. This could indicate that her aesthetic sense allowed for an unconscious form of seeing, in addition to the traits proposed in previous chapters of multi-sensorality, and relatedness both to language and to a perceptual construction of space. By Höch's inclusion of the unconscious in her theorisation of imagination it becomes radical in depth and process as well as intention. Beauty is introduced as having overarching importance to her project, so it is necessary to understand how her aesthetic supports the transformative intentions revealed by her statements about imagination. One possibility for how Höch's aesthetic ideas and her ideas about imagination might interact is through their relationships to the process of looking. Henri Bergson includes aesthetic feelings in a list of interrelated psychic states with a strong connection to image (Bergson, 2001, p.15) [1889]. Similarly, Sigmund Freud locates aesthetics within 'mental life' (Freud, 1955d, p.219) [1919]. The opening words of *The Uncanny* are:

It is only rarely that a psycho-analyst feels impelled to investigate the subject of aesthetics, even when aesthetics is understood to mean not merely the theory of beauty but the theory of the qualities of feeling. (...)

The subject of the 'uncanny' is a province of this kind (Freud, 1955d, p.219) [1919].

Aesthetic feelings are perhaps, then, part of a psychic terrain that includes imagination as the process that continually transforms psychic material into experience. Höch's 'hidden beauty', in this case, could refer to an unconscious part of the process. I use the figure of the unconscious eye here to explore the idea of a radical imagination that

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<sup>132</sup> 'DAS LEBEN. Symbole für Wachsen und Vergehen, für Liebe und Haß, für Verherrlichen und Verwerfen, aber auch die Suche nach Schönheit, im besonderen nach versteckter Schönheit.'



organises the psyche, and has an unconscious aspect. The unconscious eye places images into the world, presenting them as perception or imaginative vision. It looks both inwardly and outwardly and its imaginatively produced images, including unconscious images, may be opposites or doubles of sensorial ones. There is no boundary to demarcate where its unconscious aspect ends. Instead images are continually presented to consciousness, sharing a common process of image-ination. As images progressing along a Möbius surface, they may embark in opposite directions and opposite sides and eventually coincide. Attempts to determine the interiority or exteriority of such images or imaginative visions are destined to fail. The figure of an eye looking in opposite directions echoes the concept of polar opposites *Schöpferische Indifferenz* and also Höch's use of the bridge metaphor. The mathematical infinity symbol used by both Höch and Salomo Friedländer is a diagrammatic Möbius surface, the Möbius twist being a twist in reality's fabric.<sup>133</sup>

The aim in using the figure of the unconscious eye is to investigate how Höch might have approached issues of seeing and to explore how this could lead to new interpretations of her work. Two words for seeing, the gaze and the look are distinguished by Kaja Silverman, in *The Threshold of the Visible World*, following from Sartre and Jacques Lacan (Silverman, 1996). Silverman points out that in Freud's model of perception, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 'visual stimuli enter the psyche from the "side" of the unconscious' (Silverman, 1996, p.180).<sup>134</sup> This means that the conscious experience of looking occurs after it has been 'put in communication with my unconscious memories' (Silverman, 1996, p.180). The idea that vision is objective is, therefore, challenged by the delay between the arrival of visual stimuli in the psyche and our conscious awareness of seeing. Silverman is concerned with the ethics of the

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<sup>133</sup> This symbol for infinity pre-dates August Möbius and Johann Listing's discovery of the mathematical shape, named after Möbius in the 1800s. Lacan makes use of the Möbius surface to model simultaneous binary oppositions. Describing the reality of the unconscious as sexual, Lacan discusses the Möbius surface as 'the topology of the subject', describing the Möbius shape as having an outside that 'contains its inside' (Lacan, 1977, p.155) [1964]. Opposing terms or ideas, in the Möbius shape, are simultaneously opposite while also continuous, and have no boundary between them.

<sup>134</sup> Freud uses an optical instrument as an analogy for the mental apparatus, writing 'we should picture the instrument which carries out our mental functions as resembling a compound microscope or a photographic apparatus, or something of the kind' (Freud, 1953a, p.536) [1900]. His discussion of this model of perception is discussed in Chapter five.

act looking. The eye is the 'locus of visual perception' but 'it also represents one of the primary axes along which projection occurs' (Silverman, 1996, p.163). The look can 'conjure something new into existence' (Silverman, 1996, p.169). Lacan describes the gaze as a fundamental phenomenon in which a 'person feels their 'becoming an object for the gaze of others' (Lacan, 1988, p.215) [1975]. It is not the fact of seeing another person's eyes; it can be felt without seeing or knowing that someone is looking: 'All that is necessary is for something to signify to me that there may be others there' (Lacan, 1988, p.215) [1975]. The eye is not necessarily required, 'it could just as easily be the window behind which we assume he is lying in wait' (Lacan, 1988, p.220) [1975]. It is reciprocal in that others know that you know that you are an object for the gaze of others (Lacan, 1988, p.215) [1975]. The gaze is 'the object when faced with which the subject becomes object' (Lacan, 1988, p.220) [1975]. Rosalind Krauss points to Walter Benjamin as an early source for discussion of the gaze (Krauss, 1994, p.144, notes). In *On Some Motifs in Baudelaire* Benjamin discusses the reciprocity of the gaze, writing:

the camera records our likeness without returning our gaze. But looking at someone carries the implicit expectation that our look will be returned by the object of our gaze (Benjamin, 1970b, p.190) [1939].

There is at least an expectation that a look will be returned. The gaze's reciprocity is important to the proposal that imagination can be transformative because it suggests a visual process with social and cultural effects. If, following the argument in this thesis, imagination has a relationship with perceptual image and the act of seeing includes a mechanism for social effect, it would follow that imagination can have a social effect. However, the account here of the unconscious eye additionally proposes a different mechanism that opposes looking to seeing.

This chapter will introduce evidence that Höch's ideas were influenced by psychoanalysis, both from examples in her work and through an examination of context. The quantity of references by Höch to ideas and terms from psychoanalysis makes a compelling case for its theoretical importance. Connections between Höch's work and ideas from psychoanalysis are revealed most immediately in the practices involving chance and coincidence in Surrealism. This is a movement with which Höch aligned herself to a degree. André Breton's writing about the chance method in Surrealism refers directly to Freud. Starting with the connections made by Breton between imagination and the unconscious, the importance of chance and coincidence to Höch will be explored. Krauss discusses Surrealism as a critique of modernism in

*The Optical Unconscious*, arguing that some writers on modernism have repressed an optical unconscious (Krauss, 1994). She points to Benjamin's use of the term 'optical unconscious' asking whether the visual world can have an unconscious:

It is through the camera that we first discover the optical unconscious, just as we first discover the instinctual unconscious through psychoanalysis.

Moreover, these two types of unconscious are intimately linked. For in most cases the diverse aspects of reality captured by the film camera lie outside only the *normal* spectrum of sense impressions. Many of the deformations and stereotypes, transformations and catastrophes which can assail the optical world in films afflict the actual world in psychoses, hallucinations, and dreams (Benjamin, 2008c, pp.37–38) [1935-1936].

The world, both visible and invisible, may not have an unconscious, as a world of phenomena and things, but, Krauss considers, there may be a collective unconscious being referred to by Benjamin, and perhaps also by Freud in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (Freud, 1955c, pp.65–144) [1921].<sup>135</sup> Höch's involvement in the Mynona-Segal circle, a monthly discussion meeting that included psychoanalysts among the guests further supports the importance of psychoanalytic theory to her project. The argument here is that the unconscious is essential to Höch's radical imagination. Many characteristic features of Höch's work such as opposites, doubles, dolls, repetition and the removal of heads can be found in Freud's discussion of *The Uncanny*, in which eyes play an important role. Finally, a speculative re-interpretation of the 1930 photomontage, *Marlene*, will be made, using the figure of the unconscious eye.

### Surrealism, psychoanalysis and chance

The wider context of Surrealism and Dada suggests a psychoanalytic avenue of enquiry. Höch told Edouard Roditi that Dada began, 'after 1922, to develop along lines similar to those of the Paris surrealists' (Höch, 1959b, p.70). She visited Paris in the same year that Breton's *Manifesto of Surrealism* was published (Breton, 1972) [1924].<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Freud's mass psychology is returned to later in this chapter.

<sup>136</sup> Breton's first *Manifesto of Surrealism* was written in 1924 and reprinted in 1929, with the *Second Manifesto of Surrealism* following in 1930. It is the 1972 translation by Richard Seaver and Helen Lane that is referred to here. This edition includes both manifestoes, together with some later writings, first published together in Paris in 1962, as *Manifestes du Surrealisme* (Breton, 1972).

Höch later exhibited alongside Surrealists in New York, in 1937, in a show titled *Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism* (Museum of Modern Art, 1936) and in Berlin, in 1946, at the exhibition at the *Galerie Gerd Rosen* for which Höch wrote *Fantastische Kunst* ('Fantastic Art'), 1946 (Höch, 2008) [1946]. Höch's relationship to Surrealism is not an uncomplicated alignment, but there is some correspondence between Höch and other Surrealist writers and artists, including in the use of chance.<sup>137</sup>

Photomontage, as any composite image, is a spatial and temporal co-occurrence of two or more images. The related method of montage in film is a temporal version of coincidence or simultaneity. The cross-section, discussed in Chapter three, represents an abstracted spatial version of coincidence. Coincidence has a role in metaphor where connection can be implied through simultaneity or coincidence. Coincidence is also an important idea in psychoanalysis, as will be discussed later in this chapter. George Brecht discusses chance in Dada and Surrealism, as well as in Jackson Pollock's work, in *Chance-Imagery*, 1966 (Brecht, 1966). The gap between intention and action, created by the use of chance by artists is discussed in Margaret Iversen, *Chance*, 2010 (Iversen, 2010). The type of chance techniques used by the Surrealists through automatism or by Pollock in his drip paintings aim to allow unconscious thoughts to be made apparent. Using the chance techniques, conscious intention is bypassed and unconscious ideas and motivations are revealed (Iversen, 2010, pp.20–21). Many artists and writers link chance, as a creative technique, to the unconscious, and to revolutionary aims. Breton, for instance, connects imagination to the unconscious:

a part of our mental world which we pretended not to be concerned with any longer – and, in my opinion by far the most important part – has been brought back to light. For this we must give thanks to the discoveries of Sigmund Freud. On the basis of these discoveries a current of opinion is finally forming by means of which the human explorer will be able to carry his investigation much further, authorized as he will henceforth be not to confine himself solely to the most summary realities. The imagination is perhaps on the point of reasserting itself, of reclaiming its rights (Breton, 1972, p.10) [1924].

In connecting imagination with the unconscious as part of a psychic reality, Breton attaches imagination to the revolutionary aims of Surrealism. Moreover, his definition

of Surrealism (from the *Manifesto of Surrealism*, 1924) gives priority to techniques of chance, in the form of automatism, stressing the absence of the control of reason:

SURREALISM, *n.* Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express—verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner—the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by the thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern (Breton, 1972, p.26) [1924].

Psychoanalysis through chance techniques is used in Dada and Surrealism in an attempt to change society, rather than to cure individuals.

Höch describes her use of chance techniques in *Die Fotomontage*, first published in 1934. This text was written by Höch as a journal article, and originally published in Czech in *Stredisko* to coincide with a solo show in Brno, Czechoslovakia. The later version that I refer to here is from 1946 when it re-appears in German as an exhibition catalogue text for *Fotomontage* at the *Galerie Gerd Rosen*.<sup>138</sup> This text contains a brief history and introduction to photomontage, including an outline of the use of montage by artists and filmmakers such as Sergei Eisenstein, Man Ray and El Lissitzky. The two versions differ, but the final paragraph is similar. In it, Höch writes:

Photomontage as an end in itself - as an image or graphic - is perhaps called upon to bring us the most imaginative creations of our time [...] an important prerequisite is abandon in the sense of lacking inhibition (but not lacking discipline) [...] we must be prepared for a journey of discovery and be receptive to the charms of coincidence that, here more than anywhere else, are extravagantly willing to endow our imagination (Höch, 1989a, p.219) [1946].

Here, Höch links coincidence with imagination, using the terms ‘fantasievollsten’ (most imaginative) and later ‘Fantasie’ (imagination or fantasy). She identifies lack of inhibition as a prerequisite for the ‘most imaginative creations’. Höch’s use of ‘Zufälligen’ suggests a fortuitous chance occurrence (Höch, 1989a, p.219) [1946]. While chance and coincidence are not synonymous, there are types of coincidence that

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<sup>138</sup> *A Few Words on Photomontage* is translated in Lavin’s *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Höch, 1993) [1934]. It was published in *Stredisko* in Czech in 1934, having been translated from German to Czech by František Kalivoda and it was subsequently translated from Czech to English by Jitka Salaguarda (Lavin, 1993, p.220).

*Die Fotomontage*, 1946, is from the booklet for the exhibition 'Fotomontage', Gerd Rosen Gallery, 1946, republished in Moortgat and Thater-Schulz’s, *Hannah Höch 1889-1978: ihr Werke, ihr Leben, ihre Freunde* (Höch, 1989a) [1946].

include chance happenings that have the appearance of significance, or, in Freud's terms, point to the logical connections of the unconscious. In *Die Fotomontage*, Höch reveals the importance of freedom from inhibition in her working process, and of chance, linking both to imagination. For the journey of revelation to unfold, the artist must be free of inhibitions and receptive to coincidence, to be brought to their imaginative act. Coincidences may have the appearance of insignificance or chance, but can reveal connections. Höch claims that it is the charms of coincidence that endow the artist's imagination during the process of photomontage, but both the motor processes of gathering the visual material and the initial choices made in combining it in a new image before the artist applies any aesthetic discipline to the process, could fall into Freud's category of indifferent decisions, those that could apparently have as easily been made differently but which, in Freud's account, can have an unconscious motivation.

The 'charms of coincidence' enrich the imagination because they reveal unconscious thoughts and desires. As with dream, connections between elements are not by chance. Breton describes '*objective chance*' as:

the locus of manifestations so exciting for the mind, and a place where there filters in a light so close to being able to be considered that of revelation (Breton, 1972, p.268) [1935].

He associates chance and coincidence with something close to revelation (Breton, 1972, p.268) [1935]. It is with image and metaphor, as a particular type of image, that the poet recaptures 'the concrete vitality that logical habits of thought are about to cause him to lose' (Breton, 1972, p.268) [1935]. This could perhaps be compared to Höch's search for hidden beauty. In *Die Fotomontage*, Höch appears to suggest the absence of agency, placing it instead in the material through chance. But not entirely, as she also emphasises discipline as the artist applies the 'rules' of form and composition. The process she describes is not 'exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern', as is Breton's automatism, and Höch refers to a psychic agency when she writes: '[a]nd there also has to be a person behind the work whose inner structure compels them testify to something in this way' (Höch, 1989a, p.219) [1946].<sup>139</sup> Gaston Bachelard argues that '[o]ne must be receptive, receptive to the image at the moment it appears'. The distinction made by Bachelard between the creative production of

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<sup>139</sup> 'muß auch hier ein Mensch dahinter stehen, dessen innere Struktur ihn zwingt, auf diese Weise etwas auszusagen.'

image and a receptiveness toward image may have something in common with Höch's focus on receptiveness in that it tends to distance a person from the consciously willed act that creates image, while not entirely removing their agency (Bachelard, 1994, p.xv) [1957]. It suggests a possibly unconscious and revelatory contribution to seeing.

Freedom from inhibition during the making process is just one area of freedom valued by Höch. She also prefers a stylistic freedom, saying to Roditi:

I could understand Mondrian's art, but I have never felt any need for as rational a style. I need more freedom and, though capable of appreciating a style that is less free than my own, have always preferred to allow myself a maximum of freedom' (59b, p.73).

Freedom from convention is important in both Dada and Surrealism. Dada artists, including Höch practised social nonconformity in dress and behaviour. In doing so they challenged everyday expectations of social presentation, revealing these acts as conventions. This had political intentions, for example, the adoption of anglicised names by George Grosz and John Heartfield (previously Georg Grosz and Helmut Herzfeld) during a period of intense militaristic nationalism in 1916. Höch's and others' refusals to conform to the heteronormative ideal are equally political in intention and can also be understood in terms of psychoanalysis, as for example by Judith Butler, in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity* (Butler, 1990). In this text Butler discusses the idea of the masquerade, the construction and performance of gender. Höch's non-conformism connects political freedom to freedom of thought. Breton wrote that 'Surrealism, such as I conceive of it, asserts our complete *nonconformism* clearly enough so that there can be no question of translating it, at the trial of the real world, as evidence for the defence' (Breton, 1972, p.47) [1924]. Höch's valuing of freedom is also more all-encompassing: she refers to 'Endless freedom for HH' in the photomontage *Dada-Rundschau*. Breton's homage to imagination in the *Manifesto of Surrealism* is made in defence of freedom of thought, the misuse of which, he writes, enslaves and reduces the imagination:

Beloved imagination, what I most like in you is your unsparing quality.

The mere word "freedom" is the only one that still excites me. I deem it capable of indefinitely sustaining the old human fanaticism. It doubtless satisfies my only legitimate aspiration. Among all the many misfortunes to which we are heir, it is only fair to admit that we are allowed the greatest degree of freedom of thought. It is up to us not to misuse it. To reduce the imagination to a state of slavery—even though it would mean the elimination of what is commonly called happiness—is to betray all sense of absolute justice within oneself (Breton, 1972, p.4) [1924].

Freedom, from inhibition and censorship is prioritised by Höch, and by Surrealists, and connected by both to imagination, and here to radical imagination. This is in keeping with the aim to help people experience a richer world in the hope that they might behave more benevolently, underpinning Höch's practice with an ethical imperative.

In Freud's writing about dream, psychological material is censored through a variety of superficial connections made through verbal ambiguity, coincidence, or jokes and puns. These methods for connecting ideas are used frequently by Höch. Freud writes that:

*Whenever one psychological element is linked with another by an objectionable or superficial association, there is also a legitimate and deeper link between them which is subjected to the resistance of the censorship* (Freud, 1953b, p.530) [1900].

Höch described to Pagé the feeling of release from the stifling restrictions of political and literary censorship in the period before the Weimar Republic was proclaimed. She said, '[w]e had all been constricted by a corset and then released into the wild' (Pagé, 1976, p.25)<sup>140</sup> The release described by Höch is metaphoric and external to the body, but her writing about abandon, inhibition and preconceptions suggests that for Höch the censorship she struggled with was also internal. Censorship as a factor in Höch's work has continued in some respects after her death, for example, in the censorship of her archive,<sup>141</sup> in the almost desperate refusal by some writers of the sexual in her work (whilst nevertheless explaining her work through her personal relationships), and in the attempts to excise Höch from history by her erstwhile colleagues in Berlin Dada, and which continue to affect the reception and interpretation of her work. During her life there were multiple censors at work, including social and political censors. Conditions of censorship inevitably teach metaphorical, allegorical, ambivalent and coded speech. Individual internalised censorship can remain, and may provide a difference in material produced through processes that encourage avoiding inhibition.

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<sup>140</sup> 'Wir waren alle wie in ein Korsett eingeschnürt gewesen und wurden nun in die Freiheit entlassen, automatisch. Doch nicht nur die Dadaisten. Was sich und wie es sich zutrug in dieser Zeit, ist beispiellos. Die Arbeiter mit Spartakus, die Philanthropen mit Anti-Krieg auf allen Gebieten, die Militaristen mit Putsch, die Anarchisten mit Terror oder Individualanarchismus, die Religionen zugewandt, und die Suffragetten machten die Frauenbewegungen geltend.'

<sup>141</sup> Barchan observes a notable lack of correspondence between Höch and Brugman in the Höch archive, suggesting censorship has taken place (Barchan, 2009, p.21 n13).



What may be described as an aleatory process could, in actuality, be under the agency of psychic motivation involving the unconscious, revealing the existence of the repressed.

## Politicising the unconscious

*Schaufensterhypnose* (Shop Window Hypnosis), 1935, written by Brugman and illustrated by Höch, demonstrates the importance of a psychoanalytic understanding of looking to the political in Höch's project. This short story was published in Berlin two years after the infamous Nazi book burning, including at the Hirschfeld Institute that will be discussed later in this chapter. As such the publication itself can be understood as a political act. In this story Brugman and Höch depict shopping as a pathological activity following on from seeing goods in shop windows (Brugman, 1935a). While hypnosis is a pre-psychoanalytic concept, with psychoanalysis representing a departure from hypnosis as a treatment, Freud wrote extensively about hypnosis in his pre-psychoanalytic writing. For example, the first volume of the standard edition, *Pre-Psycho-Analytic Publications and Unpublished Drafts, 1886-1899*, stresses the importance to Freud of Jean-Martin Charcot and contains Freud's report on Charcot's studies on hysteria and hypnotism together with some translations of Charcot's work on hypnotism and a review of August Forel's *Hypnotism* (Freud, 1966b) [1886-1889]. Freud's writing on group or mass psychology is relevant to the politics of the 1930s in Germany. *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* begins with a long quotation from Gustave Le Bon, which Freud argues makes 'quite clear that Le Bon explains the condition of an individual in a group as being actually hypnotic' (Freud, 1955c, p.76) [1921]. Freud argues that the group mind is held together by some kind of power. He argues that this power is the sexual instinct, offering that '[a]nyone who considers sex as something mortifying and humiliating to human nature is at liberty to make use of the more genteel expressions "Eros" and "erotic" ' (Freud, 1955c, p.91) [1921]. He uses as examples two organised groups, churches and armies. In both there is a leader 'who loves all the individuals in the group with an equal love' and there are strong emotional ties between members, as well as between individuals and the leader (Freud, 1955c, p.94) [1921]. Turning to other groups, Freud notes that intimate relations between people contain hostility but within a group there are also mutual ties of empathy and identification. The lack of emotional restraint of members and their tendency to act on those extreme emotions 'show an unmistakable picture of a regression of mental activity' (Freud, 1955c, p.117) [1921]. Freud argues that hypnosis

is a group with two members. Additionally hypnosis is observed to create the effect of the uncanny. A hypnotist works using the look: the subject looks into the hypnotist's eyes.<sup>142</sup> 'Shop Window Hypnosis' includes both the gaze implied by the idea of windows as eyes, and the shopper's gaze, compelling them to endlessly buy. Shop window hypnosis deals with a fictional impact of mass culture and capitalism, using an idea that is related to an extent to psychoanalysis, that of hypnosis. In doing so the creators connect the power of the act of seeing with social and political effects. *Schaufensterhypnose* supports, therefore, the figure of the unconscious eye in Höch's radical imagination proposed here, in its allusion to the psychoanalytic discussion of mass psychology that Höch was thoroughly conversant with and in the significance it attaches to looking.

There is further evidence that Höch associated psychoanalysis with her radically transformative aims. Höch wrote that early in her career her art developed away from propaganda:

I have not ceased since DADA to occupy myself with these glued small-picture forms, after I had pushed back the propagandistic element. To this day I make collages, they are attempts to sublimate the aesthetic element into what is for me its ultimate possibilities (Höch, 1989d, p.197) [1958].<sup>143</sup>

Höch does not elaborate on what these ultimate possibilities are but her statement about pushing back the propagandistic element acknowledges a tension between an art that embodies freedom and the art of propaganda. It does not, however, indicate a shift away from the political or her radical intention. The movement in this statement from the past, through the present and into the future coincides with Höch's use of the psychoanalytic term, 'sublimieren', indicating that an engagement with psychoanalysis is involved in this shift from propaganda to a conception of art in its ultimate possibilities. Freud uses 'Sublimation' at least as early as 1905 (other than in published correspondence) in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*.

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<sup>142</sup> Freud also observes here that Moses was an intermediary because people could not survive the sight of God.

<sup>143</sup> *Lebensüberlick* ('Life-overview') is published in Moortgat and Thater-Schultz (Moortgat and Thater-Schulz, 1989, pp.195–212).

'Ich habe seit DADA nicht aufgehört, mich mit dieser geklebten Kleinbildform zu beschäftigen, nachdem ich das propagandistische Element zurückgedrängt hatte. Bis heute mache ich Collagen; es sind Versuche, das ästhetische Element bis in die für mich letzten Möglichkeiten zu sublimieren'.

The progressive concealment of the body which goes along with civilization keeps sexual curiosity awake. This curiosity seeks to complete the sexual object by revealing its hidden parts. It can, however, be diverted ('sublimated') in the direction of art, if its interest can be shifted away from the genitals on to the shape of the body as a whole (Freud, 1953c, p.155) [1905].

It is described by Freud, in *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, as an 'expedient' process of development:

in which the energy of the infantile wishful impulses is not cut off but remains ready for use – the unserviceable aim of the various impulses being replaced by one that is higher, and perhaps no longer sexual (Freud, 1957a, pp.53–54) [1910].

In *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, sublimation is a process by which a pathogenic wish is directed to a 'higher and consequently unobjectionable aim' and sexual curiosity is diverted or sublimated towards art, whereas in Höch's use, it is the aesthetic element of photomontage that is sublimated toward something else, unspecified (Freud, 1957a, p.28) [1910]. Whereas propaganda is superficial, the 'ultimate' possibilities opened in her work are radical in that they reveal realities of thought and feeling. The potential contradiction inherent in Höch's simultaneous refusal of propaganda while nevertheless pursuing social change through her art is reconciled through the inclusion of a psychoanalytic unconscious with both individual and social relevance. This thesis argues that the negotiation that Höch describes between propaganda and an aesthetic element involves the unconscious and the imagination.

After the Russian Revolution artists shared with writers of the Frankfurt School the question of where to stand in relation to the German Communist Party and the Weimar Republic (Jay, 1996). Psychoanalysis was faced with a similar issue of whether it could or should be a political force, as proposed for instance by Otto Gross. A politicised psychoanalysis is emphasised by some Frankfurt School theorists, for example, Eric Fromm and later Herbert Marcuse. In Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*, imagination is emancipatory in allowing people to envision a better future and is linked to ideas from psychoanalysis (Marcuse, 1956). Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950* charts connections between the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research and psychoanalysis, including the varying attitudes to psychoanalysis and attempts to integrate Freud's writing with that of Karl Marx (Jay, 1996a). There are further important coincidental connections between the Frankfurt School, Berlin and psychoanalysis: many Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute members were trained in Berlin, and, '[t]he FPI shared rooms,

staff and students with the Institute for Social Research and was a crucial initial catalyst for Max Horkheimer's and Theodor Adorno's development of critical theory' (Fuechtner, 2011, p.10). Benjamin uses the language of psychoanalysis together with the language of Marxism. His media analysis argues that transformations in society change people's perception. Höch and other artists reverse this, suggesting that art can change perception and thereby change society. The Surrealists used psychoanalytic ideas for explicitly revolutionary ends. 'Revolutionary', according to Breton, being a term used ambiguously: 'We know that the adjective "revolutionary" is generously applied to every work, to every intellectual creator who appears to break with tradition' (Breton, 1972, p.212) [1935]. He argues that the application of the term to describe the 'indisputable nonconformist' should not be confused with its meaning as 'a systematic action aiming at the transformation of the world and implying the necessity of concretely attacking its real bases' (Breton, 1972, p.213) [1935]. The discovery or use of new or unusual techniques in art is not sufficient, even if those artists describe themselves as being revolutionary. The unconscious is a key factor in Breton's revolution. The 'transformation of society' requires that 'a whole world of unavowable prejudices' that 'keep coming up from the marshy bottom, from the unconscious of the individual' be addressed (Breton, 1972, p.225) [1935].<sup>144</sup> Breton argues that the:

transformation of society will be truly effective and complete only when we have put an end to these corrupting germs. We will put an end to them only by agreeing to rehabilitate the study of the ego so as to be able to integrate it with that of the collective being' (Breton, 1972, p.225) [1935].

The unconscious is put into effect collectively in order to create concrete change in material conditions. There is no contradiction therefore between the aim of concrete transformation of society and the method of imagination, including the unconscious. Imagination, which Breton connects to the unconscious, is not, in this framework, the antithesis of material reality.

Given these connections between art, psychoanalysis and some Frankfurt School writers, it is interesting to ask whether and to what extent a Marxist materialism contradicts or supports the model of radical imagination constructed so far. Leon Trotsky defends art from the requirement to demonstrably align with materialism, writing: 'But what is one to say about the psychoanalytic theory of Freud? Can it be reconciled with materialism, as, for instance, Karl Radek thinks (and I also), or is it

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<sup>144</sup> Breton quotes himself from *Vases communicants* in *Political Position of Today's Art* (Breton, 1972, p.223) [1935].

hostile to it?' (Trotsky, 1992b, p.57) [1924]. Breton, as has been seen, had no difficulty in reconciling a psychoanalytic unconscious with Marxist materialism, and including both in a revolutionary art intended to transform society. Berlin Dadaists and their associates responded in different ways to the Russian revolution in the German context. Franz Jung, for example, joined the German Communist Party but then left to join the German Communist Workers' Party (KPD). Grosz, Heartfield and Herzfelde were all KPD members (Doherty, 2003, p.82). Brigid Doherty writes that Höch possessed Vladimir Lenin's *State and Revolution*, 1917, and a text described as '*Der Radikalismus*'. While Doherty does not claim that the Berlin Dadaists directly responded to Lenin's text, she suggests the argument it contained against the 'anarchist radicalism and petit-bourgeois revolutionism' of the extreme left in Germany had an effect on Dadaist artists and their work (Doherty, 2003, p.81). The Berlin Dadaists' strong commitment to material in art is in this context. Of interest here is the critique that Lenin made of Ernst Mach's 'empirio-criticism' in which the existence of an external world is considered to be a construct of mind. Lenin criticised this as solipsistic and idealistic. Mach was an influential figure who emphasised sensation rather than matter as being the basis for fact. He argued that the world is not perceived directly, but is always influenced by previous experience. In this argument he influenced Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. Lenin took against his ideas in a polemical text arguing that the materialist takes matter as primary, and consciousness as secondary (Lenin, 1927) [1909].

### The 'Mynona-Segal-circle'

Höch described regular discussion meetings in Berlin, the 'Mynona-Segal-circle', hosted by Arthur Segal and Friedländer (Höch, 1989d, p.197) [1958].<sup>145</sup> These are described by Kristin Makhholm as the 'Monday soirées at the studio of Arthur Segal, which became a monthly fixture of Berlin intellectual life for many years' (Makhholm, 1996, p.189). In 1958, Höch wrote:

[i]n the following years, many people came into my life and many others also crossed it, not without leaving unforgettable impressions. New interesting people always flooded through the Mynona-Segal-circle at the regular meetings. Likewise, later on, with Dr. Ernst Simmel, Freud and psychoanalysis

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<sup>145</sup> 'Mynona-Segal-Kreis'.

set the tone, even when Ernst Simmel had settled in Tegel and established a sanatorium on a psychoanalytic basis (Höch, 1989d, p.197) [1958].<sup>146</sup>

An early meeting is illustrated in a letter from Hausmann in 1921, showing Herwarth Walden, Segal, Friedländer, Ernestine Segal and Hausmann sitting around a round table in relaxed discussion, Figure 87. These were meetings for artists, philosophers and theorists to bring together ideas and art, with practical outcomes in the participants' individual work:

In 1922 [Segal] began experimenting with “prismatic painting”, a formula for pictorial images deriving from his definition of “equi-balance” and from his exchange of ideas with his friend the Goethian philosopher Salomo Friedländer-Mynona (Arnaldo, n.d.).

These meetings are described, in Heinz Ohff's biography of Höch, as monthly occurrences, held for many years on the first Monday of each month, with regular attendees and a stream of visitors. Erich Bucholz, the constructivist artist, is named as an occasional visitor, also the novelist Alfred Döblin who had links to the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute (Ohff, 1968).

Of those involved in the Mynona-Segal meetings, two are especially associated with psychoanalysis: Ernst Simmel, and the co-host Segal. Simmel was a prominent Berlin psychoanalyst who Höch, ‘Oh, Ernst Simmel, Freudians, there was often an experienced guest’ (Höch in Ohff, 1968, p.28).<sup>147</sup> Simmel introduced psychoanalytic techniques into the treatment of what was known at the time as war neurosis. He also wrote *Psychoanalysis of the Masses*, 1919. Simmel's *On the Psychoanalysis of War Neurosis*, 1921, concerns experiences that are also the subject of Dadaist art.<sup>148</sup> He was head of the German Psychoanalytic Society and led the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute after the death of Karl Abraham. Segal was an artist and friend of Friedländer's with a

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<sup>146</sup> ‘In den folgenden Jahren traten sehr viele Menschen in mein Leben, und viele andere kreuzten es auch nur, nicht ohne unvergeßliche Eindrücke zu hinterlassen. Durch den Mynona-Segal-Kreis fluteten an der regelmäßigen Jours immer neue, interessante Menschen. Ebenso später bei Dr. Ernst Simmel, wo Freud und die Psychoanalyse den Ton angaben, auch dann noch, als sich Ernst Simmel in Tegel niedergelassen hatte und ein Sanatorium auf psychoanalytischer Basis eingerichtet hatte.’

<sup>147</sup> ‘Ach *Ernst Simmel*, Freudianer, war da oft erlebter Gast.’

<sup>148</sup> Doherty examines Berlin Dada in relation to trauma, specifically that caused by war, in “See: “*We Are All Neurasthenics!*” or, *the Trauma of Dada Montage*, 1997 (Doherty, 1997).

particular interest in psychoanalysis. As a Zurich Dadaist Segal had exhibited with Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter and was a co-founder of the Die Neue Seession and founder of Novembergruppe (Arnaldo, n.d.). Fuechtner describes some of Friedländer's writing as 'psychoanalytic fiction'; Simmel appears in Friedländer's *Grey Magic*, 1922 (Fuechtner, 2011, p.112).

In addition to Höch's engagement with psychoanalysis through her involvement in the Mynona-Segal-circle, Berlin Dada had been formatively influenced by psychoanalysis both through Weimar culture, and also through the philosophy of Gross. Psychoanalysis, like Dada, crossed borders and had a number of centres, such as, Vienna, Zurich, Munich and Berlin. The connections between Dada and psychoanalysis included 'the mechanisms of the unconscious, repression, and displacement, along with the temporal and sensory simultaneity and anarchy of the id' (Fuechtner, 2011, p.151). In *Berlin Psychoanalytic*, 2011, Fuechtner argues that 'Weimar Republic culture is inseparable from the psychoanalytic discourse' on certain issues. She connects themes such as 'Dada, multiperspectivity, and the urban experience' to the psychoanalysis of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute and concludes that '[t]he emergence of psychoanalysis is closely connected to the cultural history of modernism' (Fuechtner, 2011, p.1,5). Psychoanalysis was topical in Berlin during this period. Abraham had come to Berlin in 1908, 'going where no analyst dared tread', with Berlin at that time 'a bastion of German academic psychiatry' (Makari, 2008, p.367). Over the next few years this changed: 'where Wilhelm's Berlin had been cool towards Karl Abraham and the Freudians, Weimar Berlin swooned over them' (Makari, 2008, p.369). Simmel became a leading figure in Berlin psychoanalysis: 'After the Budapest Conference of 1918, Max Eitingon and Ernst Simmel returned to the defeated capital of Germany intent on bringing psychoanalysis to the masses' (Makari, 2008, p.369). Simmel treated soldiers during the First World War, and in February 1920 opened a psychoanalytic clinic, the Poliklinik, in Potsdamer Strasse. There was a lack of analysts so they began to recruit students. The Berlin Poliklinik 'offered the most rigorous and structured education in psychoanalysis in the world' (Makari, 2008, p.372). Berlin became the model for other psychoanalysis centres, such as New York and London. In 1927, Simmel founded the first psychoanalytic hospital in Schloss Tegel, to which Höch refers in *Lebensüberblick* (Höch, 1989d) [1958]. Psychoanalysis was already a strong influence on the artists who became the Berlin Dadaists before Höch joined the group.

Gross had played a part both in the early history of psychoanalysis and that of Berlin Dada, publishing in the left-wing Expressionist journal *Die Aktion* (Taylor, 1990a, p.100). Before arriving in Berlin, he had studied psychiatry in Austria working in Kraepelin's laboratory. He left in 1906 to go to Munich advocating revolution: 'Gross championed the view that a society free of repression would cure neurosis' (Makari, 2008, p.230). Gross brought to Berlin Dada the idea that psychoanalysis could have revolutionary application:

The problem with all previous revolutions, Gross noted, was that revolutionaries themselves became authoritarians, quickly ending the revolution with a call for normalcy and order. The reason for this is that the basic cause of authoritarianism lies in the patriarchal family structure (Taylor, 1990a, p.100).

He called for women's emancipation and wrote about a possible matriarchal society. Gross's views on this issue were debated with Ludwig Rubiner in *Die Aktion*, with Gross particularly objecting to a comment about women not being directed by the free spirit. Gross argued that 'any real revolution must include the woman, freedom and *Geist* in one' (Taylor, 1990a, p.100). In 1913, Gross became notorious in Berlin after his arrest, at his father's request, with the help of Carl Jung: 'The arrest caused a major uproar in Expressionist circles' (Taylor, 1990a, p.105). During his absence however, Franz Jung continued to promote Gross's ideas in the Berlin journal *Die Freie Straße*, in which Hausmann also published. Seth Taylor argues that Hausmann's political philosophy 'originated in the psychological theories of Gross' (Taylor, 1990a, p.202). Bleuer and Gross 'were the poles of the Freudian community' (Makari, 2008, p.223). Artists in Berlin in the Dada and Expressionist circles had a longstanding and close exposure to psychoanalysis, firstly through Gross and later through Arthur Segal, Simmel, Döblin and others. Gross's notoriety, and the close proximity to Höch of his published writing, make it probable that Höch was familiar with his ideas. Any Dada influence on Höch, therefore, already had a psychoanalytic character.



Figure 87.

## *The 'Uncanny'*

This section will consider examples of psychoanalytic themes and ideas in Höch's work. Freud's discussion of the 'uncanny' includes many subjects that are characteristic of Höch's work, including: opposites, doubles, dolls, repetition and eyes. *The 'Uncanny'* is also a further example in Freud's writing, besides the *Interpretation of Dreams* and the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in which coincidence is important. *The 'Uncanny'* was published in German in different editions between 1919 and 1924. The feeling of the 'uncanny' is described as a special type of frightening feeling, to which people vary in their sensitivity, but which is recognisable to most, involving a fright that relates to an uncertainty leading back to the familiar.

### Opposites

In *The 'Uncanny'*, 1919, Freud explores the linguistic uses of the terms 'Heimlich' and 'Unheimlich' as ambivalent opposites that eventually coincide. 'Heimlich' is found to mean familiar, comfortable, tame, cosy *and* occult or magical, mystic, allegorical or withdrawn from knowledge. At the same time, Freud finds instances in different dictionaries where the linguistic opposite, 'unheimlich' is found to mean concealed, sinister, repulsive, uncomfortable, wild, gruesome or demonic. Freud observes from this that, '*heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*' (Freud, 1955, p. 226). There are numerous examples of opposites in Höch's work. In *Zweigesichtig* ('Two-faced'), c. 1928, Figure 88, Höch creates a composite head that looks simultaneously in opposite directions. Similarly, *Der Zeitungsleser* (Figure 66) also contains a two-faced figure. Floris Neusüss photographed Höch in 1962, looking into a mirror toward her own multiplied reflections or opposites, Figure 89.

### Doubles

In *The 'Uncanny'* the double is closely related to the opposite. Through the opposition of language in *The 'Uncanny'*, '*[u]nheimlich* is in some way or other a sub-species of *heimlich*' and the opposite is therefore also another version of the original, or a double (Freud, 1955d, p.226) [1919]. A feeling of the 'uncanny' can be aroused by the idea that the double, as well as looking like the original, might share some mental processes with it or possess some of its knowledge, feelings and experience. Alternatively, it can be caused by the idea that someone is identified with so strongly that, 'he is in doubt as to which his self is' (Freud, 1955d, p.234) [1919]. Freud connects the uncanniness

of the double to a fear or denial of death in response to which the double begins as an ‘assurance of immortality’ before becoming ‘the uncanny harbinger of death’ (Freud, 1955d, p.235) [1919]. From Otto Rank, Freud presents the idea of the immortal soul being ‘the first “double” of the body’ connecting the theme of the double with reflections, shadows and spirits (Freud, 1955d, p.235) [1919]. Höch uses doubling, through shadows in *Die Sängerin* (Figure 34). Another example of doubles are the double exposure photographs of Höch, Figure 90 and Figure 91. Besides being doubles these photographs imply a narrative. They are composite images or montages, superimposing moments in time. The repetition introduces a conceptual gap between exposures.<sup>149</sup> Maud Lavin notes the doubling theme in Höch’s work, using as examples *Russische Tänzerin* (Meine Double) (‘Russian Dancer [My Double]’), 1928, Figure 92, and its apparent pair, *Englische Tänzerin* (‘English Dancer’), 1928, Figure 93. There are two ‘Dada Puppets’, which Höch exhibited, performed with and painted, Figure 94 and Figure 95.<sup>150</sup> From Ernst Jentsch, Freud attributes the uncanniness of dolls to an uncertainty about whether an inanimate object is alive, or to whether a human is animated by automatic or mechanical processes. The idea of dolls coming to life is associated with puppetry. Dolls also appear in the work of Hans Bellmer, an artist who had contact with the Berlin Dadaists.<sup>151</sup> Krauss explains that Bellmer,

casts the dolls again and again as phallic [...] This doll’s body, coded /female/ but figuring forth the male organ within a setting of dismemberment, carries with it the threat of castration. It is the doll as uncanny, the doll as *informe* (Krauss, 1994, p.172).

Freud notes that injury to the eyes is especially feared, an anxiety he argues is a substitute for a fear of castration (Freud, 1955d, p.231) [1919]. In dreams Freud finds that castration is often represented by ‘doubling or multiplication of a genital symbol’

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<sup>149</sup> Double exposure in photography and moving film was used by artists and filmmakers including Vertov and Eisenstein. Dawn Ades explains that the ‘use in film of dynamic, rapid intercutting, disrupting unity of time and space, and making comparisons and qualifications, the use of alternating close-up and distance shots, overlapping motifs, double exposures, and split screen projection, all have equivalents in photomontage’ (Ades, 1976b, p.15).

<sup>150</sup> Höch is also photographed dressed as one of her puppets, Figure 95. There are also many examples of puppets made by Sophie Taeuber-Arp, to which Höch’s puppets bear a striking resemblance.

<sup>151</sup> Bellmer, as noted in Chapter two, illustrated Friedländer’s *Das Eisenbahnglück oder der AntiFreud* (‘The Railway un-accident or the Anti-Freud’), 1925.

(Freud, 1955d, p.235) [1919]. Freud suggests that the double relates to a period of development during which ‘the ego had not yet marked itself off sharply from the external world and from other people’ (Freud, 1955d, p.236) [1919]. The relationship of the double to the development of the ego has particular resonance with the idea of an unconscious aspect to imagination because the demarcation of externality during development is psychically constructed or imagined. Since the state of separateness at issue is created within the psyche, rather than the fact of an objective external world creating a consciousness of separation, one of the earliest tasks of the psyche is to create separation within a perceptual construct.<sup>152</sup>

## Repetition

Another source of the feeling of the ‘uncanny’ can be the repetition of features, for example, getting lost and ending up back at the starting point, or the idea of ‘something fateful and inescapable when otherwise we should have spoken of “chance” ’ (Freud, 1955d, p.237) [1919]. Coincidence as an ‘uncanny’ example of repetition, such as, coming across the same number throughout the day, is explained by Freud in relation to the ‘dominance in the unconscious mind of a “compulsion to repeat” ’ (Freud, 1955d, p.238) [1919]. He explains further that, ‘whatever reminds us of this inner “compulsion to repeat” is perceived as uncanny’ (Freud, 1955d, p.238) [1919]. The familiarity of the ‘uncanny’ stems from its constitution by the recurrence of the repressed in a familiar but alienated version. Much of Höch’s photomontage has qualities of repetition, and recurrence of the familiar, in an estranged or alienated way, at its core. Familiar reproductions from mass culture recur, grotesquely or unrecognisably transformed.

## Eyes

Freud’s discussion of the ‘uncanny’ rests on the example of Ernst Hofmann’s *The Sand-Man* which brings together the theme of the double (and the related concept of splitting) with the eye, through the introduction of a variety of optical devices in the story with the ‘uncanny’ feeling being attached to the ‘idea of being robbed of one’s

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<sup>152</sup> The separation of the psyche during development is discussed by Lacan as occurring at the mirror stage, for example, in *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function*, where Lacan writes that the function of the mirror stage ‘is to establish a relationship between an organism and its reality – or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*’ (Lacan, 2006b) [1949].

eyes' (Freud, 1955d, p.230) [1919].<sup>153</sup> The Sand-Man, who rips out children's eyes, is identified with a lawyer called Coppelius and later recognised in the figure of an optician called Coppola who offers the main character 'weather-glasses', spectacles and a 'pocket spy-glass' (Freud, 1955d, pp.228–229) [1919]. The theme of the eye is also linked to the feeling of the 'uncanny' by Freud in the concept of the evil eye (in German – 'the evil look') where someone who possesses something valuable fears other people's envy.<sup>154</sup> When this fear is projected onto another person, a secret intention to harm is suspected. Höch depicts a range of optical devices such as spectacles and monocles in her work. Her working process makes use of the camera lens and the magnifying glass. For example, the *Russische Tänzerin* wears a monocle and *Grotesk* ('Grotesque'), 1963, Figure 96, includes a pair of spectacles.<sup>155</sup> *Lebensbild* ('Life-picture'), 1972-73, Figure 97, includes a printed reproduction of a photomontage in which Höch has a second set of eyes. In *Der Strauss* ('The Bouquet'), 1929-65, Figure 98, Höch creates a 'bouquet' of eyes.

The above examples are a small selection where subjects with relevance in psychoanalytic writing are found in Höch's work. The frequency of their appearance suggests they are significant. Further, in *The 'Uncanny'* they are connected in an account of aesthetic experience. Given the direct use of Freud by Surrealists such as Breton, who linked the unconscious to imagination, similar connections might exist in Höch's use of doubling and opposites. One of the earliest tasks of imagination, in constructing a sense of individuality, may have also created the symbolic importance of the double,

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<sup>153</sup> 'We know from psycho-analytic experience, however, that the fear of damaging or losing one's eyes is a terrible one in children. Many adults retain their apprehensiveness in this respect, and no physical injury is so much dreaded by them as an injury to the eye. We are accustomed to say, too, that we will treasure a thing as the apple of our eye. A study of dreams, phantasies and myths has taught us that anxiety about one's eyes, the fear of going blind, is often enough a substitute for the dread of being castrated' (Freud, 1955d, p.231) [1919].

<sup>154</sup> The evil eye is a form of superstition in which the fear of envy is projected onto others: 'A feeling like this betrays itself by a look even though it is not put into words; and when a man is prominent owing to noticeable, and particularly owing to unattractive, attributes, other people are ready to believe that his envy is rising to a more than usual degree of intensity and that this intensity will convert it into effective action. What is feared is thus a secret intention of doing harm, and certain signs are taken to mean that that intention has the necessary power at its command' (Freud, 1955d, p.240) [1919].

<sup>155</sup> Nero associates the monocle in Weimar culture with patriarchal and military power (Nero, 2013, p.59).

which in art emphasises the most fundamental processes of seeing. The aesthetic phenomena of the 'uncanny' is connected by Freud, and in the Sand-Man story and other writing on the uncanny, to the eye. Similarly, the figure of the unconscious eye that I propose in this chapter encompasses characteristics such as opposites and repetition, which lead to a process of perceptual vision that starts in the unconscious.

Figure 88.

Figure 89.



Figure 90.

Figure 91.

Figure 92.

Figure 93.

Figure 94.

Figure 95.

Figure 96.

Figure 97.



Figure 98.

## Höch's use of psychoanalytic ideas

In addition to the contextual relevance that psychoanalysis has Höch, there are examples of psychoanalytic terms and references in her work. Terms used by Höch which could have a psychoanalytic or at least a psychological meaning to her include: 'sublimate', 'latent', 'hypnosis', 'megalomania', 'psychoanalysis', 'over-compensation', 'hysterical' and 'inner-structure'. She also refers directly to 'psychoanalysis' 'Freudian', 'Freud' and 'Adler'. While the term 'megalomania' is a more general psychological term, it suggests an interest in psychology. In an undated text work, *Ausgebrochener Grössenwahn* ('Eruption of Megalomania'), Figure 99, Höch demonstrates the concepts of megalomania and eruption using both text and image with her repeated signature erupting visually on the page. The Höch archive contains a 1924 document from the *Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag*, a German language publishing house, described as 'Waschzettel [.] Sigmund Freud *Gesammelte Schriften*' ('Jacket text/blurb [.] Sigmund Freud *Complete Works*') (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.193). The complete works were published in German over a number of years and this indicates that Höch knew about the books, and could have read them. The term 'Sublimate' (also used by Friedrich Nietzsche) has already been discussed in relation to Höch's distinction between tendentious and aesthetic elements in the work. Höch uses the term 'latent' ('latent' in German) in an unsent letter from Höch to Kurt Matthies in 1942-43 where she makes a direct comparison between latent feelings in an emotional context and in the context of her work (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.663).<sup>156</sup> In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud explains that in addition to the manifest content of dreams there is the latent content, the thoughts behind the dream. The manifest content is consciously remembered, but the latent content is 'of far greater significance' (Freud, 1953b, p.163) [1900-1901]. Höch's use of the term suggests that she associated her creative work with her mental life. In this letter, Höch speculates about how their relationship might have been different, finding that the effects of feelings are compelling. She locates the evidence for this in her art, writing: 'That this is so I experience in my work. Many things live latently but always ready to be awakened' (Höch in Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.665).<sup>157</sup> The context of an unsent letter suggests that the language reflects her

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<sup>156</sup> This period of Höch's life is dealt with in detail in a biography by Cara Schweitzer, *Schrankenlose Freiheit für Hannah Höch* (Schweitzer, 2011).

<sup>157</sup> 'Dass es so ist erlebe ich in meinem Schaffen. Vieles lebt latent aber immer erweckungsbereit'.

personal beliefs rather than a public interpretation, such as might be found in her interviews or exhibition catalogues. Freud uses the term 'latent' to refer to the concealed dream thoughts 'lying behind' the dream (Freud, 1953a, p.118) [1900]. This is in contrast to the manifest content in that it is 'not conscious before an analysis has been carried out' (Freud, 1953a, p.144) [1900]. The latent content is described as a class of psychical material changed into the manifest content, so that they are 'two versions of the same subject-matter in two different languages' (Freud, 1953a, p.277) [1900]. In light of this meaning, Höch's reference to things that live latently in her work supports the idea that her working process could have been designed to access unconscious psychic material. The avoidance of inhibition in Höch's process was the necessary prerequisite in order to avoid undermining her imaginative vision through the preconceptions that would tend to exclude the 'charms of coincidence'; this could also be understood as the circumvention of the internal censorship that might otherwise strive to conceal the latent content of her work (Höch, 1989a, p.219) [1946].

Höch also mentions psychoanalysis in the short story *The Painter*, describing the protagonist as knowing 'enough about psychoanalysis to confront the woman with the truth that such demands always arise out of a desire to dominate' (Höch, 2003, p.322) [1920]. Lavin interprets this story as a parody of Hausmann, who, she writes, attempted 'to justify his psychological brutality and at times even physical violence towards Höch with psychoanalytic theory' (Lavin, 1993, p.27). Höch's caricature of the painter, including his use of psychoanalytic theory, indicates a critical approach to theory and its misuse:

As a modern person he felt that in theory he had to agree with the equality of the sexes – still, if one looked closely at the situation one could not – and then, especially in your own house – her demand seemed to him comparable to an enslavement of his soul... (Höch, 2003, p.322) [1920].

Here, Höch engages with psychoanalysis while mocking the notion of the (male) genius and his attitudes towards women. *The Painter* could be understood as an indirect critique of the behaviour of some colleagues in Berlin Dada, and their hypocritical use of psychoanalytic theory. In *Julie*, Höch refers to Freud, as well as Alfred Adler (Höch, 1995b, p.690).<sup>158</sup> *Julie* has an autobiographical theme: Julie comes to Berlin from a small town and works for a major publishing house on embroidery patterns (Burmeister and

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<sup>158</sup> This story is published in *Hannah Höch: Eine Lebenscollage* ('Hannah Höch: A Life Collage'), 1995, where it is described as an eight page typed manuscript with corrections (Höch, 1995b).

Fürus, 1995b, p.689). Terms such as 'Ueberkompensationen' (over compensation) and 'Hysterisch' (hysterical) are used (Höch, 1995b, p.690, 693). Freud describes over-compensation, in *Totem and Taboo*, 1913, as a way to disguise a hostile impulse in which:

the original wish that the loved person may die is replaced by a fear that he may die. So that when the neurosis appears to be so tenderly altruistic, it is merely compensating for an underlying contrary attitude of brutal egoism. We may describe as 'social' the emotions which are determined by showing consideration for another person without taking him as a sexual object. The receding into the background of these social factors may be stressed as a fundamental characteristic of neurosis, though one which is later disguised by over-compensation (Freud, 1955a, p.72) [1913].

*Julie* also contains two references to Friedländer's work. The first is to Friedländer's *Goethe contra Newton*, published in *Die Aktion 1* in 1911, demonstrating that Höch was familiar with editions of *Die Aktion* published before her arrival in Berlin, including those that contained articles by Gross. *Julie* also refers to Friedländer's grotesque tale *Rosa, die schöne Schutzmannsfrau* ('Rosa the Beautiful Policeman's Wife'), 1913 (Höch, 1995b, p.690). The combination of references to psychoanalysis and Friedländer's work shows that Höch incorporated ideas from different sources into her own conceptual amalgam. *Julie* is dense with imagery relating to power, gender and politics. The technology of city life, trams and electricity are presented as new and frightening experiences for Julie who knows nothing of modern life. Culture, fashion, art and architecture are densely woven into the story, alongside modern women, suffragettes, psychoanalysis, war, communism and the Republic. She pokes fun at the noble souls in the Café des Westens, her Expressionist colleagues. Höch engaged with ideas from psychoanalysis, albeit not uncritically, or as a justification performed after making the work. The misuse of psychoanalysis by her colleagues also reinforces psychoanalytic theory in pointing to unconscious resistance to potential loss of power, for example to women as a result of the newly gained suffrage. Höch combined ideas to create a theorisation of imagination with a radical and politicised unconscious aspect. Her concept of a radical imagination is not replaced by a psychoanalytic unconscious, but rather includes the unconscious.

A combination of the characteristics of opposition, doubling, eyes and repetition can be found in the two paintings, *Die Journalisten* ('The Journalists'), 1925, and *Roma*, ('Rome'), 1925, Figure 100 and Figure 101. These two paintings hang side by side in the Berlinische Galerie and it seems likely they were painted as a pair. *Die Journalisten* is the simpler of the two. It contains six figures. The overall visual effect is as if the painting had been organised in distinct separate layers, as a collage. Taking the

figures in turn, in the right hand figure the coat and legs are flat, like a silhouette, or as if this were a space where the coat and legs had been cut from. The feet and legs of this figure are most likely from a reproduction of a female figure, but the head with its orange beard and large teeth appears male. One eye is closed and lacks an eyeball, giving a winking effect. The rest of the head is distorted by a massive nose, mouth and jaw. The second figure, right, also has a composite face. The top middle figure is the least distorted but still has eyes from two separate sources. The lower middle figure is the most alien looking, with two large blue eyes near the top of the head, a gigantic nose and the hint of a third eye in its forehead. Lower left is a disembodied head with blue skin and orange hair. The figure at top left is, as top right, mostly in silhouette. It appears to be female. Its head is reduced to nose, eye ear and lips presented as separable parts. The rhetoric is of collage, and the title, *Die Journalisten*, is included with a shadow as if it were pinned onto a collage, as a Trompe-l'oeil. More can be learned about *Die Journalisten* by looking at *Roma*, the more complex of the pair. One of the swimmers (the right hand one) corresponds to the silhouette shape of the top left figure in *Die Journalisten*. The left hand swimmer is also repeated within the *Roma* painting. The coated figure on the right corresponds to the shape of the coat, legs and feet in *Die Journalisten*. The buildings to the right are repeated in negative and upside down under the figures. The pointing arm and head of the left hand figure is repeated in silhouette or negative above. The neck shape of the right hand figure corresponds to the bathing costume of the left hand swimmer. This can be verified by superimposing the shapes. However, once this process is begun it becomes evident that there are differences between many of the apparently matching elements. The relationships between the doubled or opposite elements do not appear to be opportunistic in the sense of being caused by the process of cutting out. Differences between the pairs point to a process of painting without using graphic copying techniques (by eye) and to a deliberate repetition and doubling, rather than as arbitrary relics of a collage process. *Die Journalisten* contains eleven eyes. Both paintings connect eyes, doubles, repetition and opposition, to ideas of how space is perceived and represented, through the reference to the optical illusion of Trompe-l'oeil and through the contradictory articulation of space in the landscapes. They combine different ways to radically disturb space with multiple references to eyes and seeing.

Figure 99.

Figure 100.

Figure 101.



## The unconscious eye in action

The final example in this chapter is the photomontage *Marlene*, 1930, Figure 102, which has been written about by Lavin, Sharon Morris and Julie Nero. All three interpretations have some relation to ideas about androgyny: Lavin writes about *Marlene*, 1930, in *Androgyny, Spectatorship and the Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (Lavin, 1990); Morris writes about *Marlene* in *The Androgynous Self: Höch and Cabun* (Morris, 1997); Nero's study, *Hannah Höch, Til Brugman, Lesbianism and Weimar Sexual Subculture* refers to 'hybrids' and 'grotesque composites' in connection with *Marlene*, within a larger text that discusses androgyny in relation to Höch. The term 'androgyny', often used in relation to Höch's photomontage, might appear to reflect notions of opposition and doubling, and in Nero's writing 'androgyny' is used to mean an indeterminate ambiguity rather than a composite form that depends on the recognition of incongruity. In other words, for Nero, androgyny means neither rather than both, suggesting a merging of characteristics rather than opposition, or an opposition that as in *The 'Uncanny'* eventually coincides (Nero, 2013). All three writers acknowledge that this work draws on social or cultural knowledge of Marlene Dietrich that is not directly represented in the photomontage, whether this is from Weimar mass culture for Lavin, or, in Nero, from a lesbian subculture. Höch shows a 'Marlene' who is symbolically both female and male by using the social conventions of femininity, and particularly those of an image of femininity, but arranged so that, as Morris writes, '[i]t is hard to avoid the reference to the phallus in these elongated structures; high-heeled shoes, classical column, lengthened legs' (Morris, 1997, p.168). Lavin's analysis of Höch's 'Weimar Photomontages' posits a narrowly particular hypothetical viewer to whom the photomontages are addressed; Morris interrogates the implications of the possible identification of a female viewer with the iconic ideal of 'Marlene'; Nero focuses on Höch's work as a response to 'the cultural construction and fetishization of femininity' and the identity of the viewer for her remains general (Nero, 2013, p.301). Many of the differences in reading concern questions of who is looking at what, why and how.

Having, in several chapters, tried to argue for the serious theoretical import of Höch's project, it may seem contradictory now to suggest that to understand this photomontage requires the setting aside for a moment of *Marlene's* 'phallic attributes' (Morris, 1997, p.170). The unmissability of the phallic references in this photomontage raises a suspicion of parody. This could be an example of Höch puncturing the pomposity of psychoanalytic theory, as she also does in *The Painter*, in which the

protagonist attempts to use psychoanalysis to argue against doing the washing up. This chapter asks what lengths Höch could have gone to in creating a model for seeing and imagining, given her known theoretical interests and her penchant for taking ideas to complex visual extremes. Imagination has been discussed in previous chapters as an image-producing faculty, as part of perception. In this speculative interpretation, the unconscious eye is also a consumer, and digester or translator of images. For *Marlene* this affects the interaction between artist, object and viewer. *Marlene* raises questions about the viewer for all the above-mentioned writers, including reaching questions about identity and how it is constructed by images. The unconscious eye, in its condition as a consumer of images, places the process of seeing at the boundaries between an ideal self and the world, so the social context is not excluded. The social is accessed through the act of looking (and by implication touching). Laura Marks theorises a haptic visuality in which certain types of image engage the viewer's sense of touch and the eye functions as an organ of touch (Marks, 1999). Marks uses the idea of haptic visuality to reconsider the relationship between self and other. Envisioning, looking and implied visual touching all operate as acts of an imagination with an unconscious aspect.

In *Marlene*, two men look towards a monumental pair of legs, their action emphasised by the way that one shields his eyes and in doing so redundantly points to something that is already unavoidable. There are other examples in this photomontage of redundancy through doubling: two men looking, two legs, two lips, Marlene Dietrich as her body and as the text 'Marlene'. The opposition of distancing features (the monument and the iconicity of Dietrich) is coexistent with the closeness of contact in the signature, and the lips. The prolific sets of pairs or doubles in this photomontage can represent 'neither' in the sense of an indeterminate, substitutable pair, 'both' as a double that is split from one, 'both' meaning contradictory or polar opposites or 'both' in a non-oppositional and reinforcing duality. The men, for instance, are a similar pair who reinforce each other in their pointing. They give scale to the monument by their size and their bodily position, leaning back. The legs are mirror opposites, and, as with the lips, they are a pair divided from the other within the body.

Lavin, prioritises the social context in her account of Höch's position within a culture in which women are commoditised:

Höch did not stand outside commodity culture, though, as its critic. Her criticism (and possibly Brugman's) was more self-implicating. Höch's sister Grete König reports that Höch loved fashion magazines (Lavin, 1993, p.142).

Höch may have 'loved fashion magazines'; she also worked two days a week for a publishing house and had a direct role in their production. She is therefore, in part, responsible for producing the representations that she uses in her art. In one role Höch disseminates commoditised and objectified depictions of women, and in another she intervenes to undo, on a psychic level, their effects. For the period until 1926, Höch behaves like a self-avenging superhero, by day creating objectified representations of women for mass consumption and by night dismembering them. For her photomontage, as a producer, Höch has a double role.

The monumental column, if not yet another reference to the iconic *Marlene*, is reminiscent of Giorgio de Chirico's paintings and the architecture of the enigmatic, mythical, imagined space of Pittura Metafisica. The mask-like, partial face would become a sun or moon. Landscape in Höch's work is often psychic or symbolic. Rarely, if ever, is it unambiguously anchored in a naturalistic exterior. Whenever landscape is presented in Höch's work it is therefore reasonable to infer the possibility of its reference to a psychic or imaginary space. Formally, there are repeated verticals crossed by a series of diagonals created by the men's gaze, the written text, the lips and base of the nose. These introduce and frame the central space occupied by an important but invisible subject: the act of looking, the gaze and the social system of images and representation. This subject is represented as a look that, having escaped from its bodies, combines into an autonomous entity or a substance in space; a space that is itself constituted by this imaginary look. The mouth at top right, as a substitute for eyes, draws attention to the acts of consuming and touching. The legs also touch each other; multiple references to touch combine with a look that has escaped the organ of the eye and is now at large. The viewer is protected from the raw danger of this creature and shielded from its force. We neither see the bodily organ of its eye nor are we placed in its path.

It is the abstracted process of seeing (and not only or even necessarily that of the viewer) and not 'Marlene' that is central to the composition of this photomontage. A triad of figures surround the action occurring between them that relates to a system of image and self-image, the body, affect, emotion and empathy, and sets the context

for a further complex interaction between that system and the viewer. Marlene Dietrich is peripheral, notwithstanding that her name is emblazoned across the centre, because her presence is coded through the abstract pictorial system of text. The photographic representations of Dietrich are similarly part of a visual code drawing on the viewer's familiarity with mass culture. The signature, if it is read as a signature, takes Dietrich's concrete physical body outside of the image altogether. The direction of the men's gaze underlines the written representation of Dietrich, and the triangulation of forms concentrates a presence that has been labelled 'Marlene'. Marlene Dietrich therefore appears as, first, the person of Marlene Dietrich, second, the symbolic construction and third, in the naming of the icon. The impetus behind this work is the unconscious act of looking in which latent thoughts might be revealed or projected. The subject is the disembodied, dis-organed, and unseeable action taking place in the central space: the radical act of looking released as an autonomous entity in the psychic landscape. Imagination is connected in this understanding with the eye as an organ of sight and with the psychic vision and projection of the unconscious eye.

Figure 102.

## Conclusion

In pursuing an aesthetic strategy, Höch did not relinquish her political beliefs and intentions but continued to direct her efforts toward radical change. This involved changing how people see the world and its representations. Höch uses the unconscious to attack the foundations of visual coercion that support the prevailing ideological paradigm. If imagination is involved in the individual processing of image, once images are shared as representations, the functions and processes of imagination are also released into a shared space of image exchange, consumption and re-sharing. The image and imagination are not abstract in this model but are concretised both through visual artefacts and social interactions. This is in keeping with the underlying direction of Höch's aesthetic philosophy, where imagination is individual and subjective but where, in contrast to a transcendently ideal imagination, it can act in the material world and affect people and their concrete social relations. An unconscious way of looking is one element underpinning the overall radicality of imagination at the root of experience proposed in this thesis. As part of the psychic apparatus, incorporating the unconscious and fundamental to it, radical imagination constitutes itself as the medium for experience, including unconscious thought and image. As a force or process concerned primarily with image, due to the dominance of the visual sense in perception, imagination interacts with the world, including the collective of minds that construct a social world. The figure of the unconscious eye is used here to suggest that interaction, in contrast to ideas of imagination as interior, subjective and separate from the world, such as in Immanuel Kant's transcendental imagination. Separation of the psyche, during development, from the surrounding world is also important in Lacan's account of development (Lacan, 2006) [1949]. If radical imagination builds our consciousness of a distinct ego, independent of the world and others, it should be attuned to issues of separation, opposition, repetition and doubling, as well as focused on a sensory organ that is a key source of the information used to construct experiential boundaries. Finding affinity between Höch's work and psychoanalytic issues should be expected if her theorisation of imagination is psychoanalytically informed.

## Body as a site of imaginative transformation

*The imagination's pre-occupation with the subject's own body is by no means peculiar to dreams or characteristic only of them* (Freud, 1953b, p.346) [1900-1901].

This chapter proposes that Höch's radical imagination is embodied. The body as a political site was emphasised in National Socialism, for example, in ideological objections to homosexuality and an emphasis on the classically ideal body. The body belonged to the state; racist policies and actions included laws about marriage, forced sterilisation, and eugenics.<sup>159</sup> By contrast, Höch's radical imagination is rooted in the body and the concrete world of material and social relations, in direct opposition to the body as an aestheticised ideal. References to the body have appeared in previous chapters. For example, Walter Benjamin identifies an opposition between body and language, and a connection between handwriting and the body. He writes that 'graphology is concerned with the bodily aspect of the language of handwriting' (Benjamin, 1999b, p.133) [1928]. Handwriting implies the human hand, connecting hand-written language to the body and to touch. Paula Niedenthal's study, *Embodiment in Attitudes, Social Perception, and Emotion*, 2005, argues that body positions and movements align body posture to points of view or perspective, so the body become a geographic metaphor for thought (Niedenthal et al., 2005). In *The 'Uncanny'*, Sigmund Freud presents Otto Rank's idea of the immortal soul as 'the first "double" of the body' (Freud, 1955d, p.235) [1919]. The body is therefore included in the foregoing discussion of Höch's radical imagination. This chapter further identifies the body as being where radical imagination has effect, and as the means through which radical imagination transforms. Höch relies on the body in a series of mechanisms through which radical imagination has agency – rather than being aloof or separate from the world – those of body image, point-of-view, and identification. This chapter begins with a discussion of an expanded concept of soul as a site of action for the totality of imagination, mind, psyche and consciousness. Freud proposes concrete models of the psychic apparatus, for example: the Mystic Writing-Pad, the 'telescope' model and the three-fold structure of the psyche found in *The Ego and the Id*. In these, perception is

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<sup>159</sup> The Nazi term 'Volkskörper' is defined by Eric Michaud as 'the people as a body' (Michaud, 2004, p.256).

linked to the body in a series of schematic diagrams of the psychic apparatus. In Höch's work imagination is connected to the body through visual ideas about the boundaries of the individual, the physiological and psychological effects of cutting up images of bodies, and in the relationships developed between emotion, empathy and identification. These are potential mechanisms for a radical imagination with concrete effect on the body, and on affect, and by extension on society. The relationship between mind and body will also be explored in a short story, by Til Brugman. It will be argued that Brugman's story can be interpreted as an allegory of a Freudian model of the psychical apparatus.

### Embodied imagination and the soul

Höch's background influences and affinities suggest her concept of the soul is not dualistic. She describes the views of Berlin Dadaists, which she shared to some extent during her youth as being 'those of the *Monistenbund*, a society that subscribed to a monist philosophy (Höch, 1959b, p.67). In monistic understandings of reality there is one substance in the world, both spirit and matter. Evidence from Höch's work, however, appears ambivalent on the issue of the soul. While Höch's use of religious iconography suggest a dualistic notion of soul and body, she told Edouard Roditi it was 'almost incredible that a modern artist [Jacob Steinhardt] should still find a source of inspiration in traditional religious beliefs' (Höch, 1959b, p.73). In *Verkündigung (Der Engel spricht mit Maria)* ('Annunciation [The Angel speaks with Mary]'), 1938, Figure 103, two disembodied hands point skyward, while on the lower left a baby is among the angel's robes, or perhaps a vision of a baby, or the immaterial journey of its soul. In spite of her rejection of orthodoxy, Höch's work contains frequent references to religious themes, sometimes incorporating traditional religious symbols, for example, the religious subject matter in her paintings of the temptation of Saint Anthony. These references might have a critical intention, as with her inclusion of Ebert and Noske in her photomontage. They do not inevitably point to Höch's alignment with traditional and dualistic religious ideas but are cultural references, part of a wealth of symbolism that Höch draws on. Another possibility, however, which will be explored here, is that they are a visual representation of human existence, as a body and mind, or the complex entity encompassing both, that might be thought of as an embodied imagination.

The conceptual fluidity of mind or soul is complicated further by translation issues. In *Fantastische Kunst*, ('Fantastic Art'), 1946, Höch describes a function of



fantastic art as being a mental regulator, using the term ‘seelischen’ (Höch, 2008, p.12) [1946].<sup>160</sup> Höch also uses ‘seelische’ in *Die Fotomontage*, describing a Dadaist exhibition of photomontage as revealing the emotional distress of artists in their disappointed youth (Höch, 1989a, p.218) [1946]. ‘Seelischen’ is from the root ‘Seele’ which can be translated into English as soul, mind, spirit or psyche. In Freud’s writing, ‘Die Seele’ or ‘soul’ is translated by Strachey as ‘mind’ (‘Psyche’ and ‘Geist’ are also used in this context). ‘Seele’ is often used by Freud to account for dreaming and other psychic processes. However, Darius Ornston notes that:

we could say either that there is no German word for the vague English notion of “mind,” or just as correctly put it that there are many distinctly different German words. These all have varying nuances in different contexts and shift from one catch phrase to another. Freud used all of them (Ornston, 1992a, p.64).

There are differences between ‘Seele’ and ‘soul’. ‘Seele’ has evolved to include its use as the root for modern terms about the mind (Ornston, 1992a, p.65). Ornston writes that ‘*Die Seele* is steadfastly either spiritual or psychological, like the English word “psyche”’ (Ornston, 1992a, p.65). Ornston finds that ‘Seele’ comes from more ancient origins than ‘mind’, relating it to the German for a lake or sea, associated with the ‘yet unborn and all the dead’ (Ornston, 1992a, p.64).<sup>161</sup> In English there is a particular use of ‘soul’ to mean living being, in the maritime context. For example, the *New York Times* reported the sinking of *RMS Titanic* in 1912, writing, ‘[a]ll her boats are accounted for and about 655 souls have been saved’ (The New York Times, 1912). The term ‘souls’ is used in this report to account for survivors, so ‘soul’ includes the embodiment of living beings, rather than separate immaterial or spiritual entities.

In dualistic approaches where mind is separate, the brain is often considered a location its location. Historically, the heart has also been considered a possible location, for example in the Taoist heart-mind concept. Imagination, due to its association with mental processes, images, and perception, falls within the wider issue of what the soul or the mind is, and whether it is separate from the body. Psychic processes might be considered in dualistic frameworks to belong to an abstract location and the body as a separate physiological entity. For example, perception could be understood to be related to sensation, the sensory organs and nerve endings.

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<sup>160</sup> ‘diese Aufgabe des seelischen Regulativs’

<sup>161</sup> Ornston discusses Bettelheim’s, *Freud and Man’s Soul* in chapter 4 of *Translating Freud* (Ornston, 1992b).

Embodied imagination could therefore be approached conceptually through the brain, after all the brain is an organ of the body. However, there is a less reductive possibility through which to explore an embodied imagination. This involves opening category sets relating to imagination and its associated processes, and relating these to the body as one complex whole – an inseparable soul. Consideration of the soul can be equivalent to consideration of the mind: either as the same concept, or connected symbolically, so that one can stand for the other. Rather than a strict division between the phenomenal and the noumenal, Höch's understanding of metaphysics was likely closer to Salomo Friedländer's, in which creative indifference 'indifferentiates polar differences' (Friedländer, 1911, in Taylor, 1990a, p.124).

Writing about the soul in the 300s BC, Aristotle was able to draw on a long history of previous thought. In some accounts the soul is an incarcerated entity, imprisoned in the body, and could be imagined to survive disembodiment. In others the soul is located in the body as a whole, or in a particular organ, such as the heart. Souls are conceived of as material substances or spiritual entities, separate from the body and the phenomenal world. The soul in Aristotle's *On the Soul* is the form that life takes, 'the soul *plus* the body constitutes the animal' (Aristotle, 1984a, p.657). In Hugh Lawson-Tancred's English translation of Aristotle's, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, 'soul' is a translation of the Greek *psyche* and used in a way 'remote from the usual associations in English' (Lawson-Tancred, 1986, p.11). He observes that in Aristotle's *De Anima* the idea of a separate mind is not foregrounded as it is in René Descartes' approach (Lawson-Tancred, 1986). Lawson-Tancred interprets Aristotle's meaning of the Greek word *psyche* as being 'that in virtue of which something is alive' (Lawson-Tancred, 1986, p.12). Aristotle's is a theory about life rather than consciousness alone (or even at all). *Psyche* in this case means something much broader than the English 'soul', 'mind' or 'consciousness'. Imagination and the *psyche* or soul as translated from *De Anima*, are more usefully read as having broad meanings, to retain the complexity of the subject rather than attempting to classify, separate or reduce. Discussing the soul as an inseparable mind-body complex, or as two different entities, reiterates a division between a transcendental imagination, separate from the phenomenal and the unknowable thing-in-itself, or as connecting both spirit and matter. Aristotle's discussion of *phantasia*, or imagination, is found within a larger text about the soul. He asks about the essential nature and properties of the soul, such as what it is and what kind of thing it is: 'quale or quantum' (Aristotle, 1984a, p.641). If there are parts to the soul, he asks, 'which ought we to investigate first, these parts or their functions, mind or thinking, the faculty or the act of sensation (...)?' (Aristotle, 1984a, p.642). Further,

he presents the problem of the soul's relation to the body, or the 'complex of body and soul' (Aristotle, 1984a, p.642). He reasons that 'there seems to be no case in which the soul can act or be acted upon without involving the body, giving thinking and imagination as examples contingent on the existence of a body. The qualified conclusion drawn is that the soul is inseparable from the body (Aristotle, 1984a, p.657). The soul is connected, by Aristotle, to *phantasia*, a term that, while difficult to map onto modern understandings, is nonetheless relevant to imagination. Aristotle sees imagination as both an activity of the soul and as a psychic faculty belonging to the living body. In *On the Soul*, imagination is treated within a framework already much broader than some modern concepts of mind, such as those of Descartes or Immanuel Kant. Aristotle's approach presents a more capacious arrangement of the categories under discussion, providing a precedent for a wider treatment of interconnected psychic phenomena, such as imagination, with concepts of mind, psyche, and soul, Figure 104. A broader understanding of these processes is necessary to treat the idea of radical imagination with cognisance of the complexities involved.

Figure 103.

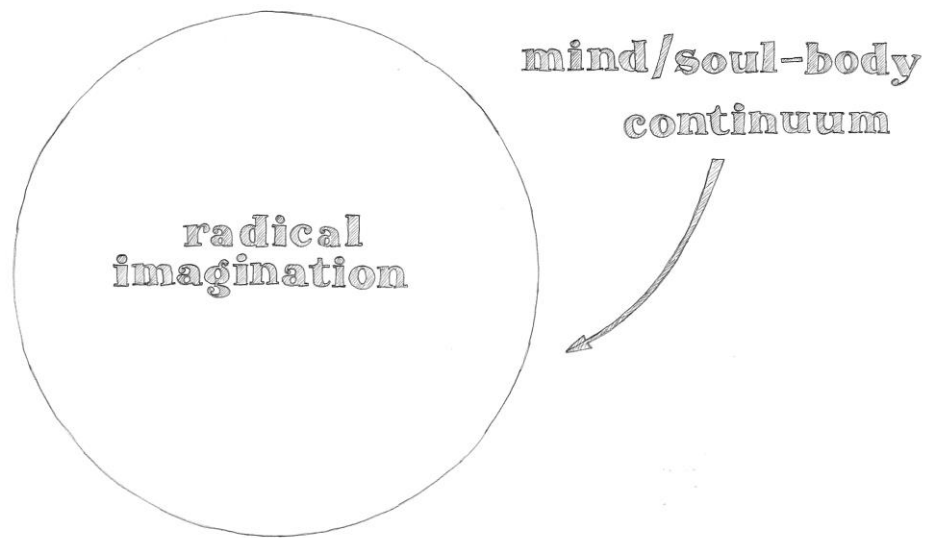


Figure 104. A holistic mind/soul-body continuum as a containing concept for radical imagination.

## Freud's models of the psychological apparatus

In so far as Aristotle divides the soul into different parts, including imagination, sensation and perception, his idea of the soul covers similar ground to Freud's description of the 'psychical apparatus' (Freud, 1953, p.536, et passim [1900]). As a key influence on Höch, Freud's models of the psychological apparatus are important to the proposal here for a radical imagination. The psychological apparatus is a concept in Freud's work translated from both 'psychischer Apparat' and 'seelischer Apparat'. Perception is crucial to this thesis because Höch wanted to change people's perception; her grotesque stories and visual art intend to challenge perceptual conformity; and she appeals to perceptual tendencies, for example, in the use of gestalt principles. Moreover, the strong conceptual relationships between imagination and perception mean it is valuable to a study of imagination to examine perception, as Höch might have understood it.

Sensory input such as physical touch describes boundaries of the self. There is a theoretical event horizon around the individual, creating a point-of-view and an image of the body. Freud developed a variety of models of perception and the psychological apparatus. Three to be considered here in their relation to the body are the 'telescope' model of 1900, the three-fold structure of the psychological apparatus as described in *The Ego and the Id*, 1923, (and further explained in later writing such as *New Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis*, 1933), and the 'Mystic writing-Pad', 1925. Although Freud used spatial and concrete models for the psychological apparatus, he did not intend these be treated literally as spatial structures, with consciousness seen as having a location:

psycho-analysis cannot situate the essence of the psychological in consciousness, but is obliged to regard consciousness as a quality of the psychological, which may be present in addition to other qualities or may be absent (Freud, 1961b, p.13) [1923].

These models are concrete analogies, which Freud does not intend as linear representations of the form or location of different parts of the mental structure. Rather, they are attempts to give pictorial representation to the intangible functions of perception and other functions of the psychological apparatus. In *The Ego and the Id*, 1923, Freud writes of his diagrammatic representation of the structure of the psyche: 'the form chosen has no pretensions to any special applicability, but is intended to serve for purposes of exposition' (Freud, 1961b, p.24) [1923]. Later in this chapter, the psychological structure as set out in *The Ego and the Id* will be applied to a new interpretation of a short story by Brugman as an allegory for Freud's theoretical treatment of the

psychical apparatus. In *The Ego and the Id* the self-concept of the body is arrived at through bodily sensations (Freud, 1961b, p.26) [1923]. The ego is described in *The Ego and the Id* as a ‘frontier creature’ invoking the idea of a body (Freud, 1961b, p.56) [1923]. In *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, 1933, which explains Freud’s ego psychology, there is an indirect association between the psychic structure and the body. ‘The Dissection of the Psychical Personality’ is the title of a lecture derived from *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1964a, p.57) [1933]. The term ‘dissection’ is associated with the body, and is applicable also to Höch’s visual treatment of the body in her repetitive, literal cutting up of images of the body in photomontage, or equivalent processes in painting, writing and other forms.<sup>162</sup> In these activities Höch also metaphorically dissects and reassembles the psyche. Specific examples of Freud’s diagrammatic representation of the psyche will now be considered.

### The psychical apparatus in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess, 1896

In chronological order, because Freud adapts and develops his diagrams in the theoretical work on the psychical apparatus, an early example of schematic representation is found in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess (letter 52, December 1896), Figure 105, Freud describes this visual representation of the ‘psychic mechanism’ as a series of transcriptions. ‘*W*’ (*Wahrnehmungen*) in this schematic are the, ‘neurones in which perceptions originate’ (Freud, 1966a, p.234) [1896]. These are registered in the first layer as indications, ‘*W<sub>z</sub>*’ (*Wahrnehmungszeichen*). At this and the previous stage there is no possibility of consciousness. The second registration is the unconscious (‘Ub’), the perceptions are then transcribed into the preconscious layer (‘Vb’) and here are ‘attached to word presentation and corresponding to our official ego’ (Freud, 1966a, p.234) [1896].<sup>163</sup> Perceptions, according to this account only develop the possibility of

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<sup>162</sup> ‘Dissection’ is translated in Strachey from ‘Die Zerlegung’ meaning subdivision or separation, rather than ‘Dissektion’ (Freud, 1991a, p.62).

<sup>163</sup> In the later series of diagrams of the mental apparatus found in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and discussed below, a trace (‘spur’) is left in the perceptual system (German ref, p.543). Registration is translated in Strachey from ‘Niederschrift’, (transcription or writing down) (Freud, 1966a, p.234) [1896]. Strachey’s term ‘indications’ is translated from ‘Wahrnehmungszeichen’ (perceptual sign). In German the language used relates easily to traces, or signs (images) being written down and translated.

consciousness during the fourth transcription, 'Bew' (*Bewusstsein*) (Freud, 1966a, p.234) [1896].<sup>164</sup>

The psychological apparatus in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900

Freud's 'telescope' model of perception may appear to suggest a concrete spatial and temporal structure, however, it is not an anatomical model. Freud writes that:

I shall carefully avoid the temptation to determine psychical locality in any anatomical fashion. I shall remain upon psychological ground, and I propose simply to follow the suggestion that we should picture the instrument which carries out our mental functions as resembling a compound microscope or a photographic apparatus, or something of the kind (Freud, 1953b, p.536) [1900-1901].

In its early manifestation in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the 'telescope' model is directional, sensations moving through the psychic structure as light moves through a series of lenses in a telescope (Morris, 2000, p.121). In the 'telescope' model,

We assume that the mental life is the function of an apparatus to which we ascribe the characteristic of being extended in space and of being made up of several portions – which we imagine, that is, as resembling a telescope or microscope or something of the kind (Freud, 1964b, p.145) [1938].

Freud's later understanding of perception is of a process that is not necessarily successional (Morris, 2000). Perceptual signs and memory traces are altered by translation through unconscious, preconscious and conscious boundaries, as psychical material is re-organised. External visual input and other sensations are thereby mediated before reaching consciousness (Morris, 2000). In *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, 1940, Freud writes that:

We know two kinds of things about what we call our psyche (or mental life): firstly, its bodily organ and scene of action, the brain (or nervous system) and, on the other hand, our acts of consciousness (Freud, 1964b, p.144) [1938].

Between acts of the body and acts of consciousness, Freud writes that everything is unknown, and even if the relation between these were to be known, and gave a location for consciousness, it would not help in understanding either consciousness or the brain (Freud, 1964b, p.145) [1938]. The mental image in the 'telescope' model is a virtual

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<sup>164</sup> Sharon Morris compares Freud's 'telescope' model with this earlier schematic of stratified registrations and transcriptions in *Turning a Telescope on the Soul: Freud's interpretation of the structure of the psyche* (Morris, 2000).



image, like the image cast by rays of light within a telescope (Freud, 1953b, p.611) [1900-1901]. Freud's models of structures are not intended as locational diagrams of acts of consciousness that could be mapped onto the brain, but are hypothetical analogies which 'must never be regarded as localized in organic elements of the nervous system' (Freud, 1953b, p.611) [1900-1901]. Freud's 'telescope' diagrams are found in the section of *The Interpretation of Dreams* about regression, Figure 106, Figure 107 and Figure 108. Freud also refers here to Albertus Magnus's discussion of the '*imaginatio*' which carries out the process of constructing dreams from memory images in 'the reverse direction to that in waking life' (Freud, 1953b, p.542 n.1) [1900-1901]. Further, Freud quotes Thomas Hobbes in the *Leviathan*, who argues that 'dreams are the reverse of our waking imaginations' (Hobbes, quoted in Freud, 1953b, p.542 n.1) [1900-1901].<sup>165</sup> Although Freud focuses on dream in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, imagination is mentioned in a footnote concerning the direction of processes of the psyche. There is just one apparatus, one that includes imagination.

It has been suggested earlier that in Höch's repetitive and literal cutting up of images of the body and re-assembly into photomontage she is metaphorically cutting up and reassembling the psyche. Höch's art thus creates a hypothetical model of the psyche, often based on images of the body, and with a clear relation to perception and body image. In dismembering bodies, Höch changes their defining boundary or surface. For example, *Der Liebhaber* ('The Admirer'), 1945-46, Figure 109, combines a person with an ant's body. In *Um einen roten Mund* ('Around a Red Mouth'), c. 1967, Figure 110, a pair of lips are the sole remaining body part, although the fabric suggests a dress and its volume implies a body beneath. The tendency to anthropomorphise and to attribute the idea of mind, and independence of being, to pieces of cut out paper survives Höch's most extreme mutilations. In *Grotesk* (Figure 96) the individual body parts are de-familiarised and recombined in unbalanced and mutilated form. The replacement of one eye, from the figure on the left, with an animal's eye, and shrinking both figures disturbs the viewer's concept of their bodily boundaries. *Englische Tänzerin* (Figure 93) demonstrates Höch's practice of reducing the figure to a face and legs, the

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<sup>165</sup> Strachey identifies this footnote as being added in 1914. In it, Freud quotes Albertus Magnus from Diepgen, 1912, p.14 and Hobbes from Havelock Ellis, 1911, p.109 (Freud, 1953b, p.542, n.1) [1900]. In the German, '*Die Imaginatio*' is used from Magnus and Hobbes is quoted in English, using 'imagination'. This footnote does not appear in the *Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag* version, of which Höch may have been aware (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.193).

legs often much smaller in proportion than usual. Reducing the figures changes the scale between body parts, recreating an image of the body's surface in a new form (Schilder, 1935).<sup>166</sup> This is also seen in *Der kleine P* ('The Small P'), 1931, Figure 111, *Russische Tänzerin (Meine Double)* (Figure 92) and *Unsere lieben Kleinen* ('Our beloved little-ones'), 1924, Figure 112. This is additional to the use of text as the letter 'P', the doubling in *Russische Tänzerin (Meine Double)* and the depiction of emotion in *Unsere lieben Kleinen*. Echoing the overdetermination in dream, where the dream content is represented in many different ways, these practices create multiple meanings and possible interpretations that are not mutually exclusive but 'cover the same ground; they are a good instance of the fact that dreams, like all other psychopathological structures, regularly have more than one meaning' (Freud, 1953, p.149 [1900]). Some of the distortions emphasise sensory organs, the face and the head. Freud gives an anatomical analogy for the 'bodily ego' that is a 'projection of a surface': 'If we wish to find an anatomical analogy for it we can best identify it with the "cortical homunculus" of the anatomists' (Freud, 1961b, p.26) [1923]. Höch may have been intuitively creating a visual representation of an embodied imagination.

### The psychical apparatus in *The Ego and the Id*, 1923

While in Freud's theorisation, the body-brain-consciousness relation is deliberately left open, the body is incorporated into another hypothetical model of the psyche in *The Ego and the Id*:

A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to internal perception (Freud, 1961b, p.25) [1923].

Freud describes the mental apparatus as having a surface at the interface with the external world, a 'perceiving surface' (Freud, 1961b, p.19) [1923]. He describes an apparatus which includes an unconscious Id, 'upon whose surface rests the ego' (Freud, 1961b, p. 24) [1923]. The ego is 'first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself the projection of a surface' (Freud, 1961b, p.26) [1923]. The body is a factor separating the ego from the id:

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<sup>166</sup> Paul Schilder's writing on body image is discussed later in this chapter.

the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body. It may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body (Freud, 1961b, p.26 n.1) [1923].<sup>167</sup>

The mental projection of the ego, a surface entity merging into the id, onto the body's surface creates a body-ego conterminous with the body as experienced by an individual. The ego, super-ego and id are separate, but also merge to an extent and may change and vary between individuals. Freud warns not to see this three part division as having 'sharp frontiers like the artificial ones drawn in political geography' (Freud, 1964a, p.79) [1933]. Instead, he suggests that it would be better not to see the divisions between different parts of the structure as a linear drawing, writing that:

We cannot do justice to the characteristics of the mind by linear outlines like those in drawing or in primitive painting, but rather by areas of colour melting into one another as they are presented by modern artists (...) You must not judge too harshly a first attempt at giving a pictorial representation of something so intangible as psychical processes' (Freud, 1964a, p.79) [1933].

Nonetheless, Freud makes a diagram of the mental apparatus, Figure 113. The body is also related to the development of the ego from the id:

From what was originally a cortical layer, equipped with the organs for receiving stimuli and with arrangements for acting as a protective shield against stimuli, a special organization has arisen which henceforward acts as an intermediary between the id and the external world. To this region of the mind we have given the name of *ego* (Freud, 1964b, p.145) [1938].

The 'protective shield' related here to the id, is quoted in *A Note Upon the Mystic Writing-Pad*, 1925, where a celluloid layer protects a waxed paper layer from stimuli, as will be explored shortly. Different models for the psychic apparatus are therefore cross-referenced and linked by Freud over time. His models are related as different 'ends or beginnings of our knowledge' through cross-referencing between them (Freud, 1964b, p.145) [1938]. It is from the protective shield to prevent excessive stimuli that the id develops an intermediary – the ego. The three-part structure of Ego, Super-Ego and Id is reconfigured by Freud in 1933, where it is described as 'an unassuming sketch', Figure 114 (Freud, 1964a, p.78) [1933]. This structure is, I will argue, pointed to by Brugman in her short story *Warenhaus der Liebe* ('Department Store of Love'), c1931-33.

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<sup>167</sup> Strachey explains that: 'This footnote first appeared in the English translation of 1927, in which it was described as having been authorized by Freud. It does not appear in the German editions' (Freud, 1961b) [1923].

## The psychological apparatus in 'Mystic writing-Pad', 1925

The final model for the psychological apparatus to be considered here is also found in *The Ego and the Id*. It is a metaphorical representation of the psychological apparatus in a 'Mystic Writing-Pad'. Freud argues in *A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'*, 1925, that 'forms of auxiliary apparatus' have been invented to improve sensory functions, such as, 'ear-trumpets' or spectacles, and these are 'built on the same model as the sense organs themselves' (Freud, 1961a, p.228) [1925]. However, unlike these devices, the perceptual apparatus can receive new perceptions while at the same time recording them as memory traces. The perceptual system, summarised in *A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'* has two parts: one part receives perceptions, which leave no trace, but then 'lying behind the perceptual system' are mnemonic systems where permanent traces can be left (Freud, 1961a, p.228) [1925]. Freud finds that consciousness arises in the perceptual system rather than in the mnemonic system. While there is no pictorial representation made by Freud for this model for the psychological apparatus, he proposes a 'hypothetical structure of our perceptual apparatus' in connection with a device for recording traces such as writing, known by the proprietary name, the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' (Freud, 1961a, p.228) [1925]. This device is described as a celluloid sheet with a transparent waxed paper sheet covering a layer of resin or wax. Writing indents the surface without leaving a mark but the indentations are visible because they adhere to the dark wax slab below. If the celluloid sheet is lifted, the writing disappears. The pad is now clear to receive further impressions. The writing remains visible upon closer inspection, however. The celluloid sheet serves as a protective layer for the waxed paper, which would be otherwise liable to break.

Freud makes an analogy between the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' and a two-layered structure of the perceptual apparatus that can continue to receive fresh perceptions and simultaneously retain traces of past perceptions. Just as the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' solves the problem of these two different functions by using two distinct layers, Freud hypothesises that the perceptual apparatus is similarly structured in layers. One layer – the *Pcpt.-Cs* – is like the clean celluloid layer that records no permanent traces, while another layer retains memory traces (*Erinnerungsspur*) (Freud, 1961a, p.227) [1925]. Freud compares the wax pad of the 'Mystic Writing-Pad', on which an imprint of previous writing remains, to the unconscious. Appearance and disappearance of writing is compared to the process of perception, with consciousness 'flickering-up and passing away' (Freud, 1961a, p.231) [1925]. Further, Freud elaborates his theory that consciousness accompanies discontinuous perceptions:

it is as though the unconscious stretches out feelers, through the medium of the system *Pcpt.-Cs.*, towards the external world and hastily withdraws them as soon as they have sampled the excitations coming from it (Freud, 1961a, p.231) [1925].

It is through this discontinuous functioning of perception, Freud suggests, that a concept of time originates. In *A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'*, Freud invites the reader to 'imagine one hand writing upon the surface of the Mystic Writing-Pad while another periodically raises its covering-sheet from the wax slab' (Freud, 1961a, p.232) [1925]. This represents how Freud pictures 'the functioning of the perceptual apparatus of our mind' (Freud, 1961a, p.232) [1925].<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Jacques Derrida writes in detail about the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' in 'Freud and the Scene of Writing' (Derrida, 1972, pp.106–115) and in 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', in *Writing and Difference*, 2005 (Derrida, 2006a) [1967]. In Derrida's interpretation, to overwrite the trace is to erase the self: the erasure is death (Derrida, 2006a, p.289) [1967].

Figure 105. Freud's schematic picture of a stratified psychic mechanism in which memory traces are rearranged and retranscribed (Freud, 1985, p.207) [1896].

Figure 106. Freud's 'schematic picture of the psychical apparatus' as found in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900 (Freud, 1953b, p.537) [1900-1901]. This is the first of a three part diagram.

Figure 107. The second stage of Freud's diagram of the psychical apparatus, from *The Interpretation of Dreams*, divided into a first system 'in the very front' which 'receives perceptual stimuli but retains no trace of them' and a second system 'behind it' in which the perceptual stimuli are transformed into permanent memory traces (Freud, 1953b, p.538) [1900-1901].



Figure 108. The third stage of Freud's diagram of the psychical apparatus, from *The Interpretation of Dreams*, includes 'another portion of the apparatus' which is involved in a process of censorship between the unconscious and preconscious (Freud, 1953b, p.541) [1900-1901].

Figure 109.

Figure 110.

Figure 111.

Figure 112.

Figure 113, Freud's diagram of the 'mental apparatus', in *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1961b, p.24) [1923].

Figure 114. Freud's diagram of 'the structural relations of the mental personality', in *New Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis*, 1933, (Freud, 1964a, p.78) [1933].

## *Warenhaus der Liebe* as an allegory for the psyche

*Warenhaus der Liebe*, ('Department Store of Love') c1931-33, is a short story written by Brugman between 1931 and 1933, during her years in Berlin. The eight-page manuscript is published as *Das Vertippte Zebra: Lyrik und Prosa*, ('Mistyped Zebra: Poetry and Prose'), (Brandt, 1995). It also appears, in Dutch, in the lesbian literary journal *Lust & Gratie*, in a special issue about Höch and Brugman (Bosch and Everard, 1988b).<sup>169</sup> During the early 1930s Höch acted as Brugman's editor in German (Lavin, 1990, p.80). It can be assumed, therefore, that Höch worked with Brugman in a cooperative, if not collaborative, way on this text. This is further supported by the mention of 'Patchamatak', an imaginary place shared by Brugman and Höch's writing, and featuring in their correspondence.<sup>170</sup> *Warenhaus der Liebe* leads to Freud, and specifically to the psychic structure as set out in *The Ego and the Id*. This short story is, I argue, an allegory for the psychic structure in *The Ego and the Id*.

Similarly to the store in *Warenhaus der Liebe*, Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science researched 'the entire sexual life, in particular its variants, disturbances and anomalies' (Magnus-Hirschfeld-Gesellschaft, 2005).<sup>171</sup> Brugman is identified as a visitor to the institute in Dose's *Magnus Hirschfeld: The Origins of the Gay Liberation Movement*, 2014 (Dose, 2014, p.57).<sup>172</sup> Julie Nero describes *Warenhaus der Liebe* as a 'thinly veiled satire of Hirschfeld's Berlin Institute', noting that Brugman visited the Institute (Nero, 2013, p.258).<sup>173</sup> Maud Lavin also describes *Warenhaus der Liebe* as a 'thinly veiled parody of Hirschfeld's Berlin Institute for Sexology' (Lavin, 1993, p.190). There is, however, an alternative interpretation in which it describes mental image

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<sup>169</sup> A copy of this issue of *Lust and Gratie* is held by the Alete Institute for Women's History, Amsterdam.

<sup>170</sup> As discussed in Chapter three, the word 'Patchamatak' appears in *Little Baby Gamma* (Höch, 2012) [1945] as well as in a letter from Brugman to Höch in (Brugman 1926, in Bosch and Everard, eds, 1988, p. 49).

<sup>171</sup> 'Die wissenschaftliche Durchforschung des gesamten Sexuallebens, insbesondere auch seiner Varianten, Störungen und Anomalien, zu fördern'

<sup>172</sup> Ralf Dose provides a detailed account of the Institute in *Magnus Hirschfeld: The Origins of the Gay Liberation Movement*, 2014 (Dose, 2014). Hirschfeld was a founder member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Association but left in 2011 after differences about whether homosexuality is innate (Dose, 2014, p.50).

<sup>173</sup> Nero cites evidence that Brugman visited Hirschfeld's Institute of Sexual Science, signing the visitor book in 1931 (Nero, 2013, p.258, n. 844).



production, and therefore points to a concept of imagination influenced by a Freudian theorisation of the structure of the mind.

In brief, *Warenhaus der Liebe* is about a storehouse or department store of love. The story begins with an official opening. Customers and their requirements are then described. The store is a business with a commercial structure providing sex-related goods and services. Nero argues that this story, 'lampoons the exhaustive collection of sexual paraphernalia held in the erotic museum housed in Hirschfeld's Berlin Institute' (Nero, 2013, p.258). The store is successful and popular; a military commander who later attacks the store was previously a customer. At first he gives the reason for attacking as that, while all the customers, including himself, are happy, and their lives are improved and enriched by the store, it creates a problem for the state because babies are not being born. Individual happiness is not important to the state. The state merely requires a supply of bodies. They want children to be born to become soldiers, and *Warenhaus der Liebe* prevents this. However, the military commander is persuaded to call off the attack when told the store has prepared for the production of a billion celluloid children on five continents (Brandt, 1995, p.81). The military can now get children to war as much as they would like. This most fantastical aspect of the story is recounted through a script like dialogue or verbalised scenario.

There is strong evidence to support the interpretation by Lavin, Nero and others of *Warenhaus der Liebe* as a satire on Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science. Hirschfeld's Institute was attacked by the Nazis in 1933, and although Brugman was writing possibly up to two years earlier, Brugman's department store is also attacked by the military. However, in the passage dealing with this attack, there are two indications that the text is more complex than a satire of the military, and that it refers additionally to unconscious processes and the psychic structure. The first is that this important part of the story is conveyed in the form of a dialogue. Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis explain the complicated relationship between phantasy and desire as sequential dramatisations, '[e]ven where they can be summed up in a single sentence, phantasies are still scripts (*scénarios*) of organised scenes which are capable of dramatisation – usually in a visual form' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973, p. 318). The military opposition to the activities of the organisation is presented almost entirely through a script between the military commander and the narrator, suggesting an unconscious process of phantasy is at work.

A reference to Freud's ideas about psychic structure is also found in Brugman's detailing of a request from an eighty-year old orphan for an Oedipus complex made

out of papier-mâché (Brandt, 1995, p.77). The Oedipus complex is discussed in *The Ego and the Super-ego (Ego Ideal)* in relation to the super-ego (Freud, 1961b, p.35) [1923].<sup>174</sup> In the story it is possible to find many elements from Freud's threefold structure of super-ego, ego and id. For example, Freud lists factors which the super-ego is instantiated by, including the influence of authority, religion, education, and morality (Freud, 1961b, pp.28–39) [1923]. These authority figures are present in Brugman's story: 'fire departments, medical professionals, police (...) church representatives, youth organisations, gymnastics clubs, medical orderlies, major hoteliers, fashion stores, travel clubs and societies to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, the Reich President, were all in our Department Store of Love' (Brandt, 1995, p.73).<sup>175</sup>

The super-ego's relation to social and political authorities has been adopted to apply psychoanalytic ideas to politics (Dallmayr, 1989, p.467). For example, Dallmayr concentrates on interactions with psychoanalysis among the Frankfurt School and a debate between proponents of dualistic internal or innate domains of the psyche, and those who situate the psyche in a social context, which includes the rules and authorities of the political sphere. The connection between the psychic and political, 'instead of simply reducing one dimension to another [...] aims to highlight the peculiar interlacing between psychic drives and social contexts' (Dallmayr, 1989, p.467). By contrast, a dualistic approach separates the internal so that it is not rooted and acting in the world. Brugman's references to the super-ego suggest her outlook involved a politicised psychoanalysis grounded in a holistic system including the body and the social sphere. As has been mentioned in the previous chapter in relation to Brugman's

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<sup>174</sup> The Oedipus complex is defined in Laplanche and Pontalis as an '[o]rganised body of loving and hostile wishes which the child experiences towards its parents' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.282). The concept is named after Sophocles' tragedy, *Oedipus Rex*, in which the King kills his father and marries his mother (unknowingly). Freud proposed the Oedipus complex as an ambivalent and complicated aspect of psychosexual development involving sexual desire for one parent and a wish to be rid of the other parent. The tragic drama is described and discussed by Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1953a, pp.261–266) [1900].

<sup>175</sup> 'Am Eröffnungstage wurden alle aufgeklärten Autoritäten sowie Feuerwehr, medizinische Fachmänner, Polizei, der Verein Immerzu & Co., kirchenvertreter, Jugendverbände, Turnvereine, Krankenpfleger, größere Hoteliers, Modengeschäfte, Reisevereine, Gesellschaften zur Bekämpfung von Geschlechtskrankheiten, Reichspräsidenten in unserem Warenhaus der Liebe rundgeführt'.

*Schaufensterhypnose* (Shop Window Hypnosis), 1935, Freud wrote about mass psychology in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, so was aware of the social application of psychoanalysis (Freud, 1955c, pp.65–144) [1921]. Identification is a mechanism for emotional ties within a group and with the leader leading to a similarity of behavior – the herd instinct (Freud, 1955c, p.117) [1921]. In *Warenhaus der Liebe*, the state's aim to force people to reproduce in order to 'get children to war' is nonsensical in a political sense and reads more convincingly as a psychic drive than a direct parody of militarism, although a literal reading remains. Instead, or in addition, the story discusses psychological relationships to authority rooted in the psychic structure. Brugman links this structure to topical political events, politicising the psyche using references to the body. Objects in the collection are described in relation to bodies or body parts; they are worn on the body (a wooden leg is included), there are odours of urine, sweat extracts, hair and nail clippings, and even where the objects are not related to human or animal bodies they are responded to bodily by smelling, stroking, wearing or sitting within. Even a chamber pot has an 'ear'. Body openings such as mouths and ears are referred to as well as internal organs or 'glands'. At a fiftieth anniversary festival there is a tent where transplant operations take place continually. The preponderance of bodily references and especially to body parts, to transplantations or substitutions, removals and additions to the body is reminiscent of Höch's work. In Brugman's story the body is further associated with image through the celluloid soldiers.

Another indication that *Warenhaus der Liebe* has something in common with unconscious or imaginative processes is that the most exaggerated or ridiculous aspect does not relate to the military or Hirschfeld's Institute, as would be expected if the main aim of the story was to satirise them. The hypocrisy of the military commander as both a customer and later attacker is pointed to, but the most impossible, extreme element is that the store will reproduce a billion celluloid children for the state to send to war. There is a parallel here with the mass production of bodies used by Höch's in her photomontage. Celluloid was an early synthetic plastic used to make various items including dolls during the 1930s. Another known use for celluloid is in making film, and as a reference to film, celluloid refers to the material or body of film. Whether as dolls, as photographic or film images, or in some other form, the commander assumes these will function as bodies, to fight in war. The state's interest in controlling human reproduction is linked to the nonsensical purpose of getting children to war, and it is implied that this circular purpose can be satisfied instead through a substitute. There is nothing, beyond their speed of reproduction and the association of celluloid with film, to suggest that the celluloid children are photographs of bodies. Nevertheless,

the military goal to ‘get children to war’ is accomplished through mass production of images as substitutes for bodies. *Warenhaus der Liebe* also represents a composite of both Hirschfeld’s Institute in Berlin and Eugen Steinach’s in Vienna. Although it appears to concern Hirschfeld’s Institute, it also refers to Steinach, a scientist who was well known for transplanting and grafting ovarian and testicular tissue to treat a variety of illnesses. Nero (2013) notes that Brugman uses Steinach’s name in *Warenhaus der Liebe* within the description of a product.<sup>176</sup> It was common during this time to describe one popular procedure as being ‘Steinached’ (Södersten et al., 2014, p.692). The store’s composite form is suggestive of unconscious and imaginative processes because combining images is a common activity of the imagination, and is a common feature of dreams, as is overdetermination.

Interpreting *Warenhaus der Liebe* as an allegory for Freud’s structure of the mind, Figure 115, the clients represent the id, the authority figures are the super-ego and the store is the ego, negotiating licenses for its clients and acting between the clients and the authorities. The super-ego appears early on when authorities are invited to the opening. They are listed as police, doctors, church leaders, and the Reich President. Different characters are indistinct within the narrative; the military commander is a previous customer. When the authority figures visit, the scientists’ educational qualifications hang on the walls, so science and education are also given as authority for the practices at the store. This could be intended to represent a merging of the three parts of the psychic structure. The clientele pay a license fee to use the store’s products, so the store (the Ego) interacts with authority on behalf of customers. When the military decide to destroy the store and to force people to give up their love objects (Liebesobjekte) they are instead appeased by a promise from the store to provide substitute body images. In *The Ego and the Super-ego (Ego Ideal)*, Freud describes a consequence of having to give up a sexual object as being an alteration of the Ego such that the object is set up ‘inside the ego’ (Freud, 1961b, p.28) [1923].<sup>177</sup> In Freud’s text, the substitution of the object within the ego is a form of identification. Freud notes that there is a parallel to the replacement of the object by identification found in the belief that to eat an animal is to take on its attributes (Freud, 1961b, p.29, n.2) [1923]. *Warenhaus der Liebe* playfully adopts this terminology, interpreting it literally when the customers of the store are forced by the military to give up their love objects. This is

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<sup>176</sup> Nero (2013) includes a detailed discussion of Steinach’s work.

<sup>177</sup> Identification and eating are discussed later in this chapter.

accepted without argument, the commander asking only 'why did you not say so before?' demonstrating the overriding power of the script.

The military could also represent the death drive, as described by Freud in *The Ego and the Id*, with the Department Store of Love, which creates the soldiers, as the creative life and uninhibited sexual drive, Eros.<sup>178</sup> Freud describes two types of drive to which the psychic structure is subject. The ego, which is primarily a bodily ego, is under the influence of perception, and the id (and the ego) is under the influence of drives. These are the sexual drive or Eros, which is 'by far the more conspicuous and accessible to study', and the death drive (Freud, 1961b, p.40) [1923]. The death drive is less obvious and aims to lead 'back into the inanimate state' (Freud, 1961b, p.40) [1923]. In *Warenhaus der Liebe*, the creative or sexual drive is represented by the range of wares and services. The death drive is represented by the military. The sudden and unexpected violence is resolved by the creation of celluloid soldiers. Their creation is opposed by the equal and opposite drive to send them to their deaths. Just as the store's name is the 'Department Store of Love' rather than the 'Institute for Sexual Science', the language throughout refers to love. The clientele have found their 'kingdom of love', one man leaves them a gift because his heart has found peace now he is able to love according to his wishes. The ego, with its perceiving surface, derived from bodily sensations, is represented within the lists of requests and productions of different objects and experiences associated with the body. As a mental projection of the surface of the body, as well as representing the surface of the mental apparatus, the ego merges into the id, with the id as 'the great reservoir of libido' (Freud, 1961b, p.30 n.1) [1923]. In *Warenhaus der Liebe* there is also a merging of different characters types in the story, such as the authority figure of the military leader with customers of the store.

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<sup>178</sup> Freud uses the terms 'Sexualtriebe oder Eros' and 'Todestriebe' (Freud, 1991b, pp.268–269) [1923].

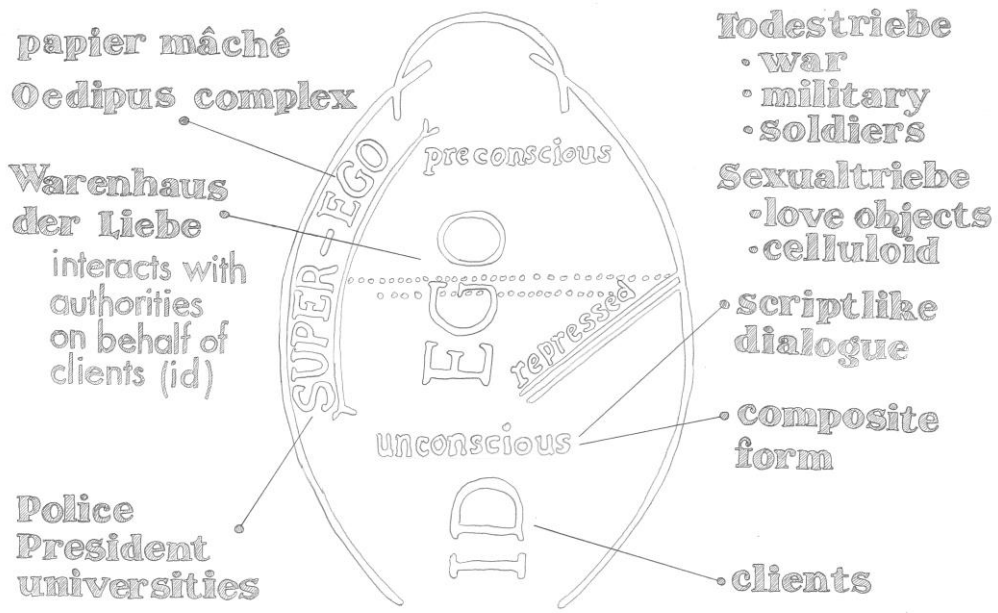


Figure 115. *Warenhaus der Liebe*, 1931-1933, as an allegory for Sigmund Freud's three-part structure of the psychic apparatus, the ego, id and super-ego.

## Mechanisms of transformation

Radical imagination's social effect and political power is based in the relationship of the body to imagination in everyday processes of perception, experience and life. Höch enacts it in her work through particular mechanisms, which this section will explore in light of the foregoing discussion about a soul-body complex. These include empathy, anthropomorphism, point-of-view, identification and body image. Empathy is involved in art in a general sense. An artist, as a communicator of information, including emotional feelings, has to imagine possible emotional reactions to the work. The art Höch values most for its communicative ability involves empathy:

The more vitality, the fuller intuition and deeper empathy on which a work of art is based, the more strongly it will speak to us, regardless of which time or to which 'ism' it belongs' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>179</sup>.

In the communicative transaction of art, both artist and viewer put themselves in the other's shoes in an empathetic manner. For example, Höch's *Boa Perlina* (Figure 63) is clearly not a snake, but it evokes an idea of a snake. Höch imbues an inanimate object with feelings, anthropomorphising it and animating a collection of representations, giving them form in our imagination, as a body. *Boa Perlina* presents an experiential picture to the viewer who understands its fictional status. In other photomontages the fiction is emphasised by the use of borders, evidence of cutting (Höch's hand is always shown, and often accentuated), the recognisability of the source material and the fact of its displacement from a printed source. These reminders of fictional status enhance the underlying reinforcement of the assumption of mind. Höch can expect the viewer to understand this evocation of the snake and this confirms the shared assumption of mind for both parties. An assumption that others have a mind is an intuitive first step towards empathy, which connects people by assuming a shared psychic world. Anthropomorphising in visual art also activates emotions. Faces are recognised, eliciting feelings in the viewer. Scarecrows are anthropomorphised through her title, in *Scheuchen geben zur Versammlung* ('Scarecrows going to the Meeting'), c1960, Figure 116. Scarecrows are designed to appear like humans and provoke a psychological response. In *Mensch und Maschine* ('Human and Machine'), 1921, Figure 117, Höch animates a mechanical entity. Weather is anthropomorphised by Höch in *Nebelfrauen* ('Mist

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<sup>179</sup> 'Je mehr Lebendigkeit, je stärkere Intuition und tiefere Einfühlung dem Kunstwerk zugrunde liegen, desto stärker wird es zu uns sprechen, unabhängig davon, zu welcher Zeit oder zu welchem >>ismus<< es gehört'.

women'), c. 1945, *Regen* ('Rain'), 1918, and *Nebel* ('Fog'), 1918, Figure 118, Figure 119 and Figure 120. In these examples, meteorological phenomena are given bodies.

Another way in which Höch recruits of effects of embodied imagination is her use of point-of-view and scale. Sensory input, for example, the touch of an object describes boundaries and creates an imagined self-concept. An individual's point-of-view is partly created by interacting with this boundary. Scale creates a sense of the individual as a body in relation to other objects. For example, Höch's miniature drawings, Figure 121 and Figure 122, suggest either a miniature viewer or the opposite idea of gigantism. Related issues of point-of-view and scale appear in Höch's writing. Höch's describes wanting, through her painting, to see the world as an ant would see it (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311). That is, from a subjective, embodied and much smaller point-of-view. By figuratively placing herself in an ant's body, Höch gives this experience tangible form. If anthropomorphising supports an idea of mind, the use of scale and point-of-view suggests imaginatively placing oneself in that animal, object or scale.

Emotion as a social experience relies on a socially shared presumed narrative. Art is a means through which the social and cultural sharing of narrative can occur. According to Henri Bergson, by involving emotion, art communicates richness beyond conceptual or symbolic understanding. Emotion is a means by which art is imbued with complexity, 'the greater number of emotions are instinct with a thousand sensations, feelings or ideas which pervade them' (Bergson, 2001, p.17) [1889]. Direct references to emotion are found in Höch's paintings, for example in the collage like drawing, *Geliebtes Kleinzeug*, 1926 ('Beloved small deer'), Figure 123. Love is also referred to in other works such as *Liebe in die Wüste*, 1923 ('Love in the desert'), Figure 124. *Angst*, 1936, Figure 125, engages with the emotion of fear. Angst has psychological and existential connotations that Höch would have been familiar with. Höch suffered from Graves' disease in 1935 and was treated with surgery. This serious and life-threatening episode may have resulted in a shock to her 'sense of self' (Lancher in Makela and Boswell, 1996, p. 133). *Angst* was painted after a period of uncertainty in Höch's personal life, with the break-up of her relationship with Brugman, her serious illness, the departure of most of her friends from Germany and an increasing threat from the Nazi regime.



In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, 1872, Charles Darwin describes emotions and sensations as being generated in the body.<sup>180</sup> He quotes Norfolk from *Henry VIII* addressing Cardinal Wolsey:

‘Some strange commotion  
Is in his brain: he bites his lips and starts;  
Stops on a sudden, looks upon the ground,  
Then, lays his finger on his temple; straight,  
Springs out into fast gait; then, stops again,  
Strikes his breast hard; and anon, he casts  
His eye against the moon: in most strange postures  
We have seen him set himself

*Hen. VIII*, iii, 2.’ (Darwin, 1998, p.37)[1872].

Höch explains that the physical cutting of images in photomontage involves emotion: ‘On closer inspection it appeared, however, that the issue was not so funny because the emotional distress and the desperate struggle of the disappointed and haunted youth had led the scissors, so to speak’ (Höch, 1989a, p.218) [1946].<sup>181</sup> Here, scissors are led by the emotion, embodying a translation of psychic activity into physical action, outside the body. Höch connects emotion to the actions of the body in the process of making. The physical act of cutting is led by an emotional state, rather than being a technical means to achieve a preconceived conceptual depiction of emotion. Darwin observes that:

There are other actions which are commonly performed under certain circumstances, independently of habit, and which seem to be due to imitation or some sort of sympathy. Thus persons cutting anything with a pair of

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<sup>180</sup> In a note about the distinction between emotions and sensations: ‘Mr Herbert Spencer (*Essays*, second series, 1863, p. 138) has drawn a clear distinction between emotions and sensations, the latter being ‘generated in our corporeal framework’. He classes as feelings both emotions and sensations’ (Darwin, 1872, p. 33n).

<sup>181</sup> ‘Beim näheren Hinsehen stellte es sich allerdings heraus, daß die Sache gar nicht so lustig war, denn die Schere geführt – wenn man so sagen darf – hatte die seelische Not, das verzweifelte Ringen der auch damals gequälten und enttäuschen Jugend.’

scissors may be seen to move their jaws simultaneously with the blades of the scissors (Darwin, 1998, p.40).

This phenomena is discussed by Ramachandran and Hubbard who explain it as a ‘spillover of signals between two nearby motor areas: those that control the sequence of muscles movements required for hand gestures and those for the mouth’, suggesting this could have been a factor in developing spoken language (Ramachandran and Hubbard, 2003, p.59). The viewer also has a physiological reaction to art. David Freedberg and Vittorio Gallese, propose that embodied simulations of movements or feelings are part of an aesthetic response to art (Freedberg and Gallese, 2007). They find that physical reactions to paintings, sculpture or other pictorial sources occur as an effect in the brain of the viewer. In particular, with depictions of figures that are unbalanced, pressured, destabilised or mutilated. In Höch’s photomontage figures are routinely dismembered and distorted. In viewing Höch’s work, the physiological and psychological response confirms its reality while their fictional nature is understood.

## Identification

Identification is important to radical imagination because it is transformative. Identification is defined by Laplanche and Pontalis as a process where an aspect, property or attribute belonging to one person is assimilated, transforming the first person as a result (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.205). In Freud’s writing, as has been noted earlier in this chapter, identification amounts to a form of incorporation, with parallels to eating (Freud, 1961b, p.29, n.2) [1923]. It is ‘by means of a series of identifications that the personality is constituted and specified’ (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.205). Jacques Lacan defines identification as ‘the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes [...] an image’ (Lacan, 2006b, p.76) [1949]. Höch often uses images of well-known cultural figures, such as to Marlene Dietrich. Dietrich is a figure who may be admired and identified with by on screen or through print media and photographs. In *Siebenmeilenstiefel* (“Seven League Boots”), 1934, Figure 126, Höch refers to fairy tale boots enabling a person to take seven league strides to move quickly through the landscape. The magical power the boots contain is given through the body, which magically adapts to fit. The reader identifies with the characters and puts themselves in the characters’ shoes. In the process there is an assimilation of attributes. Fairy tales also have a polar quality: ‘The figures in fairy tales are not ambivalent—not good and bad at the same time, as we all are in reality. But since polarization dominates the child’s mind, it also dominates fairy tales’ (Bettelheim, 1978, p.9). When reading these stories, the emotion is contagious and we share the fear

of being eaten by the ogre, getting lost in the forest and being abandoned, and empathise more readily because of the bodily emphasis. Fantasy is rooted in culturally shared pasts, so these figures and their magical accompaniments might already inhabit our minds.

Identification is discussed by Freud in relation to hysterical symptoms, as imitation, 'sympathy, as it were, intensified to the point of reproduction' (Freud, 1953a, p.149) [1900]. It operates similarly to psychical contagion, but creates assimilation rather than imitation since it is unconscious. Through identification people take on the characteristics of others, associating themselves with the other or adopting their behaviour. It is an emotional tie involving the assimilation of some aspects of the other and transformation through that process. Freud associates identification with physical symptoms affecting the body in hysteria. There is some overlap with empathy: 'identification in everyday usage 'overlaps a whole group of psychological concepts—e.g. imitation, *Einfühlung* (empathy), sympathy, mental contagion, projection, etc.' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.206). Empathy and identification are related but identification is both transformative and unconscious.

In Freud's writing, identification is a complex of concepts. Most relevant here are those applying to body-image and perception. The concept of identification appears in *The Ego and the Id* by reference to an earlier work (*Mourning and Melancholia* (Freud, 1957b, p.249) [1917]): 'an object which was lost has been set up again inside the ego—that is, that an object-cathexis has been replaced by an identification' (Freud, 1961b, p.28) [1923]. Cathexis is Strachey's term in translation of an emotional or mental investment in something. This is an amount of psychic energy invested in an object, person or idea (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.63). In *Warenhaus der Liebe* customers are forced to give up their 'love-objects'. This is a process of psychic change:

When it happens that a person has to give up a sexual object, there quite often ensues an alteration of his ego which can only be described as a setting up of the object inside the ego (...) It may be that this identification is the sole condition under which the id can give up its objects (Freud, 1961b, p.29) [1923].

Replacement of an object-cathexis with an identification is therefore a crucial psychological process in relation to transformation caused by Höch's images. It is a process described by Freud as 'common' and 'typical' and having 'a great share in determining the form taken by the ego' (Freud, 1961b, p.28) [1923]. The structure of the psychical apparatus and the psychic energy, translated by Strachey as cathexis, is explained in relation to identification as a process of substitution in which the ego is altered. This discussion

of identification focuses on transformation of the form of the ego in terms of psychosexual development, as a complication of the idea that the ego is merely 'the representative in the mind of the real external world' (Freud, 1961b, p.28) [1923]. The ego ideal is a differentiation of the ego, a complication of the psychic structure by dynamic transformational processes. The Oedipus complex is introduced as part of the 'intricacy of the problem' of the ego ideal (Freud, 1961b, p.31) [1923]. The Oedipus complex, an idea included by Freud in his discussion of identification in relation to the super-ego (ego ideal) appears in *Warenhaus der Liebe*. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, hysterical identification is described as enabling the expression in one individual of 'not only their own experiences but those of a large number of other people' (Freud, 1953a, p.149) [1900]. Symptoms are imitated in others, 'sympathy, as it were, intensified to the point of reproduction' (Freud, 1953a, p.149) [1900]. This mental contagion is an unconscious process in which the fear of something leads to its assimilation through a process of phantasy in which a person puts themselves in the place of someone else with concrete effects (such as the development of a particular symptom). Freud develops the concept of identification together with his concept of the psychic structure.

### Body, boundaries and the mental image

Body image is the picture formed in the mind of our own body and how it appears to us, built up from the senses, from our visual view of our body and an experience of unity of the body. Höch often dismembers and reassembles bodies, paying particular attention to eyes and mouths. According to Schilder, body image constantly changes according to a person's actions, emotions and motivations and is affected by its connection to the body images of others:

[T]here is from the beginning a very close connection between the body-image of ourselves and the body-images of others. We take parts of the body images of others into others, and push parts of our body-image into others. We may push our own body-images completely into others, or in some way there may be a continuous interplay between the body-images of ourselves and the persons around us' (Schilder, 1935, p.235).

The transforming force of body-image is a mechanism that changes how the world is understood and acted toward: 'strong as the tendency may be to act towards the world as we see it, there is also a tendency to unite the body-image with all other body-images' (Schilder, 1935, p.255). This is a social effect: 'There exists a deep community between one's own body image and the body image of others' (Schilder, 1935, p.217). Kaja Silverman's discussion in *The Threshold of the Visible World* argues that proprioceptivity

is central to the bodily ego. She defines proprioceptivity as being 'bound up with the body's sensation of occupying a point in space' (Silverman, 1996, p.16). The individual's body-image changes according to emotions, actions, and motives:

We expand and we contract the postural model of the body; we take parts away and we add parts; we rebuild it; we melt the details in; we create new details (Schilder, 1935, p.211).

Because of the tendency to push body-image into the body image of others, and to incorporate other's body-images, Höch's work affects the viewer's body-image. The viewers push their body-images into her work and incorporate the images presented by Höch into their own body-image. The resulting effects occur in the body because they involve a psychic apparatus connected to the body:

We see parts of the body-surface. We have tactile, thermal, pain impressions. There are sensations which come from the muscles and their sheaths, indicating deformation of the muscle; sensations coming from the innervation of the muscles [...] and sensations coming from the viscera. Beyond that there is the immediate experience that there is a unity of the body (Schilder, 1935, p.11)

Höch's work has the effect of pushing body-image into the body-image of others, creating new details, additions and adjustments.

Figure 116.

Figure 117.

Figure 118.



Figure 119.

Figure 120.

Figure 121.

Figure 122.

Figure 123.

Figure 124.

Figure 125.

Figure 126.

## Food – image – money

In *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* (Figure 4) Höch introduces, through the 'kitchen knife', another way to create body-image – eating. Eating is part of the experience of bodily integrity. It contributes to the creation of body image by providing sensations in the digestive tract. Food is experienced through the senses as a boundary-defining event, confounding distinctions between our bodies and our body image. Our body's existence as a separate object is both demonstrated and blurred through the consumption of food. Food threatens the body's integrity because to eat something means taking it into the body, enveloping and absorbing it, and in some respects to become that object.<sup>182</sup> In *Totem and Taboo* Freud writes that some cannibals hold the belief that '[b]y incorporating parts of a person's body through the act of eating, one at the same time acquires the qualities possessed by him' (Freud, 1955a, p.82) [1913]. Freud argues that the consumption of totems also reinforces an identification. The kitchen knife of Höch's photomontage is a utensil with a bodily relation, wielded in the hand. It thus creates a further reference to the body. The knife emphasises the physicality of chopping and slicing, creating a disturbing collision between images of the body, and the mental image of the knife. Combining these images with references to the social and political context provides an indictment of culture.<sup>183</sup> Tristan Tzara's Dada Manifesto, 1918, is replete with references to the body, including sweat, blood, flesh, excrement, hiccups, and entrails. Tzara declared:

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<sup>182</sup> The idea that images of the consumption of food relate to the consumption of images, and further linked to a critique of capitalism is discussed in *Hannah Höch's Dada Kitchen Knife* (Tabernacle, 2016).

<sup>183</sup> It implies an association between the political compromises that led to events such as the murders of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and the differences between some Expressionist artists and Dadaists which were to lead to the Novembergruppe break-away letter of 1921 (Dix et al., 2003, p.267) [1921].



pity is a sentiment like diarrhoea in relation to the disgust that destroys health, a foul attempt by carrion corpses to compromise the sun. I proclaim the opposition of all cosmic faculties to this gonorrhoea of a putrid sun issued from the factories of philosophical thought, I proclaim bitter struggle with all the weapons of

DADAIST DISGUST (Tzara, 1989, p.81)

Tzara's vociferous criticism is directed at art, and includes the idea of art consuming itself, as the Ouroboros, swallowing itself from the tail.<sup>184</sup> Höch's *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* is an example of Dadaist disgust that consumes, rejects and returns images. In an analogy to the body, which consumes, but also ejects, emits, seeps and vomits, Höch's presentation of images as a form of consumption proposes a similar possibility of negation and rejection, connecting this to a sophisticated political critique linking ideas of food and consumption with the consumption of image and to economics. The 'Beer-belly' of the title refers to the theme of hypocritical overindulgence and inequality during a period of endemic hunger. The use of corpulence as a code for hypocrisy was used by other Berlin Dadaists, for example, in George Grosz's print *LE TRIOMPHE DES SCIENCES EXACTES DIE GESUNDBETER GERMAN DOCTORS FIGHTING THE BLOCKADE*, 1918, Figure 127. A connection between consuming food and economics also appears in work such as John Heartfield's *ADOLF, DER ÜBERMENSCH: Schlucket Gold und redet Blech* ('Adolf the Superman: swallows gold and spouts rubbish'), 1932, Figure 128. In this photomontage, Hitler's head is superimposed onto an X-ray image of a body swallowing a stream of gold coins. A connection between money, food and the body is also made by Heartfield in *Hurrah, die Butter ist alle!* ('Hurrah, the butter is All Finished!'), 1935, Figure 129 with a family group depicted eating metal objects. Höch, by exhorting the viewer to 'invest your money in Dada' in *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauch-Kulturepoche Deutschlands* similarly incorporates an economic reference into her work, associating this with ideas of food, consumption and the body. In both Heartfield and Höch the economic exchange system of capitalism is linked to the domestic social context of food. Heartfield's title, *Hurrah, die Butter ist alle!*, ridicules a

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<sup>184</sup> The Ouroboros is a symbol in which a snake or serpent eats its own tail. It dates back to several cultures, including ancient Egypt and Greece. Its basis is a circle. It can refer to the idea of return or to cycles of life with no beginning or end. Tzara's idea of art swallowing its own tail in *Seven Dada Manifestoes* is as a negative consequence of adhering to logic (Tzara, 1989) p80.

speech by Hermann Göring in which he said he preferred guns and iron to butter because iron would make Germany strong, whereas butter would only make people fat.<sup>185</sup> Under the Nazi regime providing the military and industry with iron and guns was prioritised over sustaining the civilian population with food. Heartfield conveys a political criticism through an image of bodies, linked to consumption and eating.

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<sup>185</sup> Heartfield's caption is translated following the *Akron Art Museum*, Ohio, as 'Hurrah! The butter is finished' (rather than 'gone') to better reflect a concern with eating (Akron Art Museum, n.d.). A likely topical reference is to a speech by Hermann Göring in Hamburg in 1935 (Schultz, 1935). Göring's reference to butter and iron is reported variously, for example, by Sigfrid Schulz in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 7, 1935, which paraphrases (and translates) Göring's speech as 'Iron ores make nations strong – butter and lard make them only fat' (Schultz, 1935, p.11). The quotation appears slightly differently in David Carnegie in *International Affairs* as 'Iron makes an Empire strong; butter only makes people fat' (Carnegie, 1939, p.785). The use of butter to stand for food and civilian economic commodities, and iron for guns is not limited to this speech by Göring. For example, Joseph Göbbels is quoted by *The Economist* from a speech in Berlin in 1936: 'We can well do without butter, but not without guns, because butter could not help us if we were to be attacked one day' (The Economist, 1936, p.176).

Figure 127.

Figure 128.

Figure 129.

## Conclusion

By presenting images of people for consumption, Höch reveals the cannibalistic horror of mass culture and evokes the fear of being consumed. Just as Freud's hypothetical models of the mind are created in part through diagrams and concrete spatial models, Höch's art also creates hypothetical models of the psyche, often based on images of the body. If psychic states are treated as a matrix of interdependent processes, then imagination cannot happen without perception, thought cannot happen without imagination, and cognition cannot be a distinct and separate sphere of activity. Imagination is woven into the fabric of the totality that might be called mind, psyche or consciousness. Höch's radical imagination, it is proposed here, is holistic, incorporating perception and other psychic processes. Its effects are on the body, because the perceptual apparatus involves the body and consciousness itself, including imagination, is a property of the body. This is in contrast to the idea that perception mediates between the sensations from a material exterior and an interior and separate mind.

The differences between these two broadly depicted models are summarised in diagrams, Figure 130 and Figure 131. The first diagram is linear. It separates an exterior from an interior, thus isolating imagination from reality and the senses, leading to its secondary position as either false or at least less-than perception. The senses in this model record what is in front of people in the sphere of common experience by contrast to an individual world of the mind. As Roditi suggests, 'the camera is a far more objective and trustworthy witness than a human being' (Höch, 1959b, p.69). This model is directional, the direction is inwards, from a rational objective exterior towards an individual interior. There is no direct possibility for reciprocity or intersubjectivity. Imagination here is as the photographic plate in the one-way system of the camera. The second diagram is my alternative suggestion as a model for Höch's idea of the psychical apparatus. It has been arranged using Höch's *Russische Tänzerin (Meine Double)* as the base form. In this diagram the form represents the complex totality of the soul (Figure 104). Höch uses body-image and empathy to create alterations in perception as the viewer responds physiologically and psychically to the work. Identification is an important additional factor because it is a mechanism 'whereby the human subject is constituted' (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988, p.206). Furthermore, it is through unconscious phantasies a person identifies with another person, object or idea, echoing Höch's expressed wish to use her imagination as a bridge to change people's perception.

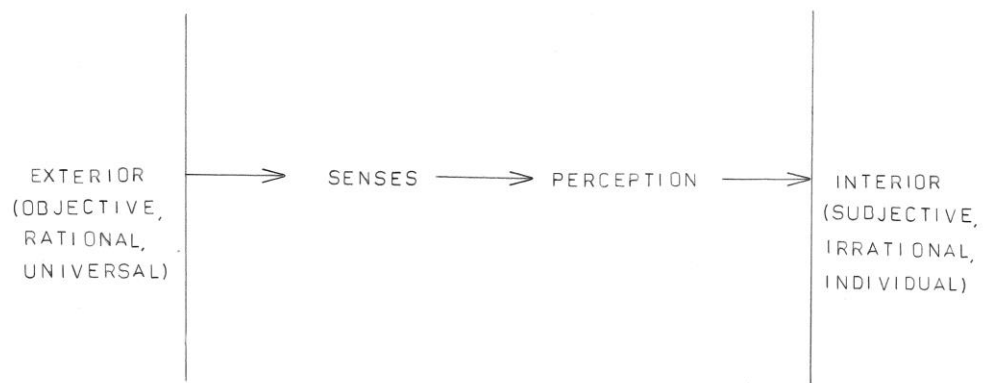


Figure 130. Imagination within a linear and dualistic directional framework.

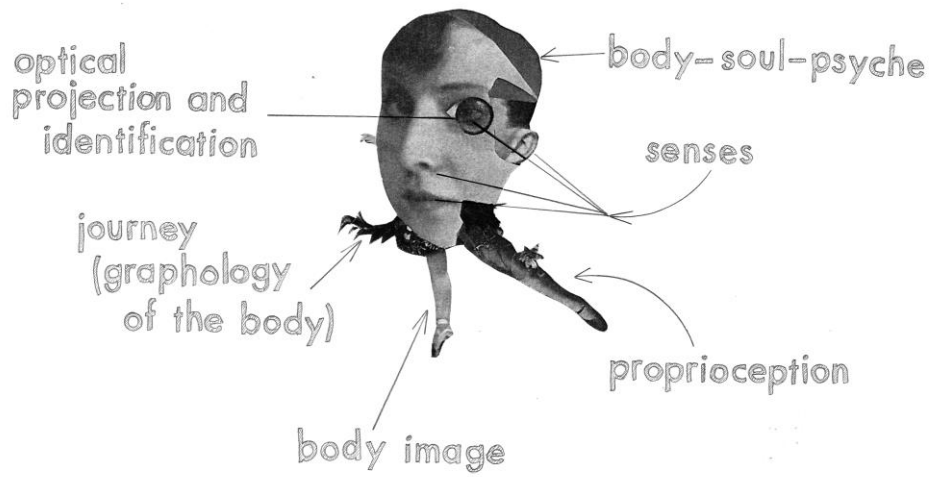


Figure 131. Radical imagination within a holistic framework involving the body.



## Discussion and conclusions

Höch saw the discovery of art's task as the most important of the age. It behoves any student of Höch therefore to try to better understand this task and its achievement. It would be impossible to fully understand or reconstruct Höch's motivations and beliefs. However, if Höch's theorisation of a radical imagination is important to the understanding of her work, particular issues, effects and qualities would be expected to be found in her work, as well as in the associated gallery texts and correspondence. This thesis has presented evidence from the theoretical context that there are possible mechanisms for Höch's radical imagination. It appears, from Höch's words, that she disregarded 'ism's, style, and propaganda, while elevating the artist's role and the task of art, as part of life, and in answer to questions of meaning, reality and imagination. The philosophy of imagination is closely related to aesthetics, implying also that art is connected to understandings of reality and perception. This is not a new connection that Höch has found, nevertheless it is a theme that she incorporates into her project, giving it considerable significance in key pieces of writing about her art that address issues of reality and perception. The assumption has been made here that Höch's aesthetic ideas should be expected to roughly coincide with her concept of imagination, and that there would likely be a degree of consistency between her art and her broad philosophical position such that conclusions can be drawn from comparing one aspect of her thinking, her art, to another, such as her writing.

The radicality of Höch's imagination is found in its intended effect as well as the processes of action. The term 'radical imagination' is not used here as a measure of how political Höch was, for example, in terms of affiliations or the publication of manifestos, or memberships of organisations. Explicit political content in Höch's work exists, but it is useful to look beyond stereotypical ideas of what politics is and include in the idea of what is political, for example, her engagement with the representation of women in mass culture. Speculative connections to Marxist writing have been made, for example by Brigid Doherty (Doherty, 2003, p.82). However, judgements of political commitment or position need to recognise the complexities of Höch's approach and the particular differences of her situation, as a woman, compared to the opportunities and reception afforded to the work of her male colleagues. Evaluating Höch politically supports the conditions that have reduced her to a purveyor of domestic support for her colleagues, and as an adjunct to the apparently serious political philosophy of Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield and George Grosz, among

others. Her lack of conformity to the restrictions of Berlin Dada is then explained through biography, as a lack of courage in the face of persecution, a lack of intellectual rigour and political commitment, or from purely commercial motivation. Rather than focus on her difference as a lack in comparison with others, this thesis argues that Höch's difference leads to and supports the positive development and application of radical imagination through her work. Höch's radical imagination has value beyond her undoubtedly pioneering development of photomontage, even including its adaption to her female perspective, her unique approach to the representation of women in mass culture and her engagement with issues of gender. Höch pursued a commitment to radical imagination, often at the cost of misinterpretation of her political and artistic contribution.

Höch, as a product of the twentieth century, was a participant in and creator of modern art and culture. Her ideas therefore fit within and in relation to existing contested approaches to imagination. Höch was, broadly, an exponent of the modern subjective imagination, but this is itself divided according to attitudes to realism and idealism. Despite Berlin Dada's flirtation with Ernst Mach's ideas about sensation and Höch's embrace of newsprint, both of which might indicate a materialist stance, an argument that she was committed to a realist materialism is contradicted by the more spiritual elements in her work and by her affiliations with artists in the more idealist and spiritual/transcendental grouping within Dada. Her statements on the issue, such as her gallery text *Fantastische Kunst*, ('Fantastic Art'), indicate a position that incorporates both material and spirit (Höch, 2008) [1946]. She does not adopt Edouard Roditi's language of the objective truth of photography, speaking instead of 'appearances', in language reminiscent of Henri Bergson's idea of an image as being somewhere between a representation and an object (Höch, 1959b, p.69). Positioning Höch through her affiliations and influences suggests that she believed there to be a fully human subjective imagination, but that writers critical of Immanuel Kant influenced her understanding. Kant's theory of imagination, before he drew back from it, is produced by the human mind (as opposed to a divinely inspired vision) and unlike in Aristotle where it is secondary to sensation and reality, it does not merely reflect but is involved in constituting the world. To use reason to conclude that imagination exists before reason is inherently contradictory in the view of writers after Kant such as Martin Heidegger, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche, and importantly for this study, Salomo Friedländer. Modern artists' understanding of imagination follows the fault-line of this debate: artists and philosophers of Höch's time might be empirical realists (Ernst Mach) or transcendental idealists (Wassily Kandinsky). Dada was

touched by this same fissure. This is in spite of Dada's apparent opposition to the excesses of spiritualism with its prioritisation of the transcendent to the neglect of concrete conditions and political realities. The philosophical debate between realism and idealism is represented by proxy in art, in the debate between materialism and spiritualism. So, while in general Dada was anti-idealist and against the reification of imagination to an omnipotent position akin to Plato's higher realm for the Idea, this does not lead to an uncomplicated embrace of materialism. Höch's approach falls somewhere between: her work has a tendency towards the concrete and material issues, while at the same time incorporating spiritual and visionary sources of imagery. She is also critical of utopianism, as demonstrated in *The Painter* and in her painting *Mausoleum für eine Utopie* (Mausoleum for a Utopia), 1967. The more important legacy for Höch from her involvement in Dada may have been the idea that methods, techniques and subject matter in art are chosen strategically.

The taboo against imagination stems from early ancient Greek and biblical cultural heritage. Cornelius Castoriadis writes of imagination being ignored by philosophy, sociology and politics (Castoriadis, 1997b, p.319). André Breton writes about imagination 'reasserting itself' and 'reclaiming its rights', attaching this to the particular Surrealist moment (Breton, 1972, p.10) [1924]. Richard Kearney identifies postmodernism as especially antagonist toward the idea of imagination (Kearney, 1988). Imagination was nevertheless considered capable of affecting material conditions by some involved in Dada and Surrealism. Höch had varying levels of engagement with these ideas about imagination; she moved on from the Berlin Dada group in 1922, retaining some of the practices of Dada but re-working them into her unique approach. While some primary accounts of Berlin Dada side-line Höch and appear to diminish her achievements, Dada remained a source of influence and ideas for Höch with relevance to how she might have understood imagination. For example, it is from Dada that the systematic application of art as a political tactic first arises for Höch, as well as the practice of choosing methods and techniques on the basis of their material social effects. Additionally, it is through Dada that Höch is first exposed to the idea of art as a revolutionary force involving the mind. Höch had sufficient differences from some of her colleagues in Berlin Dada to split from that group and seek out new contacts and colleagues. Paradoxically, in moving on from Hausmann and the exclusive Club Dada Berlin, Höch's journey took her closer to the past and to Dada's beginnings in Zürich as she made contact with artists such as Tristan Tzara, László Moholy-Nagy and Hans Arp. She also broadened her theoretical base to include movements such as Constructivism, De Stijl, Cubism and Surrealism. She continued

to work as a Dadaist, despite the friction between herself and her Berlin Dada colleagues, and also as an Expressionist, continuing to exhibit and work with the Novembergruppe. Her pluralistic approach meant that she discussed her work using the term 'Fantastic Art', a term incorporating most of the twentieth century avant-garde movements. She declined to follow the practices of De Stijl, finding it too restrictive, but engaged with the ideas of De Stijl. Her planned show at the Dessau Bauhaus did not take place, due to the school's closure by local National Socialist authorities (Boswell, 1996, p.16). However, she was part of the eclectic and contradictory mixture of modern art movements proliferating in Germany during the first half of the twentieth century. Sadly, even as Höch became the source for much of the history for this period, as she had stayed in Berlin keeping many artefacts, manuscripts and works safe throughout the Second World War, she witnessed attempts to edit her work from that history. However, if the idea of a radical imaginative force in her work has validity, her work can still create effects in the present.

Höch stated that imagination had a role in her work in several references to using imagination to create change and to imaginative vision. References to imagination are found in her subject matter and through indirect references to imaginative material such as dreams, visions and hallucinations, all involving image production. The question of what Höch understood by imagination is perhaps ultimately unanswerable, but it is possible to consider the concepts that Höch could have been familiar with. An examination of context involves some consideration of biography. Her longstanding friendship with Friedländer, the biographer of Nietzsche who wrote his doctoral thesis on Schopenhauer and continued a critical engagement with Kant, is significant in trying to assess Höch's potential attitudes towards imagination, especially considering the extensive evidence of her study of Friedländer's work and the incorporation of references to his ideas. Friedländer's *Schöpferische Indifferenz* ('Creative Indifference') is a philosophy of the nature of reality that balances spirit and matter (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918]. Höch did not follow the dogmatic propaganda of some in Berlin Dada, preferring a less propagandistic political approach. Her deliberate and carefully thought position can be obscured by a focus on extremes. Having been judged according to her compliance with these extremes, conclusions are sometimes reached that she was, for example, less consistent, less political, or less committed. She is treated in some accounts as forming her ideas according to her personal relationships. However, the reverse seems more likely: Höch actively sought the company of those with whom she identified a theoretical affinity.

An excessive resort to biography and comparisons to other Dadaists has sometimes had the effect of removing from Höch the agency to develop her own complex aesthetic theory. Looking at Höch's work in the context of aesthetic history, of which Höch is a part, the importance of imagination emerges both in the specifics of her work and from the wider debate in twentieth century art. The theoretical force of Höch's oeuvre stems from her understanding of imagination as a radical force. Imagination is fully integral to Höch's ground-breaking approach to mass media and especially photomontage. Höch's work also makes a contribution to the theorisation of imagination. From this understanding of Höch's work, new interpretations can be made. How Höch is understood has consequences for the way that the history of modern art impacts our understanding of art today.

### Enactment of radical imagination

Höch's theorisation of radical imagination is enacted through art. An analysis of the mechanisms for its enactment are organised here into four areas. These are, firstly, the representation of space in support of a theorisation of a subjective reality. The second area of effect is in the inseparability of imagination and language. This also relies on receptiveness to synaesthetic experience. Thirdly, because psychoanalytic theory is an important part of Höch's background and influence, it is proposed that her concept of imagination includes the unconscious and that this is connected to a focus in her work on seeing. Fourthly, the account of imagination given here proposes the body as a site where imagination has transformative effect. This organisation is for clarity and convenience rather than indicating a proposed categorical structure for radical imagination. Taken together, this is a proposal for an expanded understanding of imagination in art, enacted through the techniques, methods and subject matter identified in this thesis, such as the use of chance processes, simultaneity, coincidence, combining images, combining text and image and a treatment of images of the body that invokes change in the viewer.

### Reality and space: Höch's metaphysical imagination

The way that Höch depicts space in her work is not neutral: it carries meaning in terms of her attitude to realism and idealism. The problem that Kant's transcendental imagination is unable to engage with matter is addressed by writers such as Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, who are part of Höch's genealogy of influence. Höch's radical imagination is connected both to an external world and to a subjective self. Space is linked to reality and imagination because space is perceived, imagined and represented

in art. Influenced by Nietzsche and Friedländer's ideas of polarity, Höch engaged in her use of space with ideas of infinity, polarity and balance. Her depiction of space is diagnostic of her approach to reality, including the role of imagination, as part of her broader aesthetic framework. Whether imagination is understood as the negation of an objectively perceived reality of the senses, or as part of a psychic reality that can be shared and changed, is crucial to the possibility for imagination to create change. Issues of perception and reality are mirrored in the depiction of space so that, for example, a rational view of reality is associated with single point perspective and its infinite projection point. Historically, mathematical perspective systems represent an abstract understanding of space. There are examples in Höch's work of space being depicted in ways that are not rational. These include spatial anomalies and often the raised viewpoint characteristic of an imaginatively constructed space, for example, in her series of birth paintings where the raised viewpoint shows the viewer everything in the room, demonstrating a prioritisation of narrative over the recording of a rationalised view from the senses.

Friedländer's revision of Kant leads directly to the grotesque as a form intended to reveal to people their illusions of distorted reality. Grotesque images, used by Höch, Friedlander and Til Brugman, either visual or verbal, were intended to reveal the positivist doctrine behind modern culture. The grotesque relies on imaginative process of combining images. Distortions created by the false idea of a rational reality were intended to be revealed through shock. In this instance the method is directed at what Höch saw as the hypocritical concept of a fully-rationalised reality. The grotesque is aimed at conventional thinking and the habitual assumptions that lead people to be deceived by the dogmatic reality presented by modern culture. In common with Carl Einstein, Friedländer is concerned about distortions of reality and the false assumptions these habitually lead to. Conventional thinking is seen by Friedländer as intervening between people and reality (Benson, 1987b, p.11). Using the grotesque to shock people from their conventional perceptual habits therefore removes an impediment to accessing reality. By revealing the illusions existing within an assumed objectivity, the result is intended that the viewer is shocked into reappraising their subjective position. Part of Friedländer's critique of the positivist view of perception is that imagination is not taken into account. The grotesque is used as a strategy to undermine a conformist view of perception, that of positivist science. A conformist view of perception is also shared by those whose concept of imagination is that it is secondary to sensation, through which an external and rational reality is perceived. Höch's close association with Friedländer's critique of positivism does not position

her as an idealist. Neither does her *Ethnographic Museum* series of photomontages, described by Thomas Haakenson as a critique of scientific positivism (Haakenson, 2006). On the contrary, Höch is critical of idealism. Höch's *Fantastische Kunst* contrasts an art that gives the false appearance that the world is fully-rationalised with 'fantastic art' an art of 'supra-reality' (Höch, 2008, p.14) [1946]. Höch creates an image of an abyss between the real world and the idea. The ideal image rises overhead as the previously known reality lies broken beneath. She does not place herself or her art within this spatial image but instead fantastic art demonstrates the difference between the two opposing forces of the real world and the idea. Fantastic art had a task, the discovery of which was seen by Höch as its greatest achievement. In other words, Höch elevated the importance of discovering art's purpose over other achievements. Her language in this text indicates that she shares the Dadaist criticism of Kant's thing-in-itself and the implied God-given reason. It suggests a critical position in relation to Kant's transcendental imagination.

Friedländer's rejection of a wholly materialist stance does not lead to a transcendental imagination but instead he finds a material subjectivity at the null point of creative indifference. Creative indifference is a dynamic theorisation of reality as part of a material and spiritual complex in which polar differences are balanced. It incorporates art and culture as well as material, science, philosophy and spirituality. Friedländer structures all of reality, including subjective human consciousness, as polar, with creative indifference as a neutral value at the subjective centre of reality. This creates a productive force that liberates people and constitutes the world. Importantly, in this understanding of reality, the individual also has a neutral centre (Friedländer, 2009b) [1918]. The force of creative indifference therefore acts equally in the abstract as well as the concrete, bridging the transcendent and phenomenal. In this way it directly addresses the core philosophical question of imagination in a way that is neither rationally realist nor transcendently ideal. Creative indifference avoids categorical reductionism in favour of a dynamic theorisation of reality that connects the phenomenal to the psychic and corporeal, and is enacted through art, in Friedländer's case through his grotesque fiction.

The apparent adoption by Höch of Gestalt principles of perception creates a potential contradiction because the recognition of these forms suggests their pre-existence in the mind. Kant's transcendental aesthetic discusses the form of appearances as being given prior to perception. These are common forms or images that are innate. Gestalt perception relies on the recognition of these forms. Given the

evidence of Höch's critical approach to Kant, her inclusion of Gestalt perceptual principles seems surprising. However, it makes more sense when the role that Friedländer's ideas play in the early history of Gestalt psychotherapy is considered. Fritz Perl's identifies in Friedländer's creative indifference the ideas of figure and ground, of wholeness and a dialectical approach to thinking in terms of opposites such as conscious and unconscious. The apparent existence of Gestalt principles in Höch's work could also be illusory. For example, Höch creates direct and indirect connections between ideas visually through conceptual grouping, which can also look like the adoption of the Gestalt principle of grouping of forms. If Höch used Gestalt psychology deliberately in her work it would indicate an awareness of the perceptual effects of images as well as an interest in the mechanisms of consciousness and perception. The Gestalt movement was historically based on ideas that Höch may have departed from to a degree, but there are also correspondences between some Gestalt ideas and the ideas that Höch referred to from Friedländer. My view is that this is an example where Höch is flexible in her approach – open to the idea of gestalt perceptual principles but not in a doctrinaire way.

The interrelation between verbal or written language and a language of image is characteristic of Höch's work. Höch combines text and image integrating them into a whole. Text performs different roles in her work. In some examples it structures visually, in others it is intended to be read. Its formal qualities of colour and shape can be used, or its pictorial meaning, according to the way the letters behave as figures. It represents its original source as well as a new displaced position. Höch's use of text is also applied to the depiction of imaginative space. It diverges from both the rational geometric perspectival systems and the flat linear space that text is usually ordered within. In this way Höch adds depth to a system that is usually thought of as lacking spatial depth. Her works have the disconcerting effect of appearing to exist within the surface plane in a convincing, yet impossible, way that defies objective perception. Text, as with other abstract symbols, codifies meaning pictorially and these meanings exist alongside the spatial and linguistic. Approaching Höch's work through the idea of imagination therefore makes sense of the disparate mediums and subject matter where other approaches do not.

Höch's combining of pictorial language with verbal language creates simultaneous meanings, one effect of which is to reduce the distinction between visual and verbal modes of thought and its communication. Höch over-includes multiple sources of meaning in her work and in doing so demonstrates the impossibility of



separate categorisations of types of meaning production. The radicality of Höch's idea of imagination comes in part from its ability to shift between bodily senses and types of meaning and thereby destroy the illusion of those categorisations. Höch's thinking was informed by psychoanalysis; Sigmund Freud's account of perception provides potential mechanisms for shifts between sensation, perception and meaning that Höch's art puts into practice. Categorisation, or as Höch explained, the tendency to draw definite boundaries of certainty around everything in our reach, prevents us from understanding the subjective nature of reality. If people are unaware of the distortions in what is assumed to be objective and external to them, the prospect of change is denied. Höch's method is not prescriptive – she does not seek to impose her worldview onto others – but there is a degree of covertness in the application of techniques aimed at fundamentally changing people's perceptual understanding, not necessarily with their knowledge. This is already happening, in Höch's view, however, so the role of her art is to reset or repair the changes made coercively to people's perceptual processes by the prevailing culture. Radical imagination defends against tensions caused by conceptual certainty.

Text in art breaks categorical boundaries between senses and also between material and abstract forms. Writing is a way for abstract ideas to be concretised and presented in relation to image and the body. The refusal to separate is characteristic of some of her painting and photomontage. Höch's work also includes other graphic signs such as numbers and musical notation that codify pictorial meanings placing them together with other ways of communicating what Walter Benjamin refers to as 'a mental entity'. Benjamin connects language to the body as well as to space, identifying the indentations made on the paper and the implied space above and below the paper (Benjamin, 1979b, p.109) [1916]. While Höch's cover designs and illustrations are in the tradition of separating visual and verbal modes of communication, the bulk of her work argues against such a separation. The implied space behind and in front of the plane of paper is both material in the invocation of the indent on the paper and abstract in that our perception of space and the space between objects is constructed through an understanding of our position as bodies in space. Position in space can be graphically depicted and as a metaphor can be used to make connections and show attitudes and directions of thought. There is a close connection between the idea of position or coordinates and a point-of-view or perspective in the non-geographical or positional sense. Höch uses the metaphor of the bridge in relation to her intention for her imagination to create change. The analogy is with a psychic landscape through which people are connected by imagination. The

metaphorical image of the bridge, crossroads or pathway invokes the connections of language and thought. The conversion of psychic material into recordable visual traces may a fundamental property of the human imagination.

### Radical imagination's unconscious eye

The attention that Höch pays to looking, to the eye, to seeing and being seen is striking. For example, in *Lebensbild* ('Life-picture'), 1972-73 (Figure 97) she gives herself an extra pair of eyes. Taking account of her close engagement with psychoanalytic theory, and examining her work holistically, the idea of an unconscious aspect to her radical imagination helps make sense of her work. Edited from history during the post-war period, in spite of Höch's work enjoying a revival thanks to the attentions of feminist writers since that time, there is still censorship of the implications of her more radical ideas. There is sometimes also the suggestion that Höch and her contemporaries anticipate future theoretical ideas. Barrie Hinksman argues that the polar oppositions in Friedländer's philosophy anticipate 'the binary oppositions of Derrida' (Hinksman, 2002, p.110). However, in contrast to the tendency to view the work of Höch and her contemporaries as foreshadowing ideas to come, this study tries instead to understand Höch's theorisation of imagination in its context, drawing any conclusions about the future implications of those ideas directly, rather than via the intervening years. Psychoanalysis was a cutting-edge new theory during Höch's early career, and highly relevant to imagination. It makes sense therefore for her understanding of imagination to involve ideas from psychoanalysis. For an artist who aimed to recalibrate the psyche and to change people's perception, the unconscious offers a direct route.

The importance of psychoanalytic theory to Höch's thinking is a key finding for this thesis. Contextually, it should be expected that psychoanalysis is an area of relevance to Höch's approach to imagination since the Surrealists, particularly André Breton, connected imagination to the unconscious and appropriated psychoanalytic ideas for revolutionary ends, using art. Höch is associated with Surrealism, but not exclusively or unequivocally. The technique of chance informed by psychoanalysis was used in both Dada and Surrealism. Höch's Berlin art circle was closely related to the early history of psychoanalysis through interactions with Otto Gross, Arthur Segal, Alfred Döblin and Ernst Simmel. There are numerous indications in Höch's work of her awareness of and engagement with psychoanalysis. These include direct references to Freud and to psychoanalysis as well as the use of terms such as 'latent' and 'sublimate'. In addition there are examples of the use of doubles, opposites, repetition and eyes as subject matter in Höch's work. Höch attended the monthly meetings of

the Mynona-Segal circle where there were often psychoanalysts and psychoanalytically informed artists discussing the application of psychoanalytic theory to art. Psychoanalysis was politicised through incidental connections such as the sharing of premises by the Frankfurt Psychoanalytic Institute and the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (Fuechtner, 2011). Herbert Marcuse links imagination as an emancipatory power to psychoanalysis (Marcuse, 1956). Gross was involved both in the early history of psychoanalysis and published in the same journals as the artists who later became the Berlin Dadaists. His was a revolutionary application of psychoanalysis to change society. Höch was therefore steeped in politicised psychoanalytic ideas and interacted with colleagues who were committed to the revolutionary use of psychoanalysis in art. While Höch was disdainful of the interpretations that some of her colleagues made from their knowledge of psychoanalysis, and especially their use of theory to justify what she saw as hypocrisy and self-aggrandising, as shown in her sarcastic and critical story, *The Painter*, Höch nevertheless took a close interest in psychoanalytic theory in a serious and continued engagement. Her correspondence supports this conclusion, as do her library and notebooks.

The model of a radical imagination developed here includes the unconscious. It proposes a relationship between imagination and a process of seeing that includes the unconscious. I use the figure of an unconscious eye, tying the perceptual process to the bodily sense organ of the eye as well as to the unconscious, presenting this as a hypothetical organ – an unconscious eye – belonging to both the artist and the viewer. The unconscious eye bridges the interface between the body and the world while constructing a subjective worldview. Aesthetic experience shifts reality in this model of imagination because imagination is constitutive of the experience of reality, therefore to affect imagination is to also affect reality. The unconscious eye is disembodied and at large in the community having been released through images. Just as Friedländer, Höch and others aimed to change people's perception through the grotesque form, Höch aims her work directly at the viewer's unconscious eye. A community of unconscious images is formed, shared and exchanged in this process.

### Body as a site of imaginative transformation

An important achievement of Höch's work is her discovery of the body as a site of imaginative transformation. During Höch's formative early years as an art student in Berlin, the body was already politicised in the sense that it was, especially in the case of women, used for the representation of ideas through mass-produced cultural forms

such as the illustrated magazines and newspapers, cinema and photography. The First World War mobilised soldiers on a massive scale; warfare was industrialised, leading to the publication of images of dismembered and destroyed bodies. The body was important to Weimar culture, so it was natural that Höch, who absorbed and regurgitated visual images, developed an understanding that images of the body have effect. She acted as a translator of visual culture while attempting to transform the underlying ideologies. Images of the body were part of the system of values that Höch and others found to be hypocritical distortions that had to be overturned, undermined or negated through other images.

Höch's uses the figure in a large proportion of her work. She anthropomorphises inanimate objects indicating the importance of the assumption that others have a mind. When Höch cuts up representations of bodies, she attacks their boundaries with particular focus on the sense organs, on faces, mouths, and eyes. The actions and postures in Höch's art become part of how the viewer creates their body image in response to images. The body of the viewer, in this way, becomes a site for change through Höch's images. The dismantled and dissected images of the body function through empathy and identification. Höch approaches the body as material, and image as material, in a concrete world of material and social relations, one that is constituted by a primary subjective human imagination. This is in contrast to the aestheticised and ideal body of National Socialism. The choice of idealisation or concrete materialism of the body follows the theoretical concept of imagination and its political implications. Her use of the body corresponds with her depiction of space and her use of language because this mirrors the connections in imagination. The relationship of the imagination to the body appears in the connections between space and imagination where the position of the body in space is perceived and projected into the world. The relationship between language and imagination is also connected to the body through the shape of letters and their basis as figures. Imagination involves the body because it involves the senses, which have a bodily source. Body, image and language combine in imagination.

Brugman's *Warenhaus Der Liebe*, written in German and edited by Höch, can be interpreted as an allegory for Freud's structure of the psychic apparatus. This story takes the form of a first person narrative interrupted by a phantasy like script. The problem at issue concerns the state's need for bodies to send to war, but the authority figure, analogous to the super-ego, is appeased by the production of 'celluloid soldiers' instead. In the story, images are used to replace people and can be mass-produced

throughout the world, removing the need for the body to be controlled by the state. Freud's models of the psychical apparatus concern the process of perception, considered by Freud to exceed mechanical devices such as cameras. In Freud's hypothetical structures, such as the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' or the 'Telescope' model, the body, especially its surface, is where perceptions originate. The psychical apparatus, in these models, has a perceiving surface at the interface with the external world. The ego is a projection of the body's surface and is conterminous with the individual's experience of the body (Freud, 1961a and 1964b) [1923, 1938].

In cutting up images of the body, Höch dissects the psyche. Her philosophical background supports a conclusion that she was not dualistic in her thinking about body and mind. Höch's work shows that she was especially pre-occupied with the senses and with images of sensory organs. Her use of the figure demonstrates an awareness of the assumption of mind, which is a necessary precursor to the mechanisms of empathy and identification. This is shown in her anthropomorphisation of animals, plants, inanimate objects and even natural phenomena such as rain or mist. She demonstrates sensitivity to awareness of the body's own boundaries through her use of scale and her construction of composite figures. Höch routinely attacks the surface of the body and its bodily integrity through distortion and substitution. No matter how extreme Höch's mutilations however, she nevertheless often recreates an image of a body surface in a new form. Through anthropomorphisation and through the reference to emotion and the use of faces and bodies, Höch elicits an empathetic response from the viewer. She makes use of the tendency for people's body image to change according to the body images of others. The force of the body-image is transformative because there is a strong tendency for an individual to unite their body-image with all others (Schilder, 1935). This creates a community of body images that is affected by the experience of bodily unity. The perceptual apparatus is therefore highly receptive to images of the body. Höch's work combines these strong tendencies to respond to emotion, to anthropomorphise and to adjust the idea of the body in response to images of the body. In addition to the psychological effect there is a physiological effect when images of the body are destabilised or unbalanced. There is a further transformative mechanism applied by Höch: that of unconscious identification through which people take on the characteristics of others or project onto others, or their images. Höch recognises the body as a key site for transformation because of its connection and involvement in the psyche, including the unconscious. Through her use of images of the body, Höch's imaginative priorities have material effect in creating psychological and physiological

changes. The mechanism for change is multi-faceted and includes unconscious processes and the perceptual apparatus.

## Conclusion

Taking elements in Höch's work separately, many writers on Höch have interpreted, for example, her 'androgynous' figures in terms of gender or as auto-biographical reflections on her relationship with Brugman, or her use of images from mass culture as comment on the social position of women in the new metropolis. There is evidence that Höch had feminist priorities, for example in her participation in Käthe Kollwitz's exhibition in support of reproductive rights for women, her interest in women's suffrage in Europe and her comments on the discrimination she faced from some of her colleagues. And it would be impossible to separate Höch as an artist from her experiences, including her personal relationships. However, an examination of Höch's ideas including the philosophical context and her associations and affiliations together with her explicit references to imagination as part of her aims, reveals a theoretical framework that can account for the separate elements as well as produce a new interpretation of her work as a whole. For example, the 'androgyny' in her work can also be understood in terms of the collision of images and the idea of balancing polar opposites. This does not exclude other interpretations but it is consistent with examples in the rest of her work.

A complex understanding of imagination emerges from the evidence of Höch's work and correspondence. A concept of imagination can be constructed from the combination of her depiction of space and reality, her combined use of language and image and a multisensorial quality, and the existence of unconscious and bodily references. Particular techniques, methods and practices can be attached to these aspects of imagination. Höch deals with imagination piecemeal, through parts combined overall in the work as a whole, in her methods, techniques and choices of subject. Taken together, the depiction of space and reality, the use of text and language in a multisensorial way, the importance of the unconscious and the identification by Höch of the body as a target and mechanism for change are part of a radical imagination.

The four-fold division made here is not intended to suggest that imagination is structured in four parts. There are cross-references and correlations between these different aspects of imagination, for example, in the connections between the body and language or language and space. Separate chapters have used different emphases

for the purpose of identifying these aspects of imagination within Höch's work. Höch's aesthetic ideas are related to the social and political context through her understanding of reality as set out in *Fantastische Kunst*. Her radical imagination stems from a metaphysical aesthetic. It is not realist in the sense of being secondary to the rational empirical evidence of the senses, reflecting an exterior objective world. It includes and embraces imaginative vision, intuition, spirit and illusion. Reality in Höch's work is a psychic, social, psychological and emotional reality. While not realist, Höch's concept of imagination is not entirely transcendent in that it is intended to have concrete effect. It addresses social and political issues and documents and records the era of its creation. It is anchored in the challenges and catastrophes of the twentieth century. Art cannot, as Adorno identifies in Sartre's writing, free itself from meaning (Adorno, 2002). The conditions of production are included in the imagination of the artist but imagination is not limited to the social and political context. The intention to create change is explicit in Höch's work and statements and there are many possible ways for this to be achieved. There is the subversion of form, considered by Joanna Drucker to be insufficient of itself where it is not connected to social activism (Drucker, 1993, p.83). Dada and other movements such as Surrealism attempted to directly transfer revolutionary ideas to art. In the case of Surrealism insights from psychoanalysis were intended to create a revolution in consciousness. Another important aim was the destruction of the past, the history of cultural images that were seen to be responsible for creating the world in the state that it was in. Writers such as Carl Einstein, Benjamin and Friedländer implicate images in sustaining hypocritical values and false constructions of reality. These are the images that form the world of imagination and they work together with imagination in constituting reality. In this understanding, the coerciveness of the existing set of images overvalue the idea of a fixed external and objective reality leading to distortion. Vision therefore needs to be re-figured, according to Einstein, before the world can be remade (Einstein, 2004). The creation of the world through imagination and the potential to create change by changing perception makes Höch's idea of imagination radical. She attacks existing cultural images in order to recalibrate perception itself. Although Höch's work contains direct political messages, it also reaches beyond to the entire framework of perception. Radical imagination is before perception and creates the new from the unknown. Höch's use of imagination is radical in that it is aimed at the root of experience rather than at creating superficial change such as a change of government or policy. Imagination as prior to perception is radical in the sense of being a primary condition. Radical imagination does not reflect reality based on the senses or gain images from a

supernatural source outside of the individual. 'Radical' also relates to the fundamental nature of the change that is created. The site of action and mechanisms for radical imagination involve the same processes and structures that create consciousness and constitute a psychical reality. Freedom from inhibition or from censorship is an essential prerequisite.

Taking her cue from the Dadaist adoption of strategic method in art, Höch's concept of a radical imagination has an associated set of practical methods, techniques, materials and subjects. In this way Höch's art carries out theory and a radical imagination is enacted in the work. The work creates openings and opportunities for imagination to act to produce wholesale transformations of the way we constitute the world. The idea is to create art that is active in shaping reality. In her refusal to seek congruence with either the Real or the Idea, Höch rejects the conceptualisation of the world and its visual categorisation. She does not sit on the fence or hedge her bets for commercial or personal reasons. The rejection of both realism and idealism leads to a positive creation of visionary objects, and away from the rationalised reality that she sees as an impossibility. Höch's methods are inclusive and multiple. Some of her work subverts the norms of symbolic form, but Höch refers to all of her work using the term 'fantastic art'. She refers to paintings when she expresses a wish to be a bridge through her imagination. So her concept of imagination is not confined to photomontage as a new form. Höch's understanding of imagination was complex and enacted in her work through a range of methods rather than in theoretical texts. She creates the visionary objects called for by Carl Einstein and the grotesque challenge to distortions of perception called for by Friedländer. Her overriding priority is an organic autonomous art that speaks through its vivid, intuitive, empathetic qualities, creating connections within a community of imagination, so that rather than producing passive visual objects, the work has effect in altering reality.

Many future directions for further research have been opened in the course of this project. For example, as discussed in Appendix 6 (Related practice: discussion and documentation) the use of imagination as a practice-based research methodology needs further testing by being put into practice beyond the context of this thesis. Each chapter of the thesis opens an area of work that would benefit from more extensive focus. The influence of Friedländer's *Schöpferische Indifferenz* on the development of Höch's radical imagination would benefit from more detailed attention. The context in which Höch's ideas were formed is necessarily treated here relatively briefly but a more in depth examination from Höch's perspective, contextualising her work and



ideas more thoroughly would be of value in understanding her work, and would also inform discussion of early modern European art and how its interpretation leads to and alters assumptions and ideas debated in contemporary art. Such a study could provide an alternative perspective that would speak to current issues of post-truth by providing a different history of imagination and reality in art and culture, in relation to the political, creating alternative conclusions and possibilities. There were many interesting and relevant ideas and issues that were not pursued here due to restrictions of scale. Some examples include: the interest among many modern artists in non-Euclidean space, particularly in relation to cubism, and the implications this might have for a radical imagination enacted through depictions of space; the relevance of imagination in relation to geometry and mathematics found in constructivism, especially in the writing of El Lissitzky, an artist who Höch had contact with; and Höch's interest in and support for avant garde film including her contributions to film journals. The interaction between radical imagination and language in art involving word and image is discussed here in just one chapter, but there is more material and evidence than could be adequately addressed in so short a text. The many important and interesting connections and cross-references between language, image, metaphor and the grotesque in Höch's work warrant further research, especially in light of the finding here about the importance of psychoanalytic theory, contemporary to Höch, to her conceptualisation of imagination. The unconscious has been largely missing from previous accounts of Höch's work but the scale and closeness of connections between Höch and other artists in Berlin and early psychoanalytic history, in light of the connections to the Frankfurt School opens the door to further investigation. The importance of the body to the model of a radical imagination proposed here stems from Höch's metaphysical aesthetic and her use of psychoanalytic ideas, but the cultural context is also strongly relevant. The politicisation of the body and images of the body through modern culture, and especially in National Socialist ideology, create an area of contest with Höch's use of the body, which is highly relevant today. Many of these aspects, treated briefly here as part of an overall thesis, in which Höch's work was considered as a whole, have potentially wider application in art theory because they are rooted in a philosophy of art that remains contested and in many respects has not been debated in sufficient depth to draw conclusions through to the present with relevance to contemporary art. Further research into Höch's legacy could provide an opportunity to escape some well-worn theoretical tracks, and do so within the field of Fine Art, because Höch provides a model based in art practice.

## Epilogue

In 1919, observations of a rare total eclipse of the sun were used to test Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity (published in its final form in 1916). In the same year, women in the Weimar Republic achieved suffrage and a Spartacist uprising was brutally suppressed by the social democrat government using far-right paramilitaries, the *Freikorps*. In 2016, in a fluke of symmetry, the gravitational waves that Einstein's theory predicted were observed. The last few months of 2016 have seen the political upheavals of the UK vote to leave the European Union followed by the election of a right-wing populist US President. The radical imagination that this thesis has aimed to tease out from the clues left by Höch was of its time. Höch's art was made under a variety of political systems, including the Weimar Republic, the Nazi regime, and the West Berlin of the Cold War. Moreover, the context for this radical imagination stemmed from the shock of modernity. In 1976, Höch described how, in 1910, at the beginning of her studies, she experienced the 'first flames' of Modernism. These were rapidly extinguished by the First World War (Höch, 1976, p.24). The second proposition of radical imagination here is mine. Through this research I have come to understand radical imagination as a practice-based research methodology with the unreasonably ambitious aim of a complete and fundamental change to the basis for our engagement with reality. It is clear that there are now challenges to which such a radical imagination could be directed. The interpretation of Höch's project presented here therefore seems as relevant to 2017 as it was to 1917.

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Hannah Höch's radical imagination: a study on the transformation of reality through space, language and a politicised psychoanalysis.

Volume 2 of 2: Appendices

Andrea Kay Tabernacle

UCL

PhD Thesis

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## Appendix 1: Supplementary illustrations

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Figure 139.

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Figure 147.

## Appendix 2: Galerie texts for De Bron, 1929, and Galerie Franz, 1949

Kunstzaal De Bron, The Hague, exhibition invitation card, 1929



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<sup>186</sup> The original text in Dutch is found on the reverse of the invitation card for the exhibition at De Bron gallery in The Hague, reproduced in *Lust & Gratie*, 1988 (Bosch and Everard, 1988a, p.49). The front of the invitation also appears in Chris Rehorst *Hannah Höch en Nederland*, 2003 (Rehorst, 2003, p.117).

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<sup>187</sup> Translated from Dutch to German in *Hannah Höch: Eine Lebenscollage, 1921-1945* (Burmeister and Furlus, 1995b, p.365).

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### Galerie Franz, 1949

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<sup>188</sup> My translation from *Hannah Höch: Eine Lebenscollage, 1921-1945* (Burmeister and Fülus, 1995b, p.365).

<sup>189</sup> Translated in *Hannah Höch: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía* (Höch in Aliaga, 2004b, p.311). There is a note: 'Text produced from the catalogue of the show *Hannah Höch*, Galerie Franz, Berlin, 1949. Quoted by Götz Adriani in "Biografische Dokumentation" in *Hannah Höch. Collagen*, Institute für Auslandsbeziehungen, 1984, p. 52. The original version of this text was published in *Hannah Höch. Fotomontagen, Gemälde, Aquarellen*, Cologne, DuMont Buchverlag, 1980.' (Aliaga, 2004a, p.320 n.3).

## Appendix 3: *Fantastische Kunst*

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Written for the catalogue of *Fantasten-Ausstellung* (Dreamers/visionaries-Exhibition),  
Galerie Gerd Rosen, Berlin.







## Appendix 5: *Warenhaus der Liebe*

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## Appendix 6. Related practice: discussion and documentation

### Introduction

This section discusses and documents the practice element of the thesis, my art: painting, drawing, animation, writing and performance. As part of the early research, practice was used to speculate about imagination, create models and act as a catalyst for further writing and practice. It was used to test ideas, some of which could not have been fully realised through the written part of the thesis alone. The related practice can stand alone in the context of an exhibition, but here it relates also to the written thesis. The relationship stems from the overall proposal that Höch's art enacts a radical imagination, in itself, without need for explanation in support. Analysis of the concept of radical imagination in the written thesis aims to illuminate Höch's intention, and lead to new interpretations of her work. There is the further argument that art can have theoretical impact on its own terms, and that the theoretical import of the art is equal to, and in many respects surpasses that of other means. During the course of the research my understanding of imagination has changed, becoming less categorical and understood in relation to concepts of space, image, language and the body. The starting point was a provisional understanding of imagination as an image producing faculty, related to different mental or psychic acts or events and leading to the appearance of images as visual thought-pictures. I began exploring the idea of psychic states using the widely inclusive list found in Henri Bergson's discussion of image. Bergson includes sensation, emotion and aesthetic feelings in *Time and Free Will* (Bergson, 2001) [1889]. The initial framework was therefore one in which imagination is a process of image production, but where image could be understood to include emotions and feelings of beauty. My early explorations attempted to categorise and create spatial models of imagination. This was useful in demonstrating some of the problems inherent in a categorical approach. The animated models of imagination, found on the DVD, Appendix 9, contain terms and structures, but the related practice as a whole developed away from categorisation and towards an approach involving the identification of methods, techniques and choices of subject matter. The related practice therefore changed during the course of the research from a more speculative function towards an enactment of imagination. The first tentative considerations of imagination, both in early drafts of the written part of the thesis and in the initial explorations through practice, were not intended as an assumption to underpin the



future direction of the research, but as an opening, which was expected to be superseded, just as early marks of a drawing are often later replaced or removed. However, unlike in the written part of the thesis, which has been revised and redrafted, the related practice records all the previous and current ideas from the course of the research. There are also occasional references to future work, as yet uncompleted. The following discussion and documentation is organised to correspond loosely with chapters in Volume 1. There is some overlap between the two parts of the thesis. The diagrams within the main text and perhaps even the animated diagrams are arguably part of the written thesis. Some of the material for the animation, *Textual Deluge*, 2014 (Figure 185) consists of words cut from an early printed draft, reproduced in Appendix 8. The text used in the animation, *Hannah Höch - Timeline*, 2014 (Figure 154) is reproduced in Appendix 7. Shorter text-based practice is documented within the discussion. Video files are recorded on the attached DVD, Appendix 9, along with a sound file associated with *Hannah Höch - Timeline*.

### Höch's work as a practice based methodology

It is argued, in Volume 1, that Höch developed a concept of radical imagination through her art. She studied theory, including through participation in debate and discussion with her colleagues, but her engagement with theory, such as at the Mynona-Segal meetings or the experimental poetry evenings that she hosted from her studio in Friedenau, was framed by an intention to practice it in art. Arthur Segal, for example, brought ideas from the Mynona-Segal meetings into his painting (Arnaldo, n.d.); Salomo Friedländer aimed to give effect to his philosophical ideas using literature (Haakenson, 2009, p.123). The proposal here is that the relation between theory and practice is a reciprocal one for Höch, and one in which, in addition to engaging with ideas from philosophy and psychoanalysis by reading and discussion, Höch developed a system of methods directed toward her understanding of radical imagination. I argue that she aimed to put radical imagination into effect, to transform how reality is understood, through her art. This was a direct attempt to cause the destruction and replacement of the existing reality by changing people's experiences, ideas and beliefs. These included ideas about appearances and things, body and soul, self and other, image and matter – the aim being for art to lead to changed behaviours and ultimately to the reinstitution of society through socially shared imagination. Art, in this proposal, is the primary method and its relation to the concept of radical imagination is that it contains the mechanisms by which radical imagination is given effect. In this sense, Höch's development of methods to enact radical imagination can be understood as

akin to contemporary practice-based research in that her concept of radical imagination is carried out through her art. As enormous an undertaking as it appears, attempting through art to change how reality is understood, Höch's writing about her work, and that of some of her associates, together with the wider context, does suggest this scale of ambition. In *Fantastische Kunst*, Höch stresses the importance of the discovery of art's task, although without setting out in specific detail how artists could carry out this vital task. She uses the term 'Fantastische Kunst' broadly to include Cubism and Surrealism and other modern art. In *Die Fotomontage*, 1946, Höch contextualises photomontage widely, including for example, in relation to montage in film (Höch, 1989a) [1946]. It therefore seems that the mechanism for change cannot be medium specific, in Höch's understanding. Although photomontage, due to Höch's particular association with this medium, has often been the focus for writers on Höch, it is, in my view, an important part of a broader and more complex enactment of an ambitious programme that includes other forms and practices. This programme is a connected system of methods relating to theorisations of imagination, which have been shown in the written thesis to be ideas that Höch was familiar with, and which were often demonstrably aligned with her political and philosophical positioning. While, in her writing, Höch does not necessarily set out an explicit account of the mechanisms by which she expects art to affect people's perception, and consequently their behaviour, I argue that in her art, by contrast, Höch comprehensively details the proposed methods and mechanisms. It is these specific details of her practices that are examined in Volume 1, where, during the course of the research, in examining her art, I looked for practices, methods and subject matter that were noticeably emphatic. For example, in her writing, Höch may not, for example, stress the vital importance of images of the body, but her art comprehensively insists on their vital importance, as has been recognised by writers such as Maud Lavin. My assumption has therefore been that if Höch's art suggests that some practice, such as collage, or the use of text, is important, for example through the large quantity of repeated examples, then her presentation of that method, form or subject, when understood also in relation to her written statements and the surrounding context, is itself a statement bearing consideration. Additionally, my approach has preferred to treat aspects of her art holistically rather than looking for breaks and turns and connecting these to the biographical context, as writers such as Peter Boswell have done. For example, Boswell identifies an 'inward turn' and her 'decision to reengage the female figure' after 'an absence of roughly twenty-five years' (Boswell, 1996, p.17, 20). While these are interesting observations of disjuncture they are less relevant to the approach of this

thesis, which is to consider Höch's work in terms of ideas and as a connected system of methods. So much of Höch's work seems to stress the importance of the whole. She reflectively integrated chronologically different examples of her work, such as in her collage *Lebensbild* ('Life-picture'), 1972-73 (Figure 97) or in her *Motivationen* ('Motivations') folio, 1964-65, which, I argue in Chapter one, combines many of the ideas discussed in this thesis. The practice of returning to previous work and incorporating and reincorporating continually adjusted ideas changed through reflection and expansion, re-grouping, editing and finding new relationships and connections is one that is familiar in the Fine Art discipline. It also has parallels in psychoanalytic theory in relation to imagination, in the transformation of the material of unconscious thoughts through displacement and condensation, and in the multiplicity of connections that are discovered. As an artist, in the related practice part of this thesis, my engagement with Höch's work includes an intuitive response to a degree that may be less detached than might be found in other disciplines. This is important in the related practice because the thesis is inherently practice-based as well as investigating radical imagination as a practice-based proposition on Höch's part. Methods identified in Höch's practice as part of the proposed practice of radical imagination are numerous and include: her prioritisation of the concrete over the abstract; the use of collage and montage; her application of the principal that anything important bears repeating; her use of text; her articulation of space; the engagement of empathy; the inclusion of chance and coincidence in her working processes; her address of particular subject matter such as birth, or topical political events; references to perception and imagination; use of point-of-view, mass-media reproductions, metaphor, irony, symbolism; her insistence of freedom - not merely a certain amount of freedom but the maximum of freedom, and the minimum of inhibition; her exploitation of recognisable cultural artefacts; references to infinity and death, doubles and opposites, dream and hallucination; spatial and geographic processes of mapping and diagramming, the cross-section; her emphasis on seeing and looking. This thesis treats her methods as an interrelated system, essential to the enactment of radical imagination. Some of the proposed connections will be further examined in the following discussion of related practice.

### Related practice: Section 1. Speculation

My experience of generating mental image, prior to or during making, had some influence on the direction of the initial research in both parts of the thesis. Generating mental image, in my experience, is not always necessary in painting either from the

subject directly or, as it is often described, ‘from imagination’, because it is possible to rely on process, even in, or especially in, observational drawing and painting. What I have found more difficult is to simultaneously generate mental images while also painting or drawing in front of the subject. The experience that I brought from my art prior to this research suggested therefore a potential conflict between sensory perception and the creation of, or as I prefer now to see it – a receptivity to – image. However, at the conclusion of this research, my interpretation has changed as some of my assumptions have been recognised and revised. The aim was not at any stage to dismantle and rebuild my own practice. However, an unintended but welcome outcome has been my subjective experience of my practice now feels much less burdened by concerns about how I might use it as part of my research. I have found using my art as research does not impose anything onto it, but rather opens it to new directions and possibilities that enrich it.

The first work made as part of the thesis was an animation, *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-2012, Figure 149, which exists in several iterations. It began as an exploration of point-of-view, with the viewer positioned as the subject within the work as well as implicated in the narrative. My initial thoughts about imagination concerned subjectivity and experience. Point-of-view is discussed by Höch in a text that is frequently quoted, and in which she also invokes the idea of using imagination to change people’s perception. Initially, I had made a short animation called *Turning a corner*, 2011, for a group exhibition, Figure 148. *Turning a corner* was based on drawings from observation. At 12 frames per second, a minute of hand drawn animation involves 720 drawings, during which movement that is eventually apparent is imagined. Only after it is drawn, shot and processed do I see it, in the physiological sense.

The decision in the written part of the thesis to foreground Höch’s voice, through her words, as reported, was replicated in the related practice. But here, her words were used as material, for example, in *Recurring Obsessions*, the title is based on a quotation of Höch from an interview with Edouard Roditi. The original *Turning the corner* animation was extended to include passing under a bridge. The bridge metaphor was also adopted from Höch. I set up a mobile projection system and took the animation out of the studio to film a projection of it onto one of the inside walls of the bridge. In Figure 149, the left hand inside wall of the bridge is the wall that is filmed in the video shown in Figure 150. This introduced several further elements: the material of the bridge in the texture of the brick; the collaging of layers of image; the inevitable chance inclusion of passers by. It added an additional image layer as well as

sound and language. The bridge motif is repeated in the longer version; the point-of-view position of the viewer is also repeated in the drawn animation and then implied through the camera that films it. In a further development, I made a sequence, including both versions and another animation, *Leaves*, 2013 (Figure 195), and added a script based on quotations from Höch, which was performed alongside. The quotations are out of context, in some cases slightly adapted or combined from different sources. It is an inaccurate, fictional version loosely based on Höch's words, collaged together. There is accuracy in the reflection of my subjective response to the material. The image reproduced here, Figure 151, is a script on which a performance of the text was based. The woodcut referred to, *The Chase*, 2013, was replaced in a later version by *Leaves*, 2013 and *The Chase* was instead shown alongside. *The Chase* is a woodcut that was made for a collaborative project, a group show and publication. It was a visual depiction of part of the narrative of a dream, in contrast to the remembered images and was part of the early process of exploring different types of mental image. Finally in this section, I include documentation of a collaborative animation made during a workshop for the European Art Research Network at DOCUMENTA13, in Kassel, Germany in 2012. During this workshop participants each added a drawing, in a process adapted from the Surrealist exquisite corpse drawings in which a collection of drawings are assembled by a group of people, who each add to the drawing but see only part of what has been added previously.



Figure 148. Version of *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-2012, exhibited as *Turning a corner* at the APT Gallery, Deptford, December, 2011.

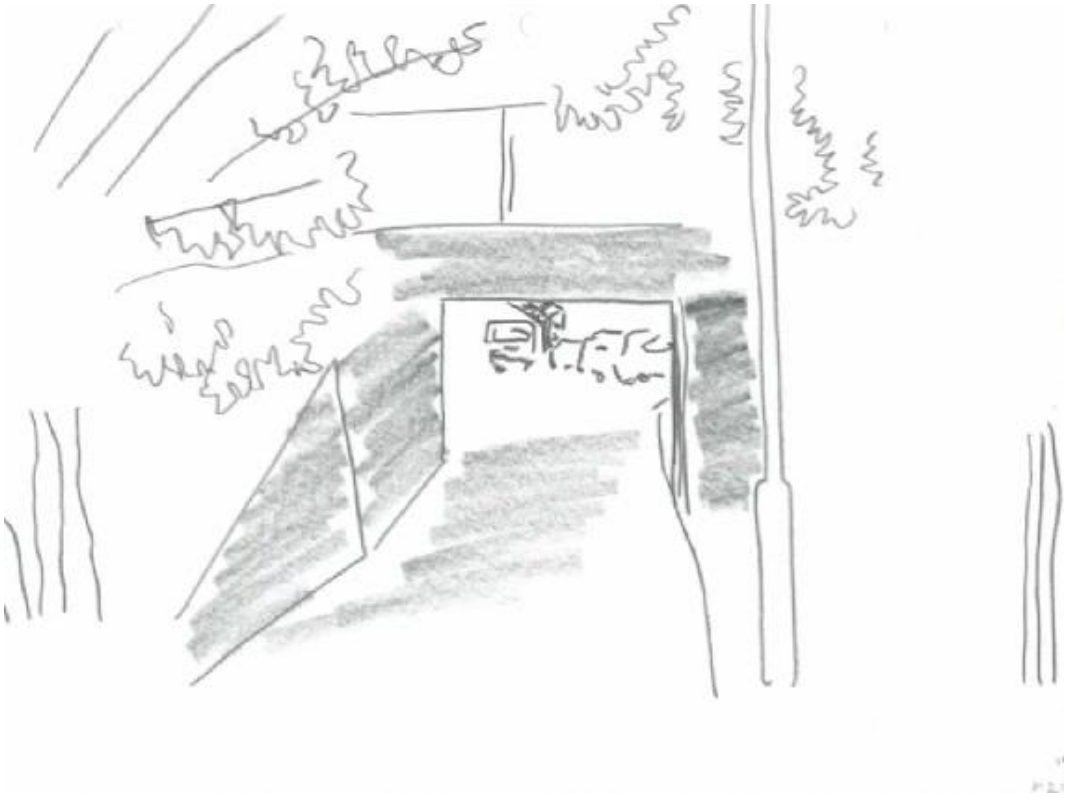


Figure 149. Still from *Recurring Obsessions* animation.  
(<https://vimeo.com/172409931/98edOf44ae>).



Figure 150. Still from *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-2012, projected onto the inside surface of a bridge on Markfield Road, London. (<https://vimeo.com/172428815/b937a07c01>)



TIMING	<p>I suppose, every imaginative artist has some recurring obsessions.</p> <p>Collage has never ceased to captivate me.</p> <p>I still exploit the photograph. I use it as color, or, as a poet, to speak.</p> <p>This technique can bring us the most imaginative creations of our time.</p> <p>It can stimulate images in other techniques - we're dealing with a source that is inexhaustible.</p>
1 MINUTE	<p>An important prerequisite is abandon, lacking inhibition, but, there also needs to be someone behind it, whose inner structure compels them to say something in this way.</p> <p>I've tried to express my ideas with these techniques, with criticism, and sarcasm, but also with sadness and beauty, as my way to have contact with the world.</p> <p>My work is about growth and extinction, love and hate, passion and rejection, and also the search for beauty, especially hidden beauty.</p>
2 MINUTES	<p>To commit artistically - to form and colour - to recognise these new creations - we must be prepared for a journey of discovery, and to be receptive to the charms of coincidence.</p> <p>Here, more than anywhere else, coincidence is extravagantly willing to endow our imagination.</p> <p>I want to erase the boundaries that we confidently draw around everything.</p>

3 MINUTES	<p>I try to convey this, to make it visually perceptable, by painting.</p> <hr/> <p>I want to show that what's small can be large, and what is large, small, it is only our viewpoint that changes.</p> <p>Then all our preconceptions lose their validity. As do our human laws.</p> <p>In addition to your opinions and mine, there are millions of other legitimate viewpoints.</p> <p>If I show the world as seen by an ant, or then as the moon, or as many other creatures -</p> <p><b>through my fantasies, I can be a bridge.</b></p> <p>What seems impossible is possible.</p> <p>I want people to experience a richer world, in the hope that we can then engage more benevolently with the world we know.</p>
4 MINUTES	<hr/> <p>LONGer BREAK - TRANSITION FROM MAINLY HAND-DRAWN TO INCL. WOOD CUT</p> <hr/> <p>We used to bring things together that we borrowed from books or newspapers or posters.</p> <p>We'd all been constricted, as if by a corset... and then, suddenly, set free.</p> <p>I saw my role as to try to capture images, to capture visually, this turbulent time.</p> <p>I didn't want to be didactic. I wanted to be free, in my fantasies and humour.</p> <p>What did their poetry say to me? Hadn't I been through those torments with my own flesh and blood?</p>
5 MINUTES	<hr/> <p>I didn't need to hear three weak people agonise over it.</p>

6 MINUTES	<p>In 1912 I came to Berlin to study painting.</p> <p>The outbreak of war collapsed my worldview: the long silence of grief, painful and hopeless - humanity abandoned.</p> <p>What happened, and how it happened, was unprecedented -</p> <p>the workers with Spartacus, the philanthropists, the anti-militarists, the militarists with their coup, the anarchists, both the terrorists and individualists,</p> <p>...and then also the suffragettes made claims for the women's movement.</p>
7 MINUTES	<p>Then my horizon expanded ...it was the beginning of DADA.</p> <p>A kind of negative obituary for the State.</p> <p>And now we have PEACE and a new place in Europe.</p> <p>From the beginning though, I wanted to make collages as an expressional possibility, to see whether they could be simply aesthetic.</p> <p>So, although much of me still uses the form of DADA - and we can probably only see this through DADA-rimmed glasses now - I'm sick of DADA, everything else I developed goes unnoticed.</p>
	<p>Many people came into my life, and many more crossed it, leaving unforgettable impressions.</p> <p>Til was a genius with words. Her boundless imagination created an atmosphere of never- ending drollery.</p> <p>My work didn't celebrate the modern woman. I was more concerned with the suffering woman.</p> <p>Naturally, I suffered through being a woman,</p>

<p>8 MINUTES</p>	<p>but my works were accepted  - and that was enough for me.</p> <p>The male artist-genius,  of course,  knew enough about psychoanalysis to confront women with  the truth  - that their demands arose from a desire to dominate.</p> <hr/> <p>Women designers,  modern women,  if you think intellectually about your work,  and strive for your right to an occupation:</p> <p>once you think that you're standing with both feet on the  ground,</p> <p>be aware: your art is a document of your time.</p> <p>8 MINUTES 30 SECONDS.</p>
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Figure 151. Script (first version) for *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-2012.



Figure 152. *The Chase*, 2013. Woodcut. Exhibited in *Observations*, Wilkins North Observatory, University College London, January, 2013. Photograph courtesy of Nuno Direintinho.



Figure 153. Still from collaborative animation made at workshop for European Art Research Network at dOCUMENTA13, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2012. Kassel, Germany. Digital video. Running time: 9 secs. (<https://vimeo.com/172419442/7557dd9a1f>, <http://www.artresearch.eu/2012/08/03/workshop-abstracts-earndocumenta13/>)

## Related practice: Section 2. Enactment

In addition to using practice as speculation, I also used it to start a process of engagement with Höch's legacy, the literature on Höch, and concepts of imagination. Although the written thesis does not take a chronological or biographical approach, in the related practice I produced a live narrated video animation, *Hannah Höch – Timeline*, Figure 154 and Figure 155, which does take a more chronological and biographical view of Höch. The text, performed together with the video, is reproduced in Appendix 7. The animation reflects the importance in Höch's work of recycling images. For example, the postcards exchanged between Höch and Kurt Schwitters used reproductions of existing work and were reworked and returned. Höch also used reproductions of her existing photomontage in the large photomontage *Lebensbild* ('Life-picture'), 1972-73 (Figure 97). *Hannah Höch - Timeline* was made for an event at Whitechapel Gallery, in association with a Hannah Höch retrospective. I wanted to make appropriately active use of her work, rather than as a series of static slides. Underlying the presentation was the replication of materials and images. I used paper reproductions because, in my argument about radical imagination, concreteness of found material is part of the methodology of radical imagination. Even though imagination can seem an abstract concept, its practice avoids the abstract. One of the methods used by Höch to achieve connection to the concrete is her use of cut out pieces of paper. It has been suggested that Höch's work moved away from the political in those works described as 'whimsy', 'escapist', 'fanciful', and 'tame' (Boswell, 1996, p.7). It is argued here that, on the contrary, her use of radical imagination is directly and fundamentally concerned with politics and social change. The timeline element of *Hannah Höch - Timeline* concretises Höch's spanning of two centuries, during which major changes and events occurred. It also details some of the interruptions to Höch's progress. It includes some of the ideas discussed in the written thesis, such as the cross-section, diagramming through mapping using embroidery patterns, the subject matter of dream, vision and other image producing states, the importance of language and particularly poetry and metaphor. Höch's political importance is often understood in relation to the National Socialist regime, but the point is made in this animation that her work was made also in relation to Wilhelmian era, the Weimar Republic, and the Cold War. Because radical imagination aims to reveal distortions in perception, in this thesis I argue that it is relevant today, in a future that Höch could not know, and that the work remains active and has continued political effect. *Hannah Höch - Timeline* also addresses the idea that her work creates fears, perhaps sometimes assuaged through taking a linear, categorising approach to create distance from the emotional and

physiological effect of the work during its analysis. The related practice here includes a response to Höch's art through making more art, addressing the recursive nature of her work as well as being a less detached engagement. In doing so the aim is that the related practice might bridge to an extent barriers to understanding, or as Höch expressed in relation to her work, 'the firm boundaries that people have, with misplaced certainty, placed around everything that came within our reach' (Höch, 1995c, p.365) [1929].<sup>190</sup> *Hannah Höch – Timeline* is a re-interpretation of facts about Höch using secondary material and the techniques of collage and cut out images. The practices of replicating, reinterpreting and recombining images are taken from Höch's example. The animation adapts the method of photomontage into the contemporary digital context while emphasising the importance of the material of paper, print and photocopy toner. In the spirit of Höch's pluralistic approach it crosses forms of animation, documentary, film and performance.

In my practice, and particularly in relation to the PhD research, I have recognised the existence of a fear of addressing political subject matter directly. I decided therefore to take this as an opportunity to test the inclusion of more overtly political content. Most recently, *Incontinental TV: Real News channel*, 2017, Figure 156, Figure 157 and Figure 158, is a photomontage-like digital video animation in which a series of news stories are presented by the *Real News channel*. The video is silent and visually reports civil unrest; an interview with Prime Minister, Theresa May; a state visit by Donald Trump during which he is fatally squashed; an admission of lying by Tony Blair; and finally a nuclear war. It is in poor taste and graphically violent. It refers, additionally to the phenomena of fake news. Höch describes how in early photomontage 'emotional distress in the desperate struggle of the disappointed and haunted youth had led the scissors' (Höch, 1989a, p.218) [1946].<sup>191</sup> *Incontinental TV: Real News channel* uses digital image software and appropriated digital images from the internet rather than scissors, but the aim was for emotions to lead the figurative scissors, and to try to minimise self-censorship during its production. None of the related practice is intended to pastiche Höch; this work possibly comes closest to an

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<sup>190</sup> 'Ich möchte die festen Grenzen auswischen, die wir Menschen mit einer eigensinnigen Sicherheit um alles, was in unseren Bereich kam, gezogen haben.'

<sup>191</sup> 'Beim näheren Hinsehen stellte es sich allerdings heraus, daß die Sache gar nicht so lustig war, denn die Schere geführt – wenn man so sagen darf – hatte die seelische Not, das verzweifelte Ringen der auch damals gequälten und enttäuschen Jugend.'



unintentional Höch-esque result. The video was exhibited within a cardboard TV, adding a sculptural element, and connecting the work to material, specifically to mass produced, familiar, found material.

The first work in which I tested the inclusion of overtly political references was a short text, *The Real World does not work like that*, 2015, performed at a European Art Research Network event, *Against Delivery* and reproduced below. As with *Incontinental TV: Real News channel*, there was a concrete manifestation of the work, in this case a folded printed copy of the text, made available during the event, Figure 159. The text was performed, because I wanted to embody the character in the text and inhabit the failure of vision that they proclaim. It is based on a collage of quotations from Hansard, mostly relating to the 2007 Defence White Paper debate, during which Tony Blair, possibly inadvertently, attributes his decision to renew the Trident nuclear war and death system to a lack of imagination on his part. I describe it in that way having observed that politicians seldom name it as a weapon preferring instead the abstract concept of deterrence and arguments referring to insurance policies that invoke the inane to debate the abominable. The title comes directly from an answer given in Parliament by the former Defence Secretary, John Reid; the character in the text is a fictional amalgam. While it is fictional, however, it draws on an argument about the 'real world' often used to dismiss alternatives in which staking a claim on reality is intended to add weight to an argument. I was therefore interested in it as an example of how ideas about reality are used politically, and how important a part of power dynamics defining reality is. The character in the text attempts to undermine the opposing speaker's argument, but the repetition only reveals their own loss of conviction. The physical manifestation of the text is folded so that different parts come into contact in a process of collage, following the recursive principle of radical imagination in which a work can be transformed into further iterations. This is especially the case in copies printed on semi-transparent paper so that there are relationships created through layers. The conclusion I draw having carried out the decision to include political subject matter and my own intrinsically biased opinion is that the work was enriched rather than diminished. Rather than creating restraints, the idea that radical imagination in practice involves an identifiable set of methods and techniques has allowed me to work with more freedom, keeping the process more open and less inhibited.



Figure 154. Still from *Hannah Höch – Timeline*, 2014, showing cut out photocopies of reproductions of Höch's work and other documentary material. Screened at *From Dada to Data*, Whitechapel Gallery, 22 February, 2014, curated by Film and Video Umbrella. Digital video animation. Running time 19mins37secs. (<https://vimeo.com/168632118/7397b27c2c#t=NaNs>).



Figure 155. *Hannah Höch – Timeline*, 2014. Installation at Slade Research Centre, 2014.



Figure 156. Still from *Incontinental TV: Real News channel*, 2017. Digital video animation. Running time: 4min38secs, loop. Exhibited during *The Intercontinental*, at Roaming ROOM, London, 2017 (<https://vimeo.com/212114693/22e7df05eb>).



Figure 157. *Incontinental TV: Real News channel, 2017. State Visit sequence.* Exhibited during *The Intercontinental*, at Roaming ROOM, London, 2017.



Figure 158. *Incontinental TV: Real News channel, 2017. Tensions Worsen sequence.* Exhibited during *The Intercontinental*, at Roaming ROOM, London, 2017.

## The Real World does not work like that.

The Real World does not work like that.

There's no gap between

fabricating a facility and assembling a fission warhead.

In the Real World there is no discrepancy.

My Honourable Friend envisages a split  
between the wherewithal and the Atomic Bomb but  
the Real World does not work like that.

My friend envisions a schism between  
Barrow shipyard supplied with steel for submarines  
and forging a thermonuclear machine.

My Honourable Friend visualises  
a differential calculus Cray computer | and then| a watershed |  
before rockets are fired.

The Known World does not work like that.

We don't have yet a high level,  
deep Earth, nuclear waste repository, but soon  
we will have a space colony on Mars.

I ask myself as Prime Minister  
what would it be like  
to come to the Dispatch Box and say:  
we have decided to relinquish our arms?  
– and I just can't see it.

I wonder how it would feel  
to stand in the Commons Chamber to declare:  
we won't renew Trident.

The answer waits beyond my view.

My Honourable Friend imagines me,  
sheaf of papers in hand,  
proclaiming disarmament;  
I cannot grasp it, and in any event –  
the Real World does not work like that.

Kay Tabernacle.

12-13 November 2015. *Against Delivery*. Slade Research Centre. London.

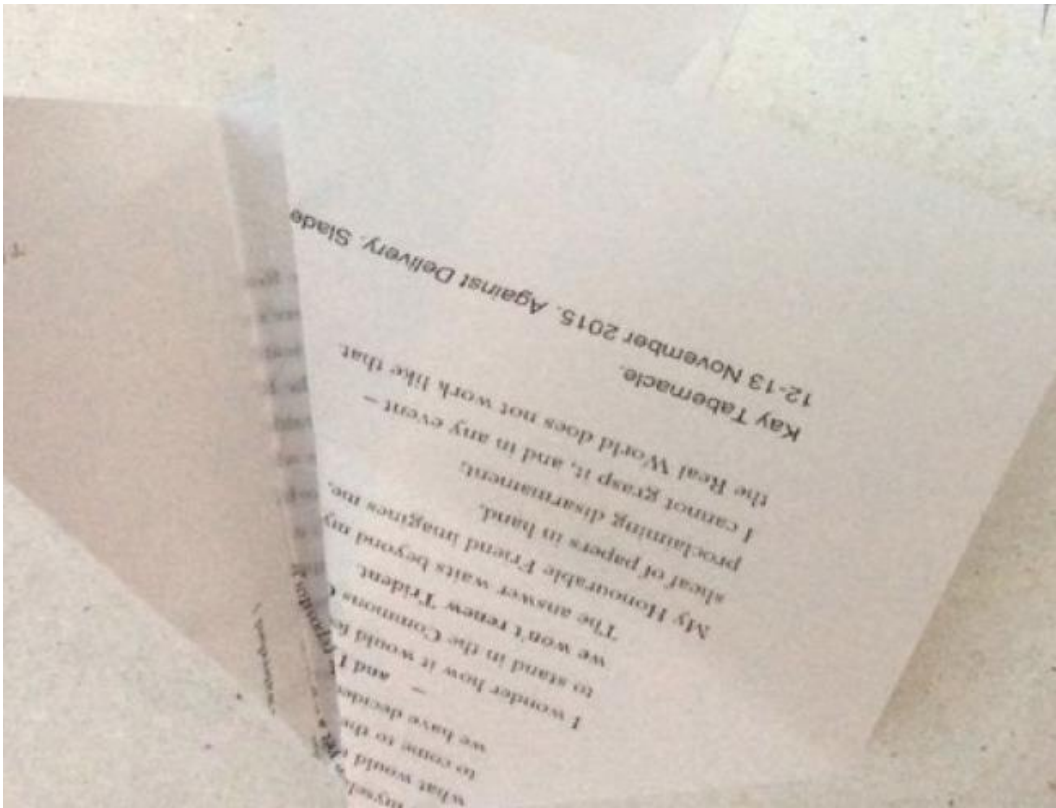


Figure 159. *The Real World does not work like that*, 2015, folded copy. Photograph courtesy Ladies of the Press.

## Related practice: Section 3. Chapters

### *Chapter one: Höch's radical imagination*

The related practice associated with Chapter one connects speculative drawings and paintings that explore mental image and imagination with the animated diagram series, *Models of Imagination*, which developed throughout the project and is ongoing. I began drawing, modelling and diagramming together during a research residency at the Slade Summer School in 2013, Figure 160. The series of drawings and paintings produced is titled *Insurrection Fantasms*, for which the starting point was Höch's *Fantastische Kunst* (Fantastic Art), 1946, the gallery text written for the exhibition catalogue for *Fantasten-Ausstellung* (Dreamers/visionaries-exhibition) at the Galerie Gerd Rosen in Berlin, and discussed in Chapter two (Höch, 2008) [1946]. I used the term 'psychic state', as is used in the English translation of Bergson's *Time and Free Will*, in which Bergson includes different types of mental image and also emotions and feelings of beauty (Bergson, 2001) [1889]. I made a series of drawings that attempted to represent the mental or psychic states of fantasy, dream, emotion, memory, perception, illusion and hallucination having identified these as example of mental image that may be relevant to imagination. I included emotion as a type of image in a similar way to the inclusion of sound as an image. I initially conceived of a model of imagination in which the items on this list existed as separately identifiable mental states, formed through the process of imagination, and then presented to experience as different forms of image. The starting list of psychic states with visual outcomes included intuition, cognition, empathy and sensation, which are not perhaps usually thought of as forms of mental image. I had in mind a process in which imagination might facilitate the formation of mental image from those states that seemed more abstract or unconscious. The diagrams refer to this division between those states that appeared to be image outcomes and those that seemed to be potentially imageless, such as intuition and cognition. They functioned in pairs, so for example, sensations are processed through imagination to become perceptions or illusions. A later view was that these states and types of images are only separated conceptually, through visual culture and language. The diagrams were made alongside the drawings. There were a series of possibilities, Figure 161, for example, shows rough drawings for two possible models, of which I developed the tube analogy into an animation (*Models of Imagination, Models of psychic action via imagination: 1. The long tube of smarties*, Figure 162).

## Psychic states drawings

Before discussing the animated diagrams further, I will just give some detail about the drawings. The drawing for sensation attempted to represent visually the sensations I was feeling during the drawing, such as the sound of the studio fan and the buzz of the lights and noises outside, the heat and the taste of chocolate. I experienced these sensations as merged into one. The drawing was made as a visual representation of that experience. I considered how, as is argued in Volume 1, sensation might be added to, translated or transformed by imagination. An example of this would be the use of hypnosis to affect the sensation of pain. Considering also that sensation does not need to be experienced, for example, it is possible for light to affect the biological clock even if it cannot be seen, I wondered if it was in fact perception that is experienced, rather than sensation and the result is *Perception*, 2013, Figure 163. As a result of this drawing and thinking and the work on the written part of the thesis, I separated perception as a visual outcome of imagination and put sensation into a group of psychic states that are not experienced directly or necessarily at all. This was the core idea at the heart of the first *Models of Imagination* animation: that the mental processes it deals with could be divided into those that are experienced as outcomes of imagination, and others that might not be consciously experienced or would require some form of transformation into a consciously experience-able outcome. I produced drawings for as many categories as I could identify in order to spend some time focused on each category and how it felt visually to me. The drawing for illusion, *Two Heads*, 2013, Figure 164, was based on my understanding of the phenomena of pareidolia where, for example, faces are seen in clouds. I based the hallucination painting, *The tunnel*, 2013, Figure 165, on accounts of visual experiences in near death events that have been survived. This subject was chosen because it is represented in the history of art, for example by Hieronymus Bosch in *The Ascent of the Blessed* (fourth panel of *Visions of the Hereafter*), c1500-1504, Figure 166, and so the image exists in culture in relation to a visual experience connected to consciousness, and death which is one of the main subjects in art. It uses a tunnel shape, which I had been considering for the animated diagram, and I was interested in this as a visual representation of a mental image that is repeated through history. For my painting, it was just the tunnel that interested me because it appears to be reliably repeated in many accounts, including in art, but not exclusively. My subjective hunch was that this visual motif is repeated because it is a visual representation of an experience, so that essentially this is an insight into the visual experience of consciousness in extreme conditions. In my painting I thought of the light end of the tunnel as representing a more direct



experience of the self during a disruption to the way that a person's world-view is constructed by imagination. *Proportionality*, 2013, Figure 167, was based on the idea of disturbances in the sense of proprioception, the sense of movement or position of the body. *Emotion*, 2013, Figure 168, was difficult to represent visually. This drawing treats emotion as both figure and ground, being both the field of experience, and specific emotional experiences like fear or contentment. For example, a form of extreme anger is often described as a red mist, which is a landscape analogy conveying ideas of envelopment in a complete environment of emotion, while at the same time particularising that image using the colour red. The drawing tries to convey the idea of emotion as a both a steady state but containing movement, action and opposition within it. The difficult categories were ones that I saw as visually un-presentable to experience, such as intuition, and eventually memory and sensation. The difficulty of this separation became the basis for the first animated model of animation in which imagination acts as a conduit through which the un-presentable states are converted into image. The idea of a conduit is suggested by the tunnel imagery in paintings such as in Bosch's *Visions of the Afterlife*. The drawings of fantasy and dream were conceptually easier as they were closer to my initial preconceptions about imagination. The dream drawings and painting contained narrative and visual puns and visually represent abstract thoughts, giving them concrete visual expression. *Memory*, 2013, Figure 169, was approached through a graphite handprint that made contact with the plane of the paper's surface, linking the space of my present reality with an implied space behind the drawing. Following Bergson's separation of memory from memory-image, I thought of memory in this drawing as something that could, like sensation, only be presented indirectly to consciousness. For example, in procedural memory we can remember how to ride a bike but this is not usually experienced in a conscious image form. Following Bergson, in the first part of *Models of Imagination*, 2013, I separated memory into two separate categories of memory-image and memory. Memory in this model can be involved in the creation of memory-image, or other outcomes such as perception. I also made drawings for the categories of fantasy and dream (*Fantasm* I, II and III, Figure 170, Figure 171 and Figure 172, *Midnight Owl*, Figure 173, *Waterfall*, Figure 174, and *Under the Table*, Figure 175).



Figure 160. *Insurrection Fantasms*. Exhibition of work made during Slade Summer School Residency, August, 2013.

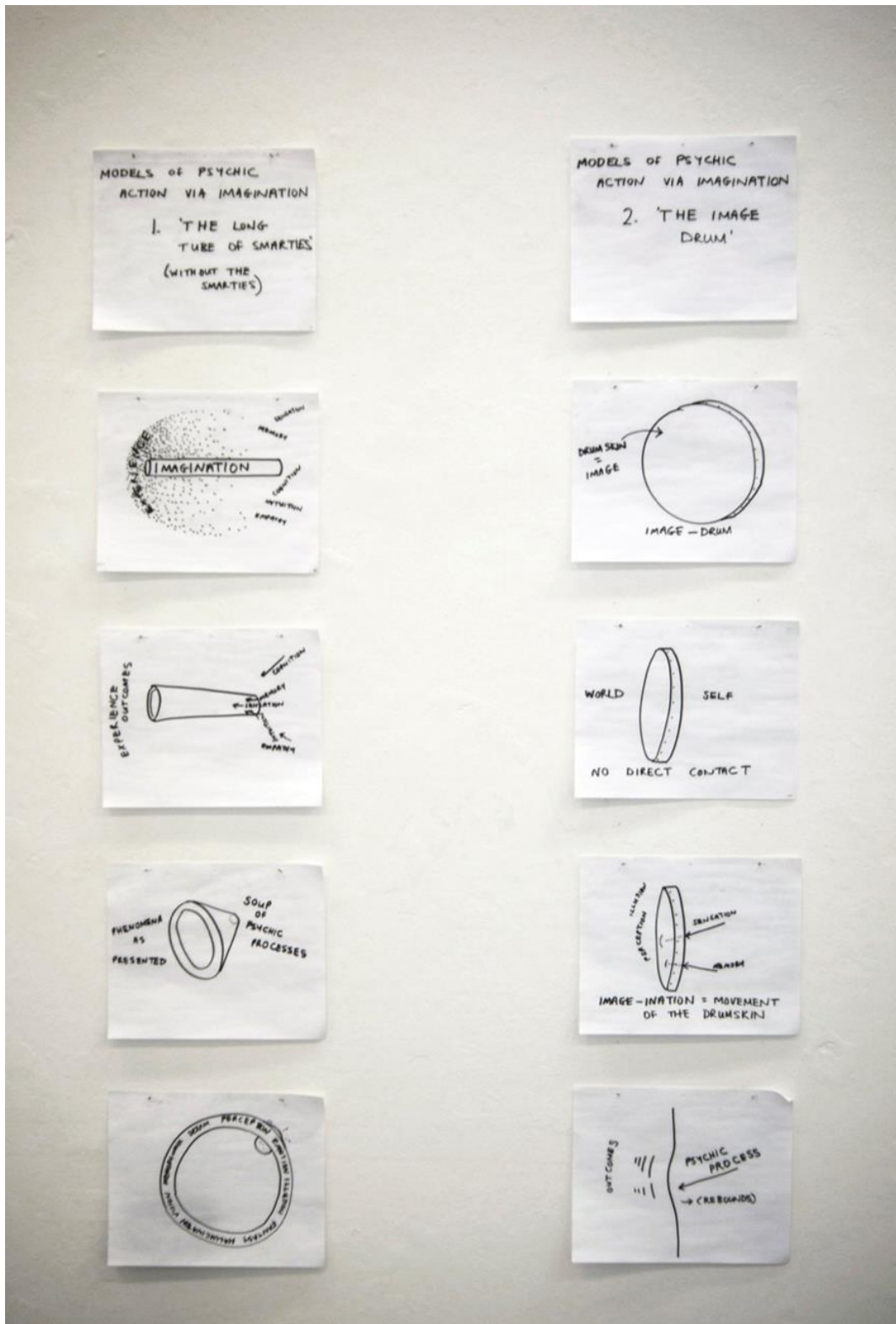


Figure 161. Drawings for development stage of *Models of psychic action via imagination I*, 2013. Exhibited at Slade Summer School Residency, August 2013.

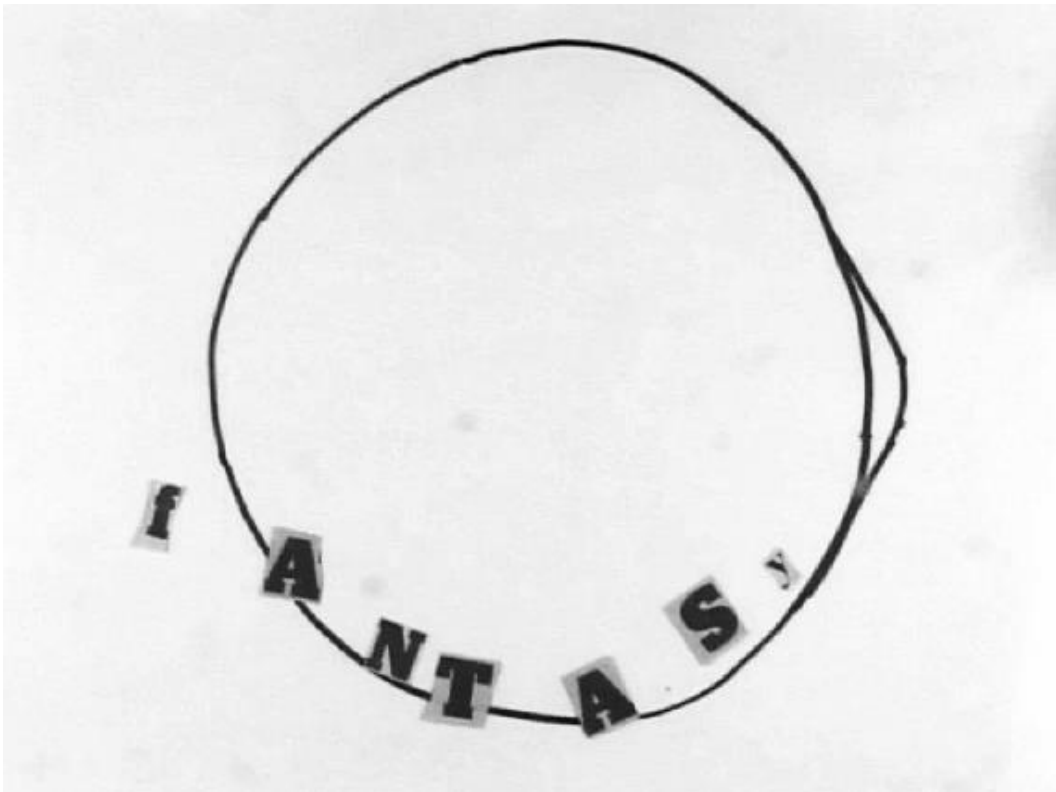


Figure 162. Still from *Models of Imagination, Models of psychic action via imagination: 1. The long tube of smarties*, 2013. Digital video animation. 2mins2secs. (<https://vimeo.com/172398291/97dc656073>).

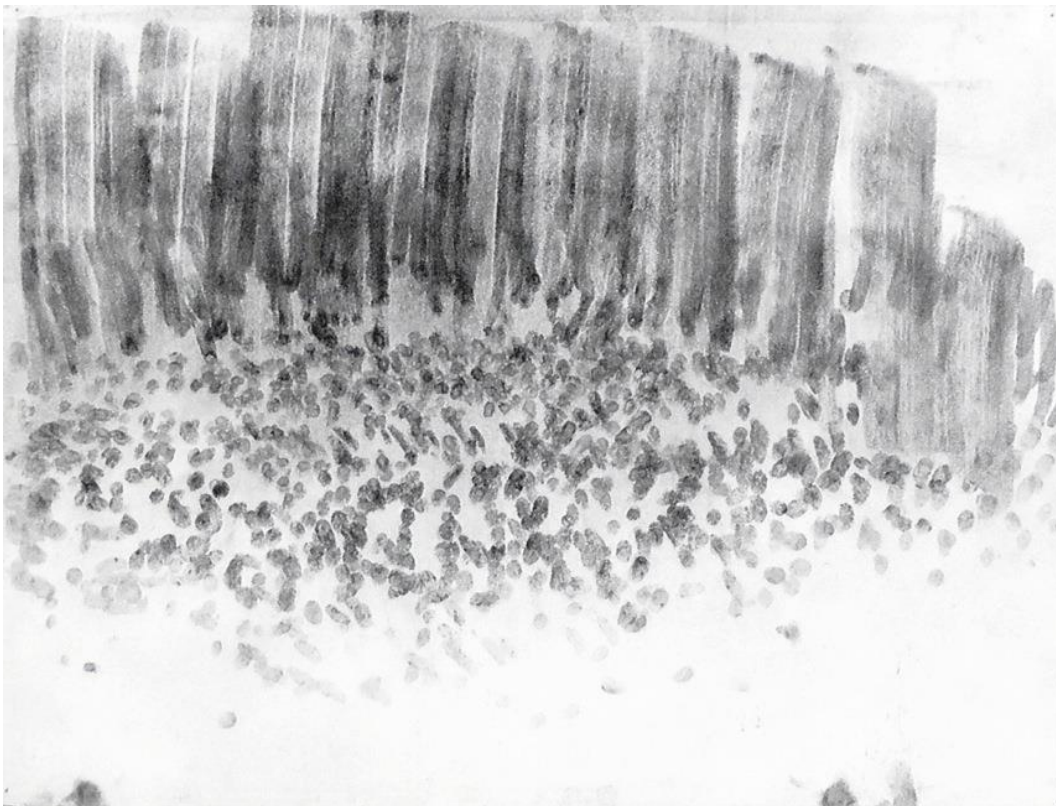


Figure 163. *Perception*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 56.0 x 76.0 cm.

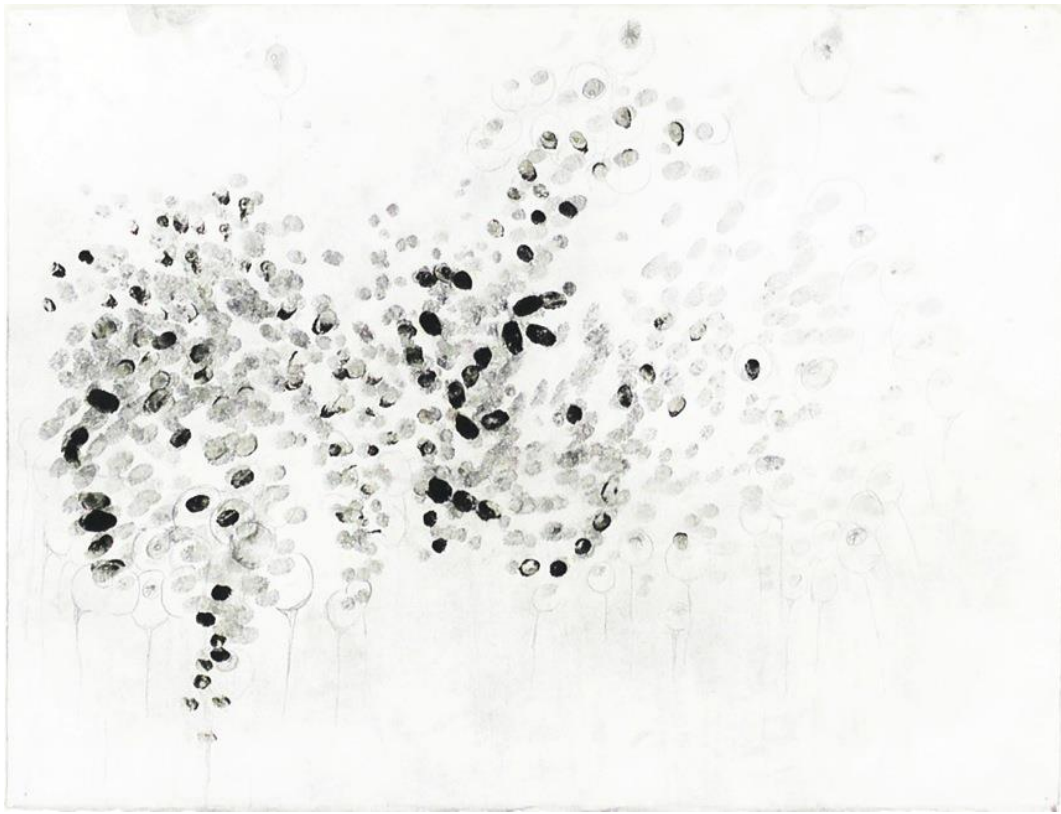


Figure 164. *Two Heads*, 2013. Graphite and etching ink on paper, 56.0 x 76.0 cm.



Figure 165. *The tunnel*, 2013 Ink and acrylic on paper, 76.0 x 56.0 cm.

Figure 166.

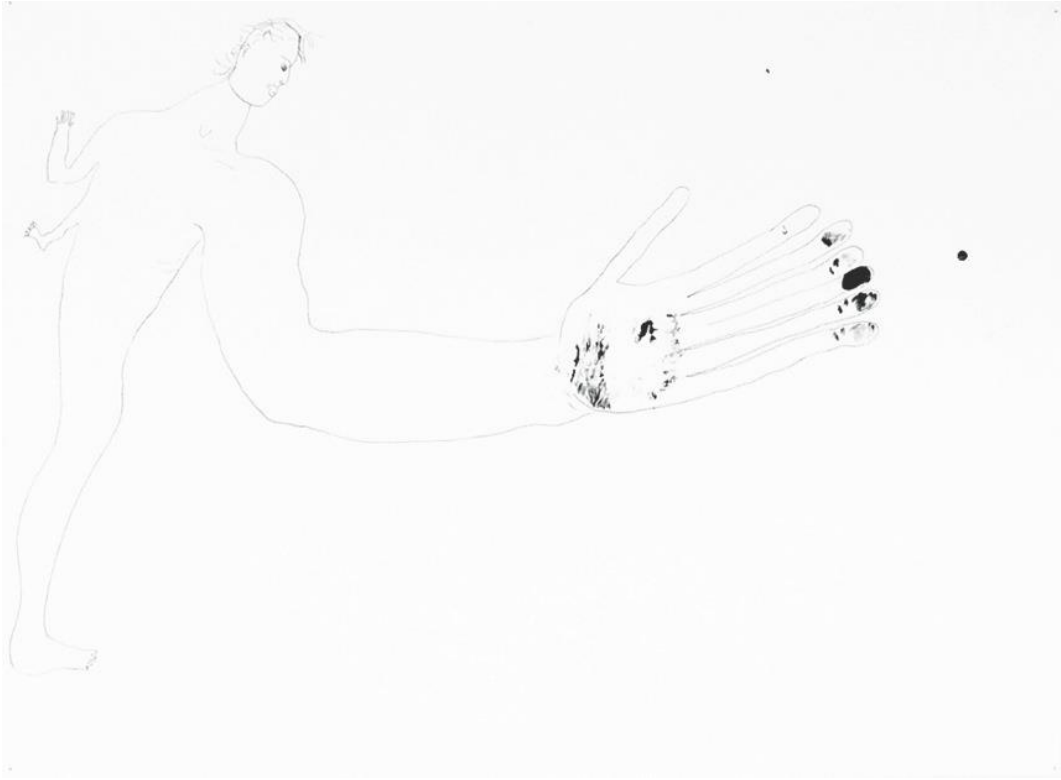


Figure 167. *Proportionality*, 2013. Ink on paper, 56.0 x 76.0 cm.





Figure 168. *Emotion*, 2013, graphite on paper, 76.0 x 56.0 cm.



Figure 169. *Memory*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 76.0 x 56.0 cm.



Figure 170. *Fantasm I*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 56.0 x 76.0 cm.



Figure 171. *Fantasm II*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 76.0 x 56.0 cm.



Figure 172. *Fantasm III*, 2013. Watercolour, acrylic and ink on paper. 56.0 x 76.0 cm.



Figure 173. *Midnight Owl*, 2013. Watercolour, acrylic and ink on paper. 76.0 x 56.0 cm.



Figure 174. *Waterfall*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 76.0 x 56.0 cm.

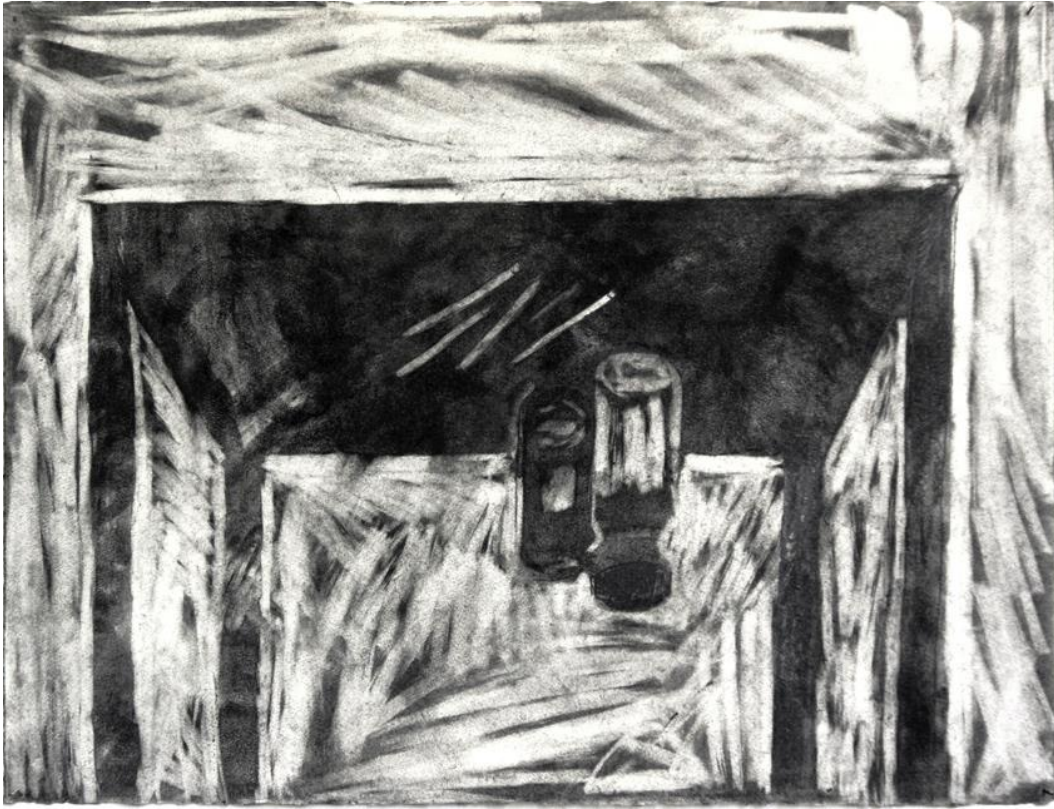


Figure 175. *Under the table*, 2013. Graphite on paper, 56.0 x 76.0 cm.



## Animated diagrams

*Models of Psychic Action via Imagination: I, The Long Tube of Smarties*, 2013, deals with a sequence of mental states or processes, categorising them as either a mental states or an image outcome. The tube represents this separation and the passage to experience-able images, and it also allows for alternative pathways and two-way movement. The outcomes of processes like memory, sensation or cognition, or a combination of these types of process, enter the tube and are transformed through imagination into the outcome, which is an image of some kind. This model has been published as part of an article about empathy in Höch's work, so it has a dual status as part of a written article and as art (Tabernacle, 2014a). There is a further animated diagram, *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017 (Figure 215). I also began an unfinished animation, *Models of Imagination: III, The Maelstrom*, which is not documented here. This unfinished animation begins with a diagrammatic collection of terms in apparently spatial relationships to one another before becoming more figurative and narrative. One reference point for this third part of the series is Harry Clarke's illustration for Edgar Allan Poe's *Descent into the Maelstrom*, 1841, and it was conceived of in response to the complexity and unknowable quality of imagination. *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron* uses more diagrammatic and spatial language. It stems directly from ideas explored in chapters three and five, and specifically from the diagram in Chapter three (Figure 56). In this diagram the concepts of language, imagination, image and body are related so that there is opposition between language and body, and image and imagination, and also contact between the concepts. The tetrahedron shape better represents these connections and oppositions than the diagram, which could be read as a cycle with the side-by-side connections having more emphasis than the oppositions because it is two-dimensional. After making a paper model I decided to animate it resulting in a diagram that moves in space. Both *Models of Psychic Action via Imagination: 1. The Long Tube of Smarties* and *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017 are documented on the DVD, Appendix 9.

## *Chapter two: Reality and space: Höch's metaphysical imagination*

Space and reality were investigated in the related practice through a series of three geometric drawings taking account of ideas from Gestalt psychology such as multi-stability, overlap, continuity and, figure and ground, which as perceptual effects, can be identified in Höch's work. *Rationality*. 2014, Figure 176, is the first of these three. It contains the hexagonal cube shape, based on a circle that is found in Höch's *Kubus* ('Cube'), 1926 (Figure 50) and *Die Sonne* ('The Sun') 1968 (Figure 71). This shape is explored further in my drawing, *Kubus*, 2015, Figure, 178. *Projection*, 2015, Figure 179, mixes different vanishing points and types of geometrical projection within one drawing. Photomontage also does this if the source photographs have a variety of distances, viewing points and lenses. The text, *The Real World does not work like that*, 2015, was performed in front of *Rationality* and they were exhibited together with copies of the text contained in a bucket next to the drawing.

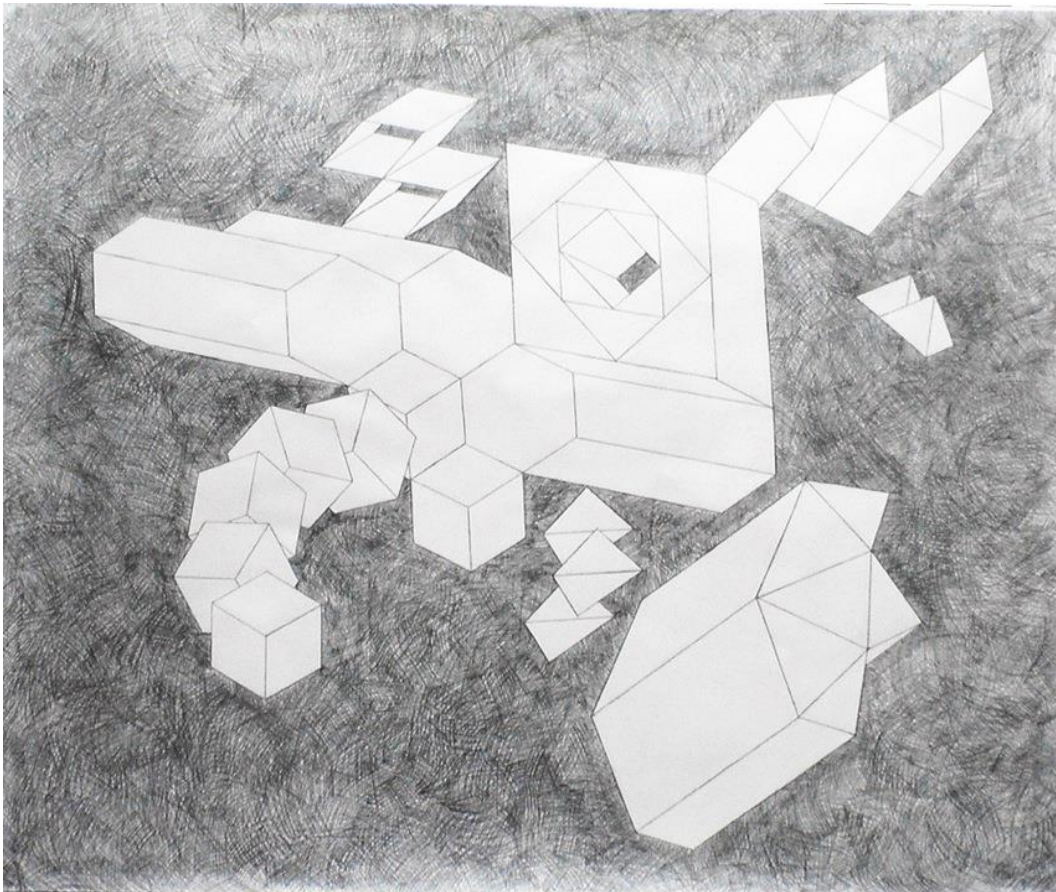


Figure 176. *Rationality*. 2014. Graphite on paper. 150 x 180 cm.



Figure 177. *Rationality*. 2014, installed at Slade Research Centre.

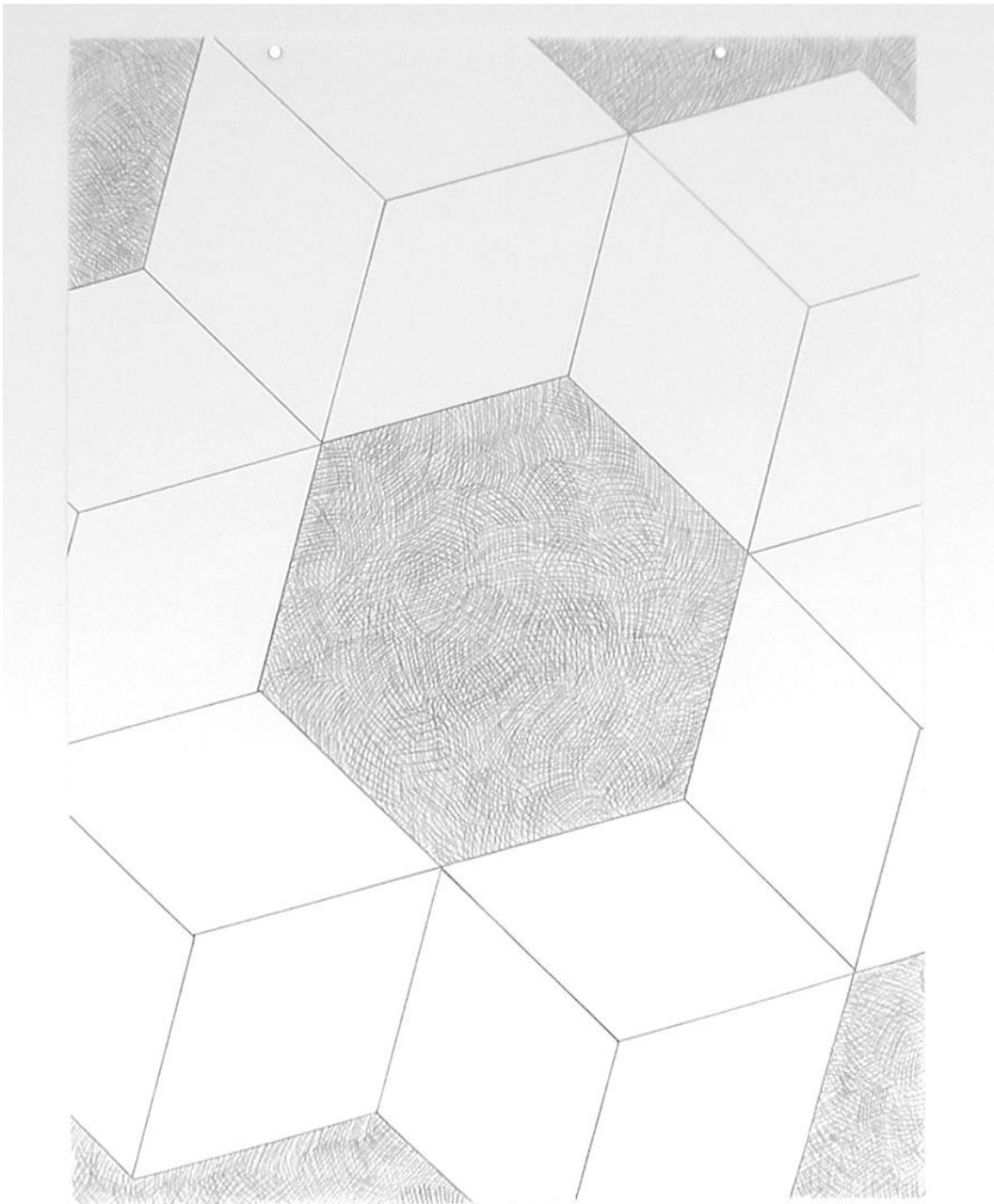


Figure 178. *Kubus*, 2015. Graphite on paper. 102 x 75 cm.

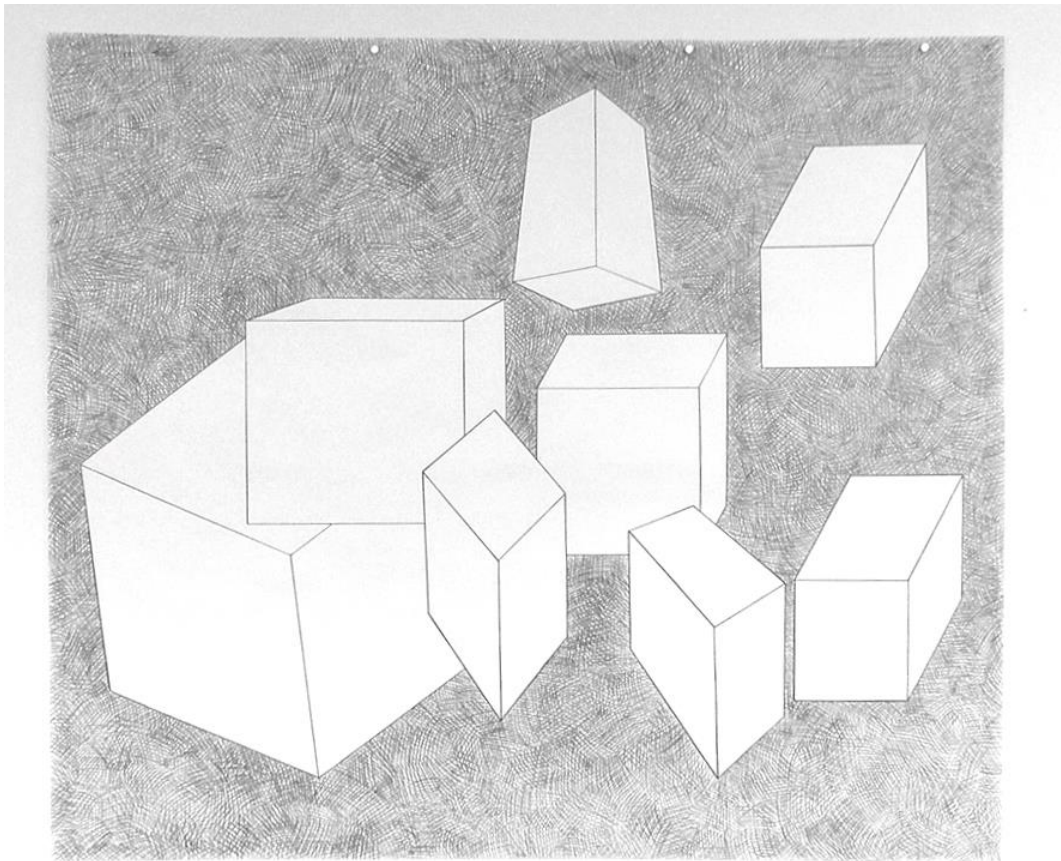


Figure 179. *Projection*, 2015. Graphite on paper. 102 x 120 cm.

### *Chapter three: Imagination and language*

The argument in Chapter three is related to that in Chapter two the topographical metaphor of the bridge used by Höch connects issues of space and language. I made two drawings as part of Kai Syng Tan's *Run, Run, Run* conference in 2014. These drawings were inspired by the point runners, who ran one mile in each of the four cardinal compass directions. I walked one mile north of the venue and made two drawings, *North Point I and North Point II*, 2014, Figure 180 and Figure 182. In relation to this thesis, the *North Point* drawings were a way of engaging with geographical position. The topographical aspect of imagination is also dealt with in works made which use bridge motif. In her writing about imagination Höch invokes the image of the bridge. A bridge involves crossing, looking back, connecting and separating and crossing. In *Die Brücke* the bridge links art of the past to that of the future. The bridge can therefore represent time, space and the infinite as well as being used as a metaphor with spatial and topographical connotations, bridging ideas and connecting parts of language. *Bridge*, 2013, Figure 183, includes one of the bridges found in the animation *Recurring Obsessions. A12*, 2011, Figure 184, was painted from a bridge over the A12, and the short text *Sludge Main*, 2015, also refers to a type of footbridge. The animation *Textual Deluge*, 2014, Figure 185, uses words taken from an early draft of Chapter three. The skeleton figure is adopted from the skeletons in *The Chase*, Figure 152. This symbol appears also in a number of Höch's paintings, such as the skulls in *Auf dem Weg* ('Along the Way') (Figure 54). In *Textual Deluge* the skeleton was produced in parts. This is because it is animated as a stop motion cut-out that is articulated at the joints. The separation of body parts relate it to the issue of dissecting and recombining figures found in Höch. The figure moves within a two dimensional landscape. However, there are different types of space produced in the animation. Firstly, there is the three dimensional depth created by the woodblock. This depth is necessary to produce the printed image so the printed skeleton figure also has this space by implication. There is a second space above the woodblock in which the skeleton figure as a cut-out print moves. This shallow space relates to Walter Benjamin's discussion of the indent made by text on paper and includes also the implied space above and below the paper in printed text (Benjamin, 1979b, p.109) [1916]. Finally, the figure turns during the animation and the space that it turns in is within the animation itself, within the image on the paper, so that there is a further fictional space existing simultaneously with the actual depth created by the material objects of the wood and the paper. The idea that an otherwise flat cut-out figure can occasionally break the paradigm by moving within the figure, through animation on the paper, is influenced by Oliver Postgate's and

Peter Firmin's *Noggin the Nog* (*The Sagas of Noggin The Nog*, 2005) [1968], Figure 193 and Figure 194. This uses mainly two dimensional, cut-out paper stop motion but sometimes a figure is animated within the piece of paper that its figure is cut from. *Noggin the Nog* also refers to printed text in the opening titles and to language in the form of the medieval saga. In addition to the separation of the figure into parts and the address of space within the animation, *Textual Deluge* uses language as both text and image. The words and phrases that rain down causing a flood of language are taken from a draft of the written thesis, from a section discussing the relationship between language and image. They are not intended to be easily legible within the animation, but as fragmentary glimpses that might be caught. Similarly to Sigmund Freud's assumption that where someone does not themselves appear in a dream, their ego is hidden behind another person, it is possible that artists' egos can be concealed behind characters in their work, in this case the skeleton character (Freud, 1953a, p.323) [1900].



Figure 180. *North Point I*, 2014. Graphite on paper. 76 x 58 cm.





Figure 181. *North Point I* during Run, Run, Run conference 2014.



Figure 182. North Point II, 2014. Graphite on paper. 76 x 58 cm.



Figure 183. *Bridge*, 2013. Oil and oil bar on linen.



Figure 184. A12, 2011. Pigment and oil bar on canvas.

## Sludge Main

Mist floats under an  
early grey conveyor in  
cold pipe.  
Roping clear  
of navigation undissuaded.  
Purpose concealed  
below dull rust.  
The sky hides rails  
behind a glinting first frost low squinted orange morning.

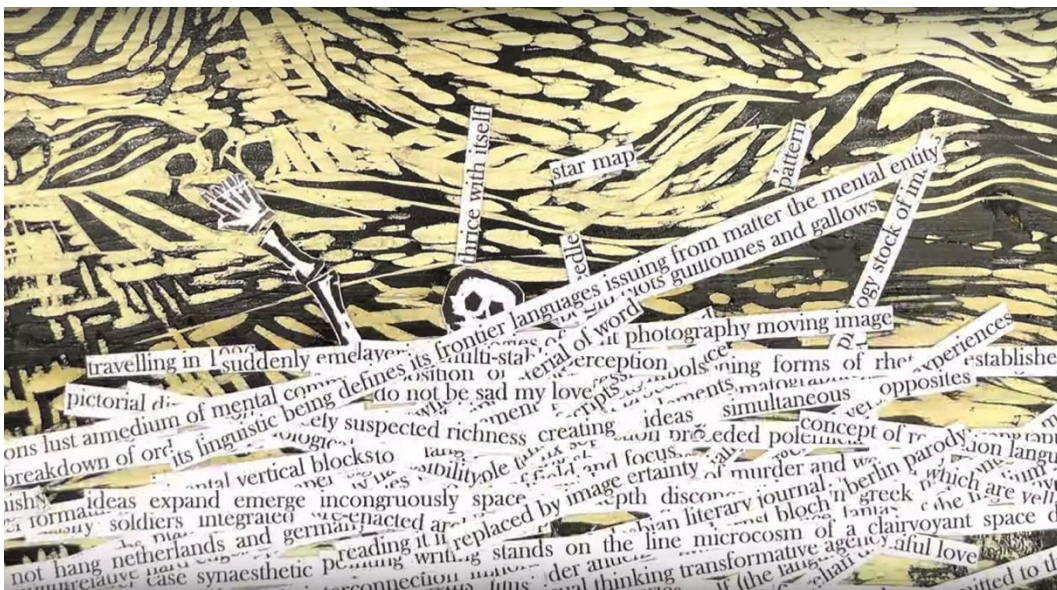


Figure 185. Still from *Textual Deluge*, 2014. Digital video animation. Running time: 24 seconds (<https://vimeo.com/172731434/Obc74f7ac5>).

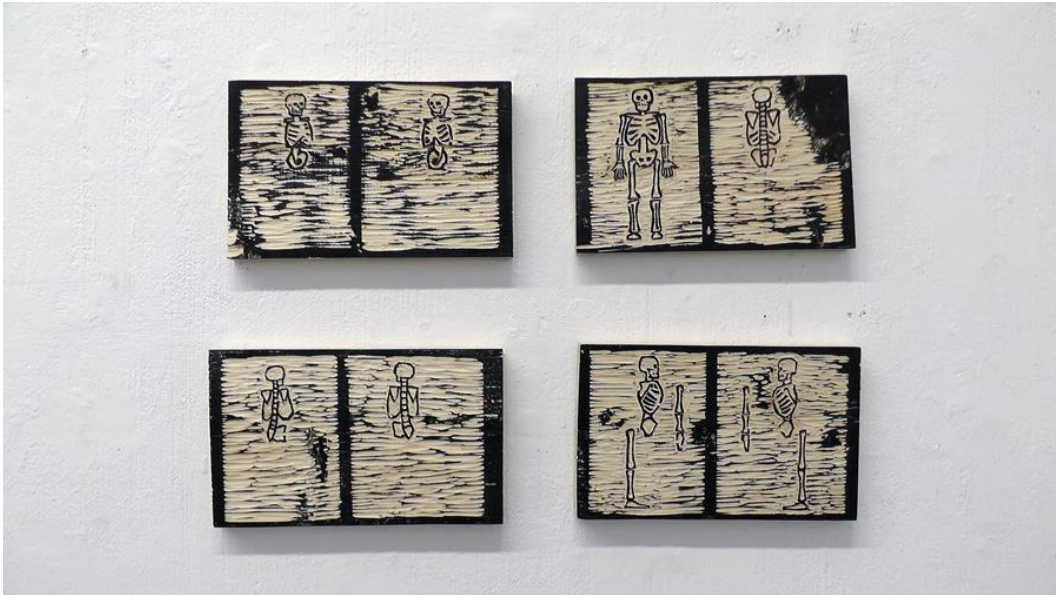


Figure 186. Wood blocks used to make the animation *Textual Deluge*, 2015

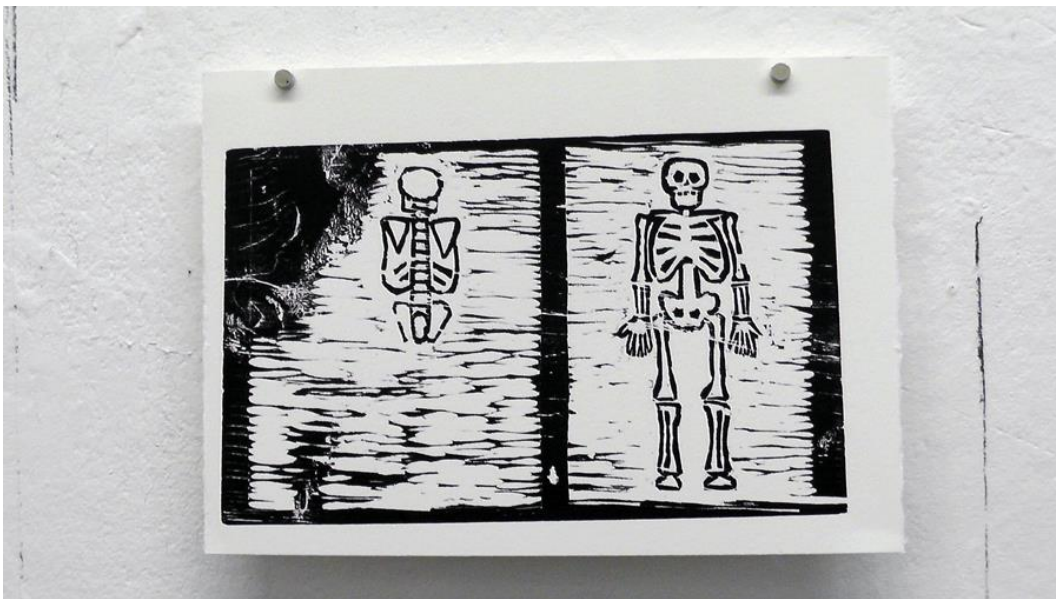


Figure 187. Print of skeletal parts for *Textual Deluge* animation, 2015. Front and back.



Figure 188. Print of skeletal parts for *Textual Deluge* animation, 2015. Three quarter view.

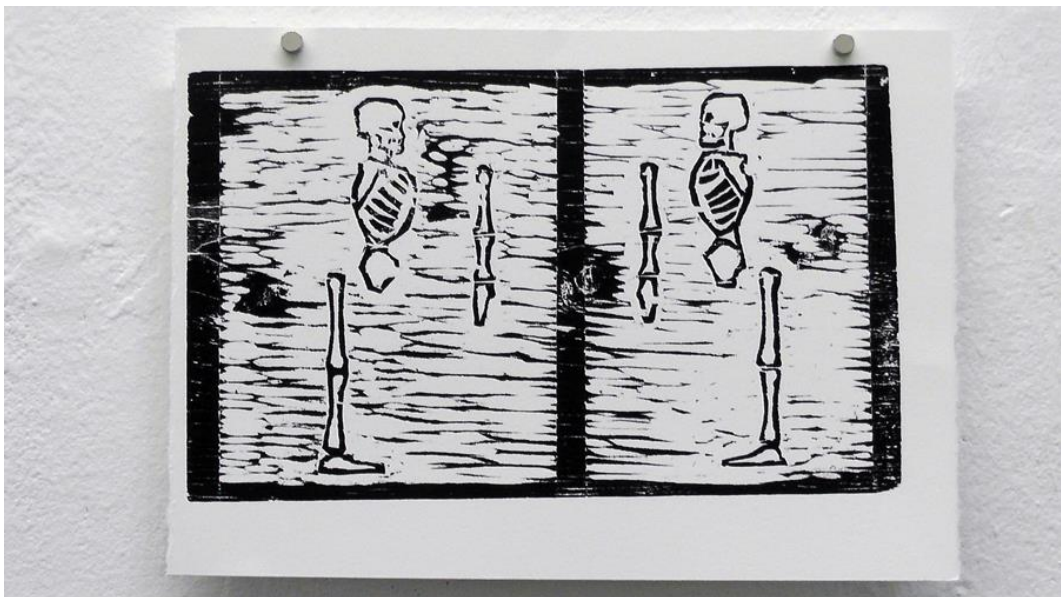


Figure 189. Print of skeletal parts for *Textual Deluge* animation, 2015. Side view.



Figure 190. *Textual Deluge*, 2014, test installation at the *Slade Saloon*, 2015.



Figure 191. Test installation of *Textual Deluge*, 2014.





Figure 194. Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin. Still from, *Noggin and the Ice Dragon* (detail).

#### *Chapter four: Radical imagination's unconscious eye*

Methods of radical imagination connected to the idea of its unconscious eye are found across the related practice as a whole. My account of the unconscious eye, as set out in Volume 1, particularly in Chapter four, opposes looking to seeing. The characteristic issues involved include: doubling and opposition; techniques of chance and automatism; references to the eye; decapitation; coincidence; censorship and repetition. Before discussing some works that particularly relate to this chapter, I will return briefly to some of the work discussed already in relation to previous chapters. *The Chase*, based on a dream, refers to the unconscious. The collaborative animation made at DOCUMENTA13 in Kassel, is similar in technique to the Surrealist practice of the exquisite corpse drawings in which a drawing (or written collection of words) is rotated around a group of people so create disruptions in logic. In the collaborative animation, which I did not direct in terms of content, it is interesting that a figure was created, and the word 'stop' (backwards). *Hannah Höch – Timeline* contains sequences in which visual images are brought together using chance techniques to create new connections between images. In *Incontinental TV: Real News channel*, there are similar collisions of images. It was not made with a complete absence of critical restraint, but rather there was an attempt to minimise censorship and inhibition in order to facilitate unconscious motivations that might reveal images through the making process. The

resulting gratuitous violence does point to unconscious thought processes, as does the visual representation of abstract thoughts and feelings. By placing it in a cardboard box TV I wanted to make it both more fantastical and more immediate. I was thinking also about the material quality of the Merzbau and its grottoes within which different images and objects were encased (Gamard, 2000, p.98). The folding in *The Real World does not work like that*, relates also to Freud's pack ice metaphor in which elements of dream thoughts are 'turned about, broken into fragments and jammed together' (Freud, 1953a, p.312) [1900]. The *Fantasm* drawings and paintings combine images to create hybrid forms, reflecting the way that images are combined in dream. Figure and ground, as found in *Rationality* for example, is a form of opposition.

*Leaves*, Figure 195, originated from the imagery of a dream. It is a more accurate representation of a mental image than it is of a tree. It is a cut-out animation using paper and string, which is then reversed, cut up and recombined digitally. I tried to minimise the amount of deliberation during its creation. The result is like as a moving sketch. *Accidental Drawing*, 2014, Figure 197, was made by accident. I had used plastic to cover a prepared sheet of paper and removing the protective film revealed the drawing. I started using 16mm film in addition to digital, in a largely similar process in that I am still shooting 'blind'. The only 16mm film documented here (in digital reproduction) is *Pencil Shavings*, 2015, Figure 198. This is a 16mm photogram made without a camera through exposing print stock in the dark room. Pencil shavings were scattered on the film prior to exposure so there is an element of chance in the resulting film. I was surprised that the film has a strong sense of movement appearing as though pencil shavings are falling through space. The text *Subterranean utterances*, 2016, was made for performance in a cave in the Forest of Dean as part of the *Deep Material Encounters* symposium, Figure 199 and Figure 200. It was performed in the dark from a natural gallery above the main cave. It relates to the unconscious eye in its content and also the process of creation. I had visited the cave before the event and discussed it with the owners and another participant. I wanted to write a text that reflected some of the concrete images and feelings of the cave and the stories of its historical use as a pigment mine. Depth and underground is a metaphor for the unconscious. When I visited the cave I felt the presence of the historic and pre-historic people who had spent time in the sensuous surroundings, illuminated by unnatural light and wrapped in darkness. I was also struck by the fact that the ochre pigments mined here, and extremely prevalent in painting, were created in the dark under the pressure of the earth in silt layers crushed over millions of years. It seemed sad that this material was trapped from sunlight underground. I created the text by trying to allow images to

appear. This is a working process that I am continuing and I am still working on a longer animation, driven by a text created in this way. *Subterranean utterances* is in three parts; the first part is written in the first person and is about perceptions and illusions within the cave. We were regaled with ghost stories during the initial visit. The second part is from the point of view of a miner through the ages, beginning in prehistoric times using antler picks and then later in the industrial age. The third part is about the rock. I wanted to try to empathise with the rock, and saw the coloured pigments as the dreams of the sleeping rock. It was made for performance and that cannot be documented here, but I hope that my channelling of the voice of the text was in keeping with the location during the live event. The printed text and two photographs of the event are documented.

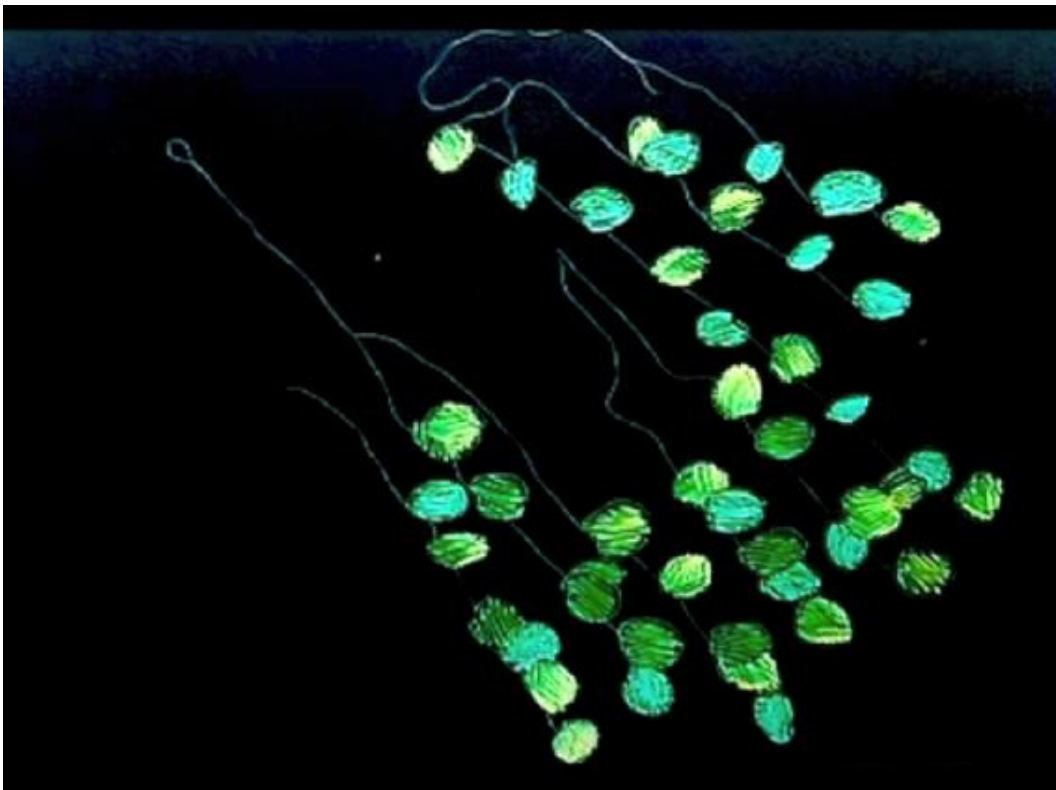


Figure 195. *Leaves*, 2013. Digital video animation. Running time: 1min10secs, loop. Exhibited during *Open Studio (Hinterlands)*, Slade Research Centre, London, 2013 (<https://vimeo.com/168831424/ceacb7343b>).



Figure 196. *Leaves*, 2013. Exhibited during *Open Studio (Hinterlands)*, Slade Research Centre, London.

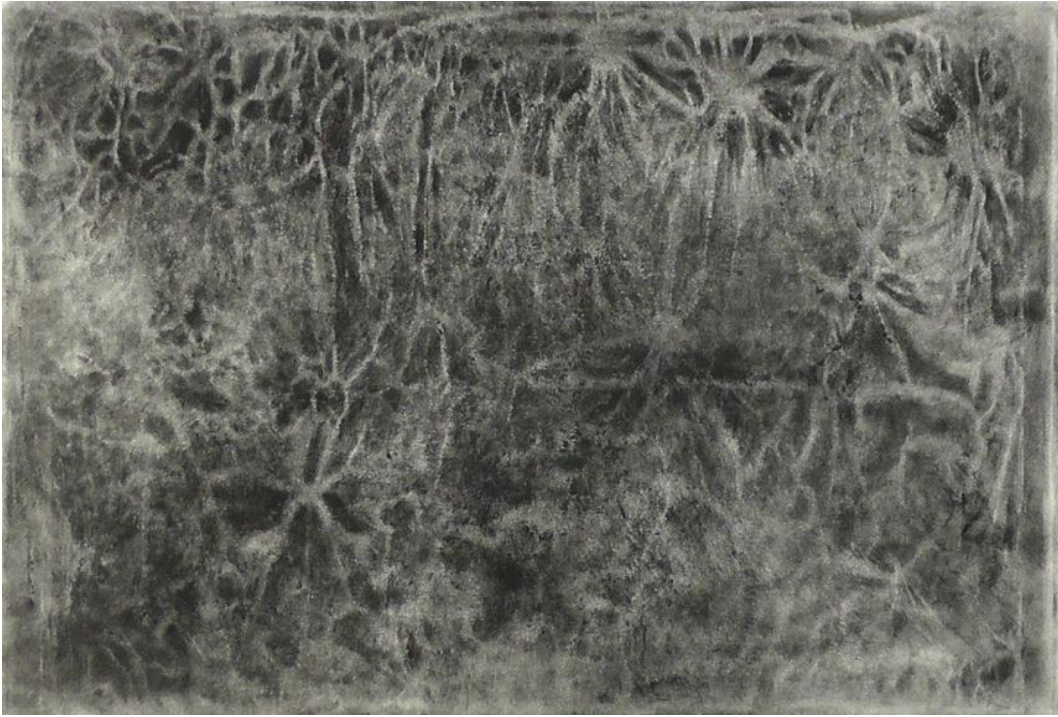


Figure 197. *Accidental Drawing*, 2014.

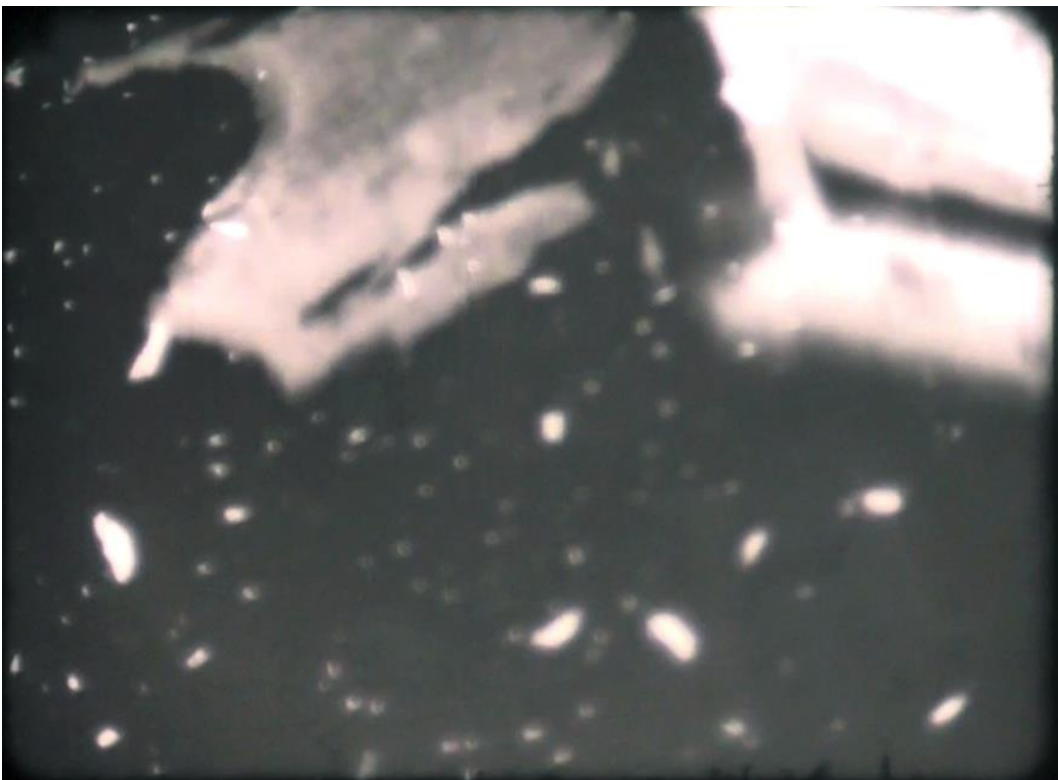


Figure 198. Still from digital reproduction of *Pencil Shavings*, 2015. Digital documentation of 16mm film. Running time: 23secs loop (<https://vimeo.com/212167043/4351323873>).

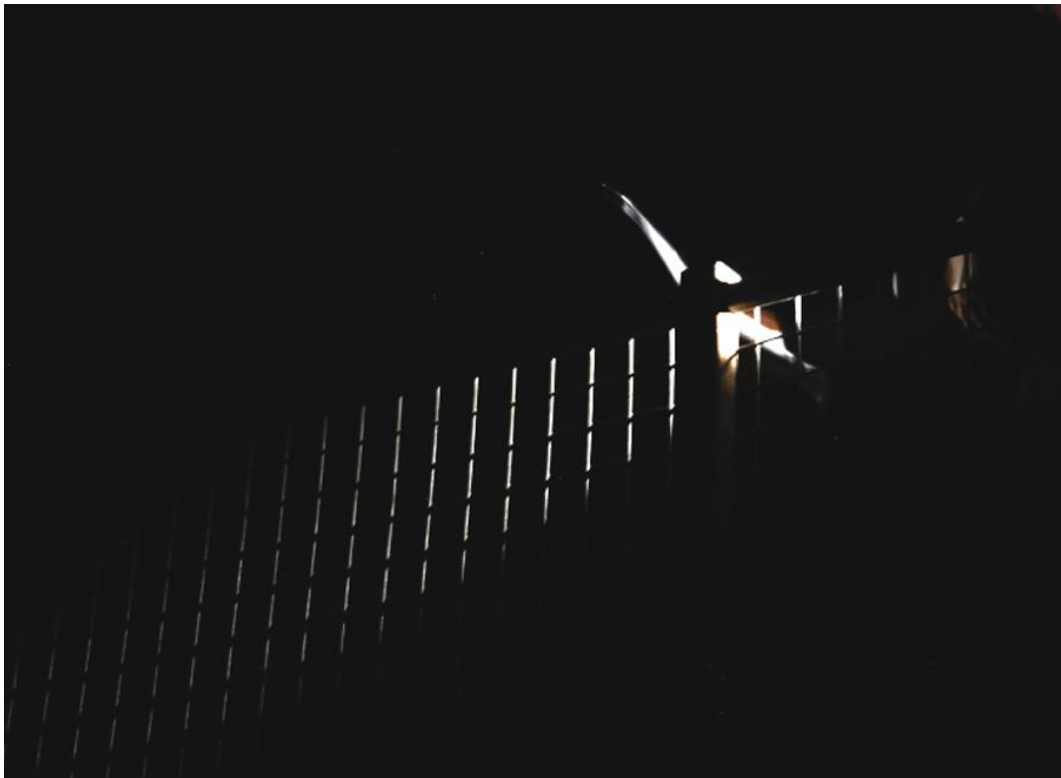


Figure 199. Performing *Subterranean Utterances at Deep Material Encounters*, Clearwell Caves, Forest of Dean, 15 April, 2016. Photograph courtesy of Onya McCausland.

## Subterranean utterances

I fall through a sinkhole into the cavern  
and darkness empties my memory.  
Phantoms brush my skin,  
as they pass to the deeper churns, where bats roost,  
clinging to the misted tissue calcite coverings,  
sonic witnesses to mineral treasures  
amassed by an endless flow of water.  
Apparitions rebound  
and drop into pockets below:  
subterranean utterances cast against walls  
in reverberated rhythms.  
They wait with me beside the alcoves  
to reach out with shaking fingertips that graze my breath.  
The miner leans back from a seam;  
scuffs from knee to knee,

scrapes with antler pick.  
Hours are traced by pulsing veins.  
A long sigh exhales a thousand years  
before the clang of iron on stone.  
Pigment is drawn out of eternity  
to the percussion of wheels on rails;  
winches and chains;  
pulleys on narrow gauge tracks.  
A rumble that rises through hanging mist  
as openings are blasted and drilled.  
The pool quivers at each sound.  
Millennia of miners move,  
pry, pull, glean and hew;  
throw up deadwalls;  
pile debris;  
cut through to the lower workings.  
They yell back,  
wiping sweat and fire the walls.

Earth's machinery hefts eternal pressure  
onto the ponderous wedge of silt  
– entombs it –  
its last sight of the sun long forgotten.  
Already almost lost,  
the rock sleeps, and dreams in reds, yellows and purples.  
The dark absorbs its own undulating contours,  
and oozes over  
the bleeding stone face of prehistory.  
DARK-NESS  
holds the first image of ochre  
in secret time-reflections,  
that dance as separated shadows.

Kay Tabernacle. Performed at *Deep Material Encounters*, Clearwell Caves, Forest of Dean, 15 April, 2016.





Figure 200. *Deep Material Encounters*, Clearwell Caves, Forest of Dean, 15 April, 2016. Photograph courtesy of Onya McCausland.

### *Chapter five: Body as a site of imaginative transformation*

Ideas of anthropomorphism, emotion, empathy, identification, body, index, touch, and the projection of the surface of the body were approached through paintings made with hands and feet. These included an initial series of paintings, Figures 203-211, and then a larger single painting, *Embodiment*, 2014 (Figure 211). I wanted to see how gestures can be recorded, and the effect of different gestures and their recognition. It was difficult to understand the speed of the printed marks, so if I sprinted across the room and collided with the surface, this would not be apparent in the painting. Only movement that happened at the paper's surface was readable. Different movements such as sliding across the surface or wiping paint were tested. Some of the unintentional handling marks seemed more recognisable when reviewing the paintings. This was a subjective assessment; it seemed that removing intention was more revealing and interesting. The first series was made to explore different marks and informed the larger work. The pigments were chosen partly with toxicity in mind since I was handling them directly, but also because earth colours relate to the body, often made of the same substances and through a symbolic connection between the earth and the body. I found the scale of the first series unsatisfactory: there was not enough space to move. The larger painting *Embodiment* relates more closely to a moving body in scale.



Figure 201. Embodiment series at the Slade Research Centre.



Figure 202. *Embodiment I*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.



Figure 203. *Embodiment II*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.

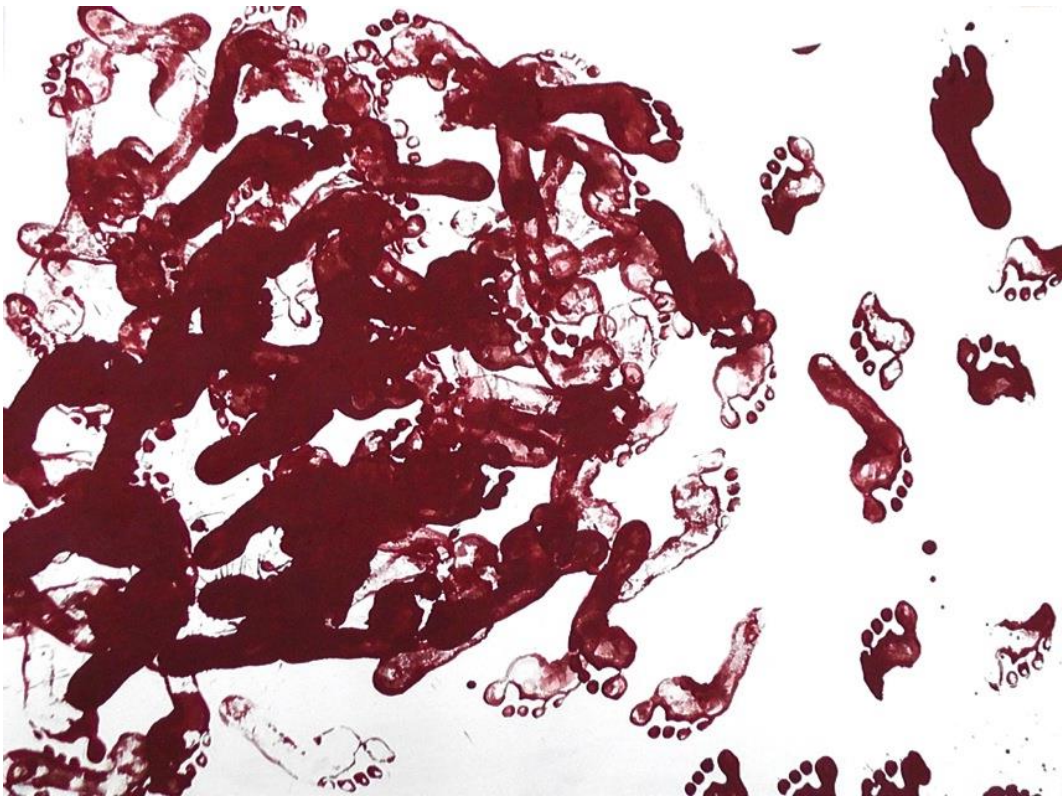


Figure 204. *Embodiment III*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.



Figure 205. *Embodiment IV*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.



Figure 206. *Embodiment V*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.



Figure 207. *Embodiment VI*. 2014. Acrylic on paper. 101.5 x 137.5 cm.



Figure 208. Detail from *Embodiment* series.



Figure 209. Detail from *Embodiment* series.

## Conclusions

My aims in the related practice were to reach my own understanding of imagination and to put into practice some of the ideas about imagination from the rest of the thesis. This has involved modelling and making diagrams as well as painting, drawing and animation. Early explorations of different types of mental image demonstrated a problem in attempting to categorise and order imagination as a series of parts in relationship to one another. A more narrow definition of imagination as a faculty of image production was eventually widened so that the focus of the practice became the methods of radical imagination as identified in Höch's work. Prior to starting this research project, in my painting there had been a tension between the ideas of experiencing the subject, observing and recording it, while also being open to an emotional, intuitive response. I understood my interest in landscape as being connected to the unconscious but often became entrenched in observation. During the course of this project one aim has been to become more open to the processes and mechanisms of imagination, through the application of a set of methods identified in the written part of the thesis, as part of its construction of a possible model for Höch's understanding and enactment of imagination. That change in focus, and breaking what I saw as a problem in my art into smaller chunks, has been liberating and has released my practice from an impasse. The step of engaging with ideas through a set of methods and techniques has allowed much greater freedom. It is not a programmatic approach, but is closer to a set of tendencies, for example, to prefer the concrete to the abstract, or to repeat and rework previous subjects and ideas. Then there is a toolbox of methods including collage, and chance techniques, the inclusion of text and language, the employment of empathy and embodiment and a purposeful receptivity to image. During the course of the research I have also been confronted by the importance of art and its ethical responsibilities. Having initially felt protective of my practice and reluctant for research to impinge on it, the exposure to and engagement with Höch's art and ideas, and those of the theorists who influenced Höch, has changed my attitude to what I can do with my work and created openings for future work. I now recognise that my art is fairly resilient and I can find new directions and possibilities, and that my art can survive the world without being destroyed on contact.

In conclusion I will now discuss the installation of a selected group of work from the related practice, exhibited at the Slade Graduate Show in 2017. This group included six individual works installed together: *Embodiment*, 2014; *Image, Body, Imagination, Language*, 2017; *One minute in 4:3*, 2016; *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*,

2017; *Rationality*, 2014; and, *What is this called?* 2012. It is not documented here, but the sculptures of Hyojoo Lee were in the room to the left and in front of *Embodiment* and also activated the space. The space between the works as installed functioned as in a diagram. *Embodiment*, Figure 210, was the first work seen when entering the room from the corridor. This is a large painting, over four metres long and two metres high. Within the painting the hand and feet marks suggest the moving body. To the right of this painting was a wall drawing based on a diagram from the written part of the thesis, *Image, Body, Imagination, Language*, Figure 212. The diagram drawing was produced directly from the written thesis (but larger) and I included it because it has the four concepts that the other works in the installation engage with. The body is most clearly referred to in *Embodiment*. Opposed to the body, in the diagram, is language which could be found roughly opposite or facing *Embodiment*, in the hand drawn diagram itself which was mainly those four words: Image, Body, Imagination and Language. Imagination is referred to in the animated diagram, *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, Figure 215, and image in the drawing *What is this called?*, Figure 217. It was not strictly arranged to match the diagram. There was also the issue of the room to contend with. Stub walls interrupted the room creating a series of bays, so that it was not possible to see all of the works at the same time. To look at the installation as a whole required the viewer to move around the space. Behind the stub wall with the diagram were two animations, opposite each other, two different uses of the tetrahedron shape. Moving into the room and looking to right it was possible to see both the diagram *Image, Body, Imagination, Language* and the animation that arose from the diagram, *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*. I saw this arrangement also as similar to a fold in bringing these two works into a closer spatial relationship. Moving back from this position, it was possible to see both the diagram and part of the drawing, *Rationality*. The formal language in both is similar, using graphite in rough cross-hatching, but the figure ground relationship is reversed; in the wall drawing, the ground is the white wall and the text is filled with graphite, whereas in *Rationality* it is the opposite. The two drawings *Rationality* and *What is this called?* were very close to each other but *What is this called?* could be seen from the central space of the room in a position in which *Rationality* was hidden; and if standing in the bay where the animations were shown, directly in front of *Rationality*, *What is this called?* was partly obscured through being at an angle to the viewer, so there was the option to see them together with their contrasting language, or separately. Looking back from the animation bay it was possible to see *One minute in 4:3*, Figure 213, next to *Embodiment*. Moving round the space brought the works together or separated them as gaps between the architecture opened and closed. *One*



*minute in 4:3* was made from the development drawings for *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*. *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron* is made from a series of drawings; each drawing is shot and then replaced under the camera by a completely different drawing on a new piece of paper. But in addition, from the development stage, there is a set of drawings from which these final drawings are made, a kind of ghost set, behind the animation, that plots the movement. I used this ghost set of drawings to produce *One minute in 4:3* so they have an underlying connection. It is shot in 4:3 format because there is also a 16mm version. It was made following an invitation by Onya McCausland to take part in an exhibition, *Charcoal Works*, in which a group of artists made works using the charcoal from the remains of the sculpture *Place* from the Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail. It uses a different animation process to *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron* as each drawing remains and is altered in place by erasing and adding marks before the next shot. The newspaper ground adds a chance element of printed text. Charcoal on newsprint is a commonly used combination and refers to the discipline of drawing. While this animation is related to *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron* through the ghost drawings, it does not contain the diagrammatic terms, 'image', 'body', 'imagination', and 'language'. *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron* was projected opposite *One minute in 4:3*. It is more diagrammatic in that it contains text and is colour coded. It is hand drawn and based on the direct observation of a small three dimensional paper model, rather than having been created by geometric or mathematical means. *Rationality*, by contrast was produced using a compass. All the lines, other than the cross-hatching, in *Rationality* are positioned using a compass to cross existing lines and points and plot new lines. There are multistable relationships between some shapes in the drawing and the whole operates as an asymmetric figure group. Most of the works installed in this exhibition were made flat, on the floor or on a drawing desk, but they are viewed vertically, recalling Benjamin's distinction between longitudinal and transverse 'sections through the substance of the world' (Benjamin, 2008a, p.219). The remaining drawing to discuss from this installation is, chronologically, the first in the group. *What is this called?* was made from memory from a small window a distance away from the paper. It was made by memorising for a while from the window and then returning to the drawing and repeating this process. I also made an arbitrary compositional decision that I wanted the drawing to be attached to the right hand edge. *What is this called?* is the work that I think corresponds most closely to the concept of image from the diagram, as mental image, with its relationship to imagination mediated through language and the body.

It is difficult to conclude a body of work. Each individual work is a conclusion of sorts as well as a proposition and invitation for future development. It would not be appropriate or possible, for example, to create a final work that could incorporate all the issues and findings from the thesis. Instead they all contribute a part to a continuing whole. There remain works in progress and future directions that have been opened in the course of this project, in the same way that the written part of the thesis has opened further questions for future research.



Figure 210. *Embodiment*, 2014. Acrylic on polyester. 200 x 415 cm. Installation, Slade Graduate Show, 2017.



Figure 211. *Embodiment*, 2014. Acrylic on polyester. 200 x 415 cm.

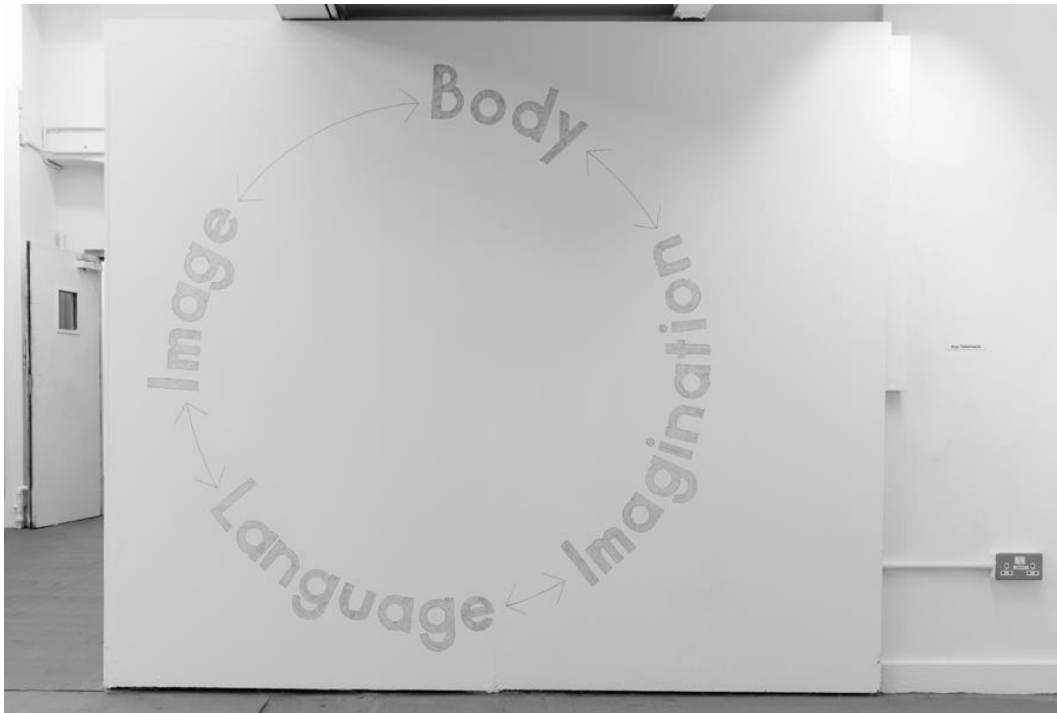


Figure 212. Diagram: *Image, Body, Imagination, Language*, 2017. Graphite wall drawing (based on Figure 56 in Volume 1: Relationships between concepts of language, imagination, image and body as suggested by Benjamin's writing on language).



Figure 213. Still from *One minute in 4:3*, 2016. Digital video animation. Running time: 55secs. Exhibited at *Charcoal Works*, Hardwick Gallery, Cheltenham, 2016. (<https://vimeo.com/168664130/ec692cac36>)

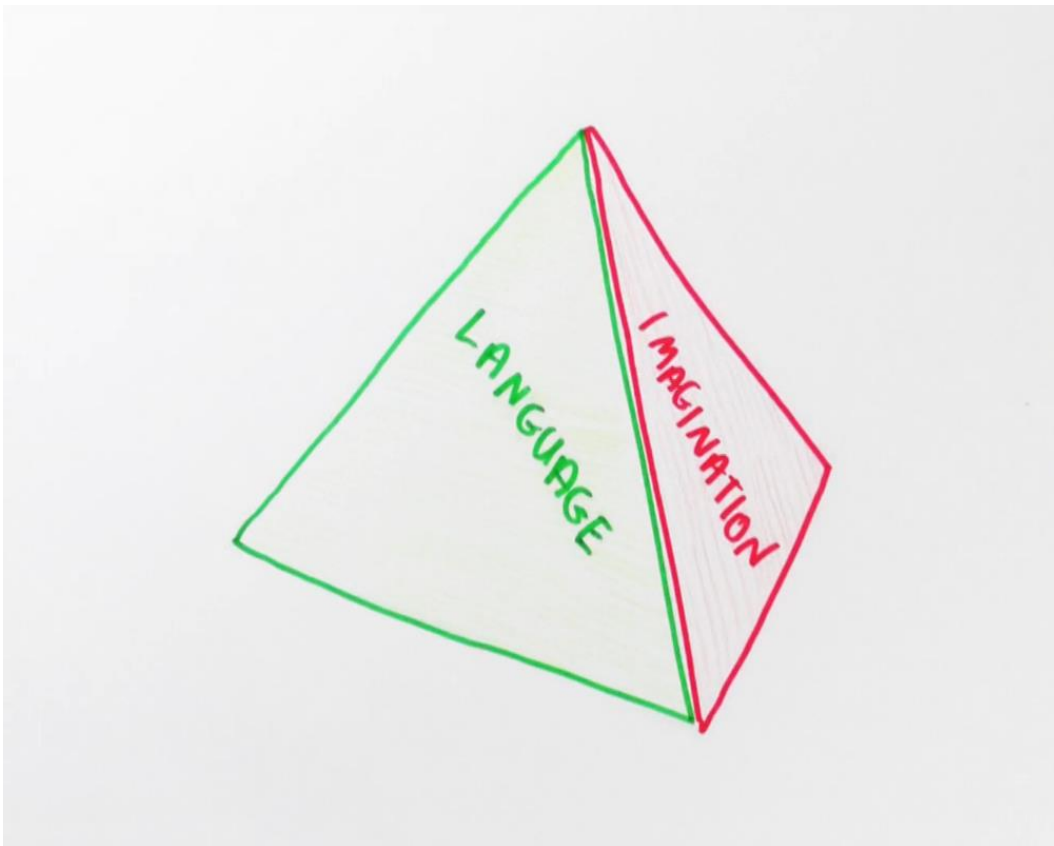


Figure 214. Still from *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017. Digital video animation. Running time: 43secs. (<https://vimeo.com/219540549>).

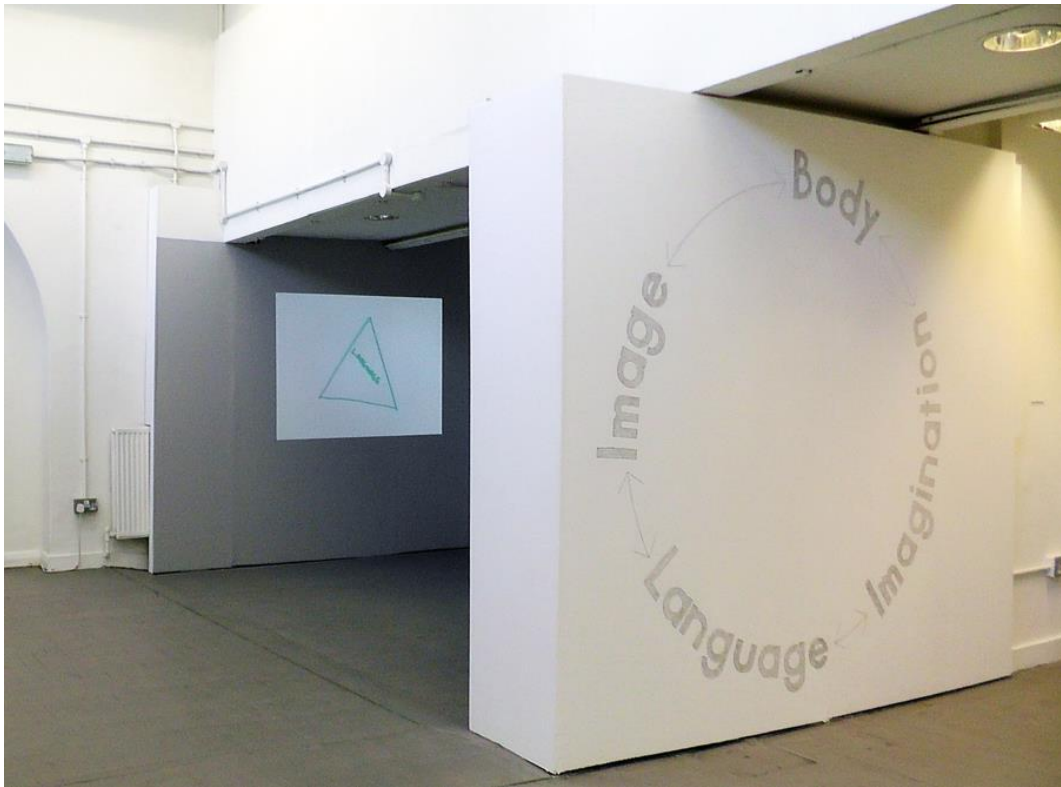


Figure 215. *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017 and *Image, Body, Imagination, Language*, 2017. Installation, Slade Graduate Show, 2017.

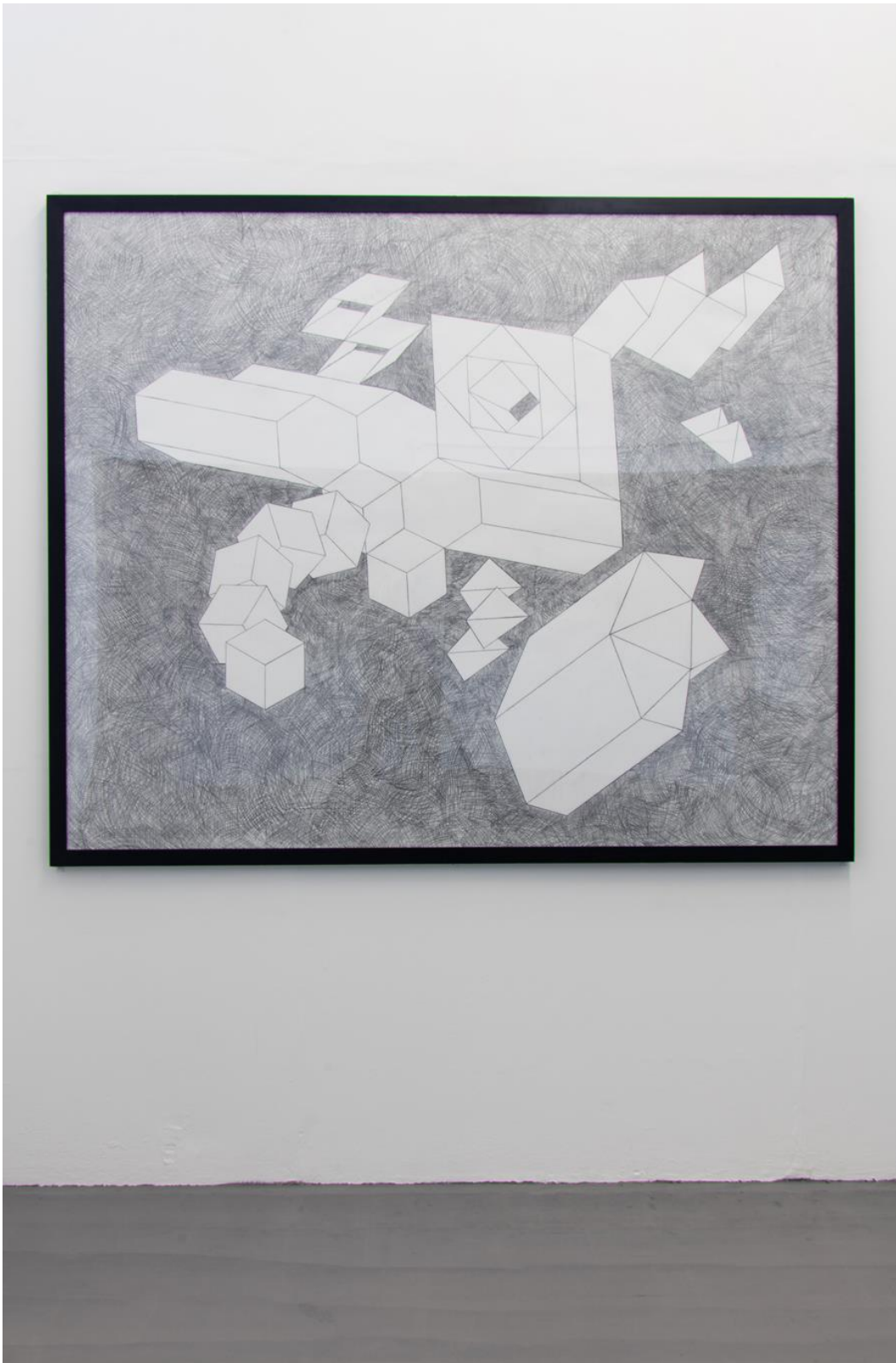


Figure 216. *Rationality*, 2014. Installation. Slade Graduate Show, 2017.



Figure 217. *What is this called?* 2012. Graphite on paper. 280 x 110 cm. Installation. Slade Graduate Show, 2017.



Figure 218. *Rationality*, 2014 and *What is this called?* 2012. Installation. Slade Graduate Show, 2017.



Figure 219. *One minute in 4:3*, 2016, *Rationality*, 2014 and *What is this called?* 2012. Installation. Slade Graduate Show, 2017.



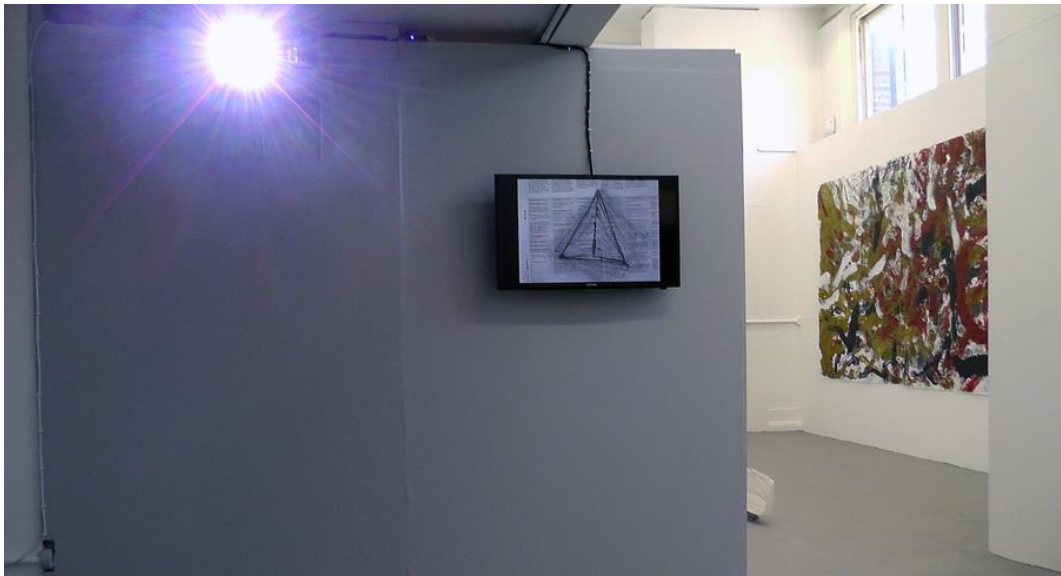


Figure 220. *One minute in 4:3*, 2016 and *Embodiment*, 2014. Installation. Slade Graduate Show, 2017.

## Appendix 7: *Hannah Höch - Timeline*

### *Hannah Höch – Timeline*

Hannah Höch used the material of paper, mechanised through the mass visual culture medium of print. The images here are made from digital photographs of photocopies of print reproductions of photographs of her work, much of which was made from reproductions of photographs from popular picture magazines.

While her colleagues mainly distributed their work in reproduction, through journals, posters or book covers, cropped for print, Höch returned the images despatched for packaged consumption, as original, unique works - recombined and processed by hand with no pretence that these were not pieces of paper.

And yet, although her photomontages were anchored to a material exterior world, through cuttings from already published visual sources, they operate in the subjective realm of the imagination. The image is not created on the paper or with the paper but in the mind's eye, inviting a multiplicity of responses through perception, affect, and meaning.

Höch was a member of the exclusive Club Dada in Berlin. By the time she became part of the wider Dada and Surrealist adventure, there was no Dada, only Dadaists who continued to disagree about what Dada was. Dada was indefinite and transitory. Höch was influenced by the original Zurich group, long after it had disbanded, but is known for her work with the derivative of Dada brought to Berlin.

Hannah Höch was born in 1889; in the year before the massacre at Wounded Knee; in the 19th Century; before sliced bread, before Mickey Mouse, before Einstein's theories of relativity, before powered flight, the vacuum cleaner, penicillin and before women in Europe had the vote.

Her life as an artist was first delayed and then interrupted. She was removed from school at the age of fifteen to care for her youngest sister. She was allowed to leave home at 23 to go to Berlin to study graphic design. But, the outbreak of war in 1914 closed the school and she went home, to work for the Red Cross, returning to Berlin as a student again in 1915.

She met Raoul Hausmann in Berlin, her partner until 1922 and she was one of the four Hs of Berlin Dada: Hausmann, Heartfield, Huelsenbeck and Höch.

In 1916 she began working for Ullstein, Germany's largest news and magazine publisher, making knitting and embroidery patterns and writing short texts. She was in the belly of the publishing machine whose offerings she carved up and re-assembled.

1920, *The First International Dada Fair*, Berlin. Cut with the Dada kitchen knife through the last Weimar beer-belly cultural epoch of Germany. A cross section through the era - a map of women's suffrage, ball bearings, cogs, skyscrapers, engine parts, trains, dancers, babies, cars and crowds. Mass-culture, technology and militarism. Dada balanced by anti-Dada. A snap shot through time. Statistical sampling – detached, objective and made visual with pieces of cut paper. The pomposity of grandiose claims about the epoch, punctured by the domesticity of the kitchen scissors.

In the imaginary body of time, the cross section cuts through and reveals layers, sediments and connections. The contiguity of separate elements is revealed through a total image in which hidden interiors are exposed, where forms emerge and spatial entities rupture the surface and coagulate. The transverse section through the epoch is instant and unending.

Höch's *Dada Review*, where men in military uniform lost their heads, and heads of state had flowers pushed down the fronts of their swimming trunks. 1922, *Astronomy* was published in Kurt Schwitter's journal *Merz*, under a photograph of a model building by Walter Gropius and a poem by Tristan Tzara. Höch mapped the stars of the universe using embroidery patterns. Orion and Sirius rest alongside knitting stitches.

Berlin Dada insisted on contact with material. For Höch the concrete also related to the figurative and to sensorial language and images. In common with dream, vision, hallucination, and other image producing psychic processes, in photomontage, existing images are recombined and superimposed. In this way, the photomontage is a model for the mind and its imaginative processes. Höch valued intuition and empathy in art; emotion containing a complexity of sensations and thoughts, woven within its form.

She worked in an attic studio in Friedenau, where she hosted discussion and poetry evenings. They made silhouette collages, recording directly without the mechanical technology of photography. She took part in an exhibition for a campaign for women's reproductive rights, continued to use the forms of print, collage, construction, puppets, performance, painting, drawing, photography, poetry, and short stories and wrote letters to her friends in verse. She performed her grotesque stories at the Berlin Secession with

Hausmann and the philosopher and writer Salomo Friedländer. She noted on a ticket 'Hausmann has mangled my name again'.

Her images emerged from fragments of ephemera, as the world emerged from the conventions of the 19th century to the technological upheavals and violence of the 20th. She referenced medieval poetry and the avant garde, looking simultaneously to both past and future. Her work resists the mapping of chronological progression. It repudiates order, category and the concept of time.

After breaking from the Berlin Dada group, Höch embarked on a period of independence and wider collaboration, travelling around Europe to meet with other artists. She travelled to London where she visited Welwyn Garden City and Richmond Park. In 1924 she travelled to Paris, a crossing point for artists and writers. She met with Nelly and Theo van Doesburg, Sonia Delauney, Constantin Brancusi, Ferdinand Léger, Man Ray, Duchamp and Mondrian. Her meeting with Mondrian led her to visit the Netherlands, and to fall in love with the writer and poet Til Brugman.

She left Berlin, to live with Brugman and a gigantic cat, in The Hague. Brugman was a translator who spoke 15 languages. She distributed Merz and De Stijl journals and helped artists such as Schwitters, El Lissitzky and Mondrian to sell their work. In Brugman's poem 'R', letters and syllables, the constituent parts, are ordered and arranged on the page. Höch was now able to give up her part time job at Ullstein to become a full time artist.

Although she was a friend of Mondrian's, Höch rejected De Stijl for its lack of freedom and its orderliness, preferring to work uninhibitedly without constraint. 1928, Guardian Angel. Painting combined with collage to create a flight over a fictional landscape arrangement of out of scale objects. Insects the scale of buildings and people, all presented on plinths, each separate and isolated. Human and animal forms combined, as in the language of dream or metaphor. Imagination, directly addressed. The concrete artefacts from the surrounding storm of visual matter given an irrational order.

In The singer, a piano has a human legs, the impossibly constructed figures cast shadows in the harsh lighting of the stage. Multiple borders frame the theatrical fiction within a fiction. Out of context, out of scale, the viewer makes sense of these offerings by reading figure and landscape. The broken ground recedes while the sharply focused objects come forward. Overlap completes the illusion of space.

This period of development was followed by critical success and her first solo shows in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia and she took part in the groundbreaking international touring group show *Film und Foto*. She'd needed to leave Berlin Dada in order to get her work shown, but in 1929 she decided to return with Brugman to Berlin.

The forms of photomontage, montage and new types of typography had been co-opted shortly after they'd appeared, lending themselves to that fate with their graphic potential and their close relationship to modern media - the life blood of propaganda and advertising. Höch remained committed to a range of practice. Curators, critics and historians have usually presented her photomontage in isolation, ignoring her other achievements. Faces, eyes, masks, performance. The challenge is to convention, to habits of subjective thought. She referred to cinema, another mass visual form, creating landscape out of body blended with building.

The National Socialists came to power soon after her re-arrival, locally at first. Höch was asked to declare her support and to prove her descent, which she refused. They refused to fly the Nazi flag, their flat was burgled, with documents and diaries removed, and they were visited by officials. In 1932 Höch's planned show at the Bauhaus was cancelled when the school was closed by the National Socialist city council. They didn't like Dada or most modern art because of the international orientation and the intolerable idea of cultural freedom. Imaginative art was also tainted by its association with hallucination and madness. They especially objected to the use of everyday objects in art and didn't appreciate any questioning of hierarchies of authorship or perception. Imaginative art was feared as transformative, orientated towards an un-conceived future, instead of the certainty of the totalitarian aesthetic, where the future was fixed, and perfection, tradition and conformity were promoted through visual means.

Höch was not included in the exhibition of what they saw as unacceptable art, because it only took work from public collections. She was listed as a cultural Bolshevist in the book associated with this show because of her involvement with the Expressionist November Group and Berlin Dada. Her painting 'The Journalists' was used as an illustration of degenerate art.

In a time of book burning, Höch and Brugman were publishing through a small independent press in Berlin, a book of short stories which explicitly engaged with the politics of visual representation, mass psychology and hypnosis, mass culture and militarism. They critically exposed the use of visual strategies to support an agenda of control.

The context in 1935 was extreme, but Höch had made insurrectionary art before and since. Before the National Socialists was the Republic, the Russian revolution, the great depression, hyper-inflation, political murder and compromise; before the Republic, Kaiser Wilhelm, censorship, suffocation, militarism and war. Afterwards: nuclear war, globalisation, the war on terror, mass data surveillance, the false certainty that the world has changed, presented as incontrovertible and neutral objective fact. Höch still encourages us to un-conceive our futures and to question habitually accumulated distortions in perception.

Shortly before the Second World War and until her death in 1978, Höch lived in a small house in the suburbs of Berlin. She painted death, deaths, infernos. Her eye watching as if in a vision. In *The Mockers* her projected perspective defies spatial logic. A curved horizon wraps around irreconcilable surfaces and expands the scene by bending space. The elevated viewpoint detaches us and suggests a construction of mind.

1945, *The Picture Book*. Höch's poems and illustrations. The mother succeeds in hatching and raising all her eggs because she feeds both body and mind. Flying is associated with psychic experience. It is a motif of escape, but also of freedom and imagination. Höch disrupted the picture plane at the same time as she emphasised it through her use of cut paper. We are torn between absorption into the ambiguous, unsettling illusion and our understanding of the means of its creation.

In the 1950s there was a revival of interest in Dada. Dadaists started rewriting their histories. Höch exhibited internationally again in group shows, often about Dada or collage but also showed painting. There were Dada re-unions and retrospectives. She was visited in Berlin by Fluxus artists and met the abstract expressionist painter Emilio Vedova. Dada was in demand as a retro-active underpinning for Pop-art and Neo-dada. An artist who had returned to the root of Dada in the 1920s, against the grain, and without reference to progression along the conventional route map of modernist art history, was now beginning to be recognised as part of a history that many wanted to claim.

Fear of the implications of her ideas has kept the focus strictly on the linear; cataloguing and sourcing, assessing and analysing; which magazines her source material came from, what type of paper she used: there is a desperate clamour to avert attention from how these works make us feel.

In the age of sputnik, Höch embraced colour photography. Had she lived through the technological revolution of the digital age, it's tempting to

speculate that she might have found ways to counter its use for the purposes of propaganda and distortion.

Photomontage is both strange and familiar, because it draws on everyday images. But the material of image is always familiar. We are what we see, and the image is the stuff of our minds, our dreams and understanding: archetypal, particular, dislocated or estranged.

*From Dada to Data*, Whitechapel Gallery, 2014 (Tabernacle, 2014b)

From *Dada to Data* event information



Curated by Film and Video Umbrella in partnership with Whitechapel Gallery. Supported by Slade School of Fine Art, UCL (Film and Video Umbrella, 2014).



Appendix 8: Text from which *Textual Deluge* was  
made

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whole

removal

of heads

star map

embroidery

pattern

the bird

thrice with itself

death

re-enacted archive

grapho-cinematographic

superficially

manomètre

travelling in 1926

shapes or symbols

layering multi-stable perception

unsatisfied

impossible to fix separate elements

postcards

house

performing short stories

manuscripts

reading it in her sleep

classify soldiers integrated simultaneous legible phrases betraying pearl dutch german  
french italian russian japanese diphthongs geometrical abstract interrupted  
horizontally lesbian literary journal

relative hard edges diffuse background depth of field and focus

made photographs blossoming beautiful love

gravity does not hang netherlands and germany fixed reality relinquish certainty  
panorama physiological impossibility

symbolic systems illusions categories of signification edge to edge holistically  
perceptual principles visual language and pictorial space

ideas expand emerge incongruously space and depth disconcerting latin greek  
spanish english danish

confounded angle disturbs plane of the paper signify displacement progressively  
breakdown of order in representation

smell which are yellow

profoundly order formatting horizontal vertical blocks

grotesque visual properties fruitgrape's patchamatak

shared imaginations lust and gratie

lived experience intertwined typescript material of word

affected capital emphatic doubling lower case synaesthetic response phantastische  
dutch interconnection image strengthens links coincidence fantastical typography and  
visual poetry

you have to know how to see

suddenly emergent technologies of print photography moving image

do not be sad my love

modernity accountable accords acquainted with awareness

multiple methods of murder and weaponry

bomb plots guillotines and gallows

bodily handwriting

under comparison intersection preceded polemical unceasingly renewed dialectical  
compromise interest in and approval of

der antichrist und ernst bloch

fringes of apocalypticism

graphology stock of images

pictorial dimension scarcely suspected richness

pointing writing stands on the line microcosm of a clairvoyant space dialectical image

psychic states and processes

medium of mental communication

infinite incommensurable uniquely constituted infinity

its linguistic being defines its frontier languages issuing from matter the mental entity  
itself (the language) one of the medium interrelated

concept of revelation language of poetry

images differently to language creating ideas simultaneous opposites superimposition  
of layers logical reasoning forms of rhetoric established order replaced by image

existing metaphors committed to the concrete

visual thinking transformative agency

distortions of perception historical or psychological

hegelian dialectic confrontation magnetic north

differential deviations plotting his thinking un-reconciled

transitory field contradictory null point

collisions of images

range of devices symbols signs text and words

images altered through distortion omission magnification inversion contact with the world

after all god had created the male to do just that

no genius would deny a certain complement of mysticism

julie

exaggerated version experiences

berlin parody

tanderadei

## Appendix 9: DVD

1. *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-12. Digital video animation. Running time: 43 secs. Video file.
2. *Recurring Obsessions*, 2011-12, projected under a bridge on Markfield Road, London, 2012. Digital video. Running time: 21 secs. Video file.
3. Collaborative animation made at workshop for European Art Research Network at dOCUMENTA13, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2012. Kassel, Germany. Running time: 9 secs. Video file.
4. *Hannah Höch – Timeline*, 2014. Digital video animation. Running time: 19mins 37 secs. Video file.
5. *From Dada to Data*, 14 February 2014, Whitechapel Gallery. *Hannah Höch – Timeline*, 2013. Sound file.
6. *Models of psychic action via imagination*, 2013. Digital video animation. Running time: 2mins2secs. Video file.
7. *One minute in 4:3*, 2016. Digital video animation. Running time: 55secs. Video file.
8. *Textual Deluge*, 2014. Digital video animation. Running time: 24 seconds. Video file.
9. *Leaves*, 2013. Digital video animation. Running time: 1min 10secs, loop. Video file.
10. *Incontinental TV: Real News channel*, 2017. Digital video animation. Running time: 4min38secs, loop. Video file.
11. *Pencil Shavings*, 2015. Digital documentation of 16mm film. Running time: 23secs loop. Video file.
12. *Models of Imagination II, Tetrahedron*, 2017. Digital video animation. Running time: 43secs.