

Pedagogy of welcoming: reflections on the poetics of space by Bachelard

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Introduction

The present work is developed around the issue of welcoming in education; more specifically, based on the studies of imagination by the philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1884 – 1962), this is a philosophical reflection with the intention of opening up to the new, to the possibilities that may derive from this process of imagination of the function of dwelling. Therefore, as usual in philosophy, the work developed is a bibliographic review supported by practical examples of education, namely, reflections from a philosopher, interweaving with others from the same or other areas to re-think principles.

Through this research, it is understood that philosophizing about an attachment pedagogy, with regard to its role of receiving the child-being in the world, is fundamental and, perhaps, an endless exercise, given that cultures move, in time and space, and the beings that come into the world always present unique demands. In this view, the work *The Poetics of Space* (Originally published in 1957) by Gaston Bachelard is used to support the philosophical exercise that here treads on such insecure and fertile grounds as that of the imaginary, imagination, and dreams.

The psychosociality of non-formal education spaces

Starting from the idea of welcoming to opening as pedagogical possibilities, Bachelard shows himself to be a philosopher who can be understood and classified as daytime and

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nighttime, because his work has both poetic and epistemological characteristics. We will then start from the poetic aspect, in which the book *The Poetics of Space* will be studied in terms of the imagination of the house and the so-called ontological function of inhabiting.

Bachelard suggests that daytime and nighttime instances should be understood as an unfolding of the animus and anima concepts which started from Jungian analytical psychology, delimiting and naming these two great forces and manifestations as profound archetypal forms. “Archetypes are not derived from culture; instead, it is cultural forms (in Jung's theory) that derive from archetypes” (STEIN, 2000, p.116). The animus as a male pole is the symbolic father, as understood by psychoanalysis. It will generate the channels through which science operates or the rising of vertical axis. Bachelard understood that this psychic side / pole operates differently from the anima. The male sphere generates science starting from the “no,” seeking to eliminate the first images. When subjectivity has contact with the image, the scientific posture will deny and eliminate the first impression so that it does not have to rotate in circles for any desire for discovery.

While for the female side of the anima, everything is considered by the “yes” and acceptance, what is interesting about this opening is that, precisely by not denying anything, the opening of the being owing to the Imaginary arises. In this way, the anthropologist Gilbert Durand, a disciple of Bachelard, in his work *Anthropological Structures of the Imaginary* reports all the prejudice that the logocentric West had against the Imaginary and the rigor of its studies, which were then unjustly classified as the source of epistemological error.

It is from surrealism, psychoanalysis, and other movements in the human sciences, that this re-acceptance will arise, this relocation of the Imaginary as an area of studies in the human sciences through which it is possible to find profound modalities of being, as stated by Mircea Eliade (1991), another thinker from the Eranos Circle, as well as Jung and Durand.

Consequently, through poetry, the Bachelardian night side, we ask the question, “What are the images/anima of education?” In both formal and informal education, if there is a space for reflection on this feminine and poetic axis, is it then possible for welcoming without classification, judgment, or intention to arise? With this provocation, will it be possible to do more than what is given? In this way, we enter the Bachelardian phenomenology, thinking about this imaginary house, this anima space, and we relate the poetics of space to education.

Pedagogy can be understood here with Gilbert Durand as a psychosocial environment.

[...] It is necessary to explain well what we mean by historical pressure: it is just the pressure that occurs in the ideologies of an instant of a civilization, and to mean that pressure we prefer to call it "pedagogy" more than history, because the latter term causes confusion, in the mentality of the last two centuries, precisely with a messianic and progressive myth (DURAND, 2002, p.384).

Such psychosocial nuances, which started from what Bachelardian phenomenology presents, open to pedagogical thinking as new possibilities. The philosophy that is built here refers to what is most subjective in the human being; this imaginative terrain provides for the creation, genesis of relationships of alterity. To welcome, as a pedagogy, an educational system, it is necessary to accept a happy home space.

With that said, it is possible to notice an important link that connects the present proposal of pedagogical reflection in the Durandian sense, as a force of the psychosocial environment, to the studies of the first welcoming space, to the house. "Every truly inhabited space brings the essence notion of home" (BACHELARD, 1993, p.25). It is in this way that looking at the space of the house comes close to that of education. The philosopher teaches through his provocative images that the animus builds the exterior of the house while the anima builds the interior.

Psychically speaking, the image of the feminine, or the image of the "mother", as psychoanalysis brings us, refers here to the "construction" of the intimate life of the very being, which at birth immediately begins to inhabit a world, a house. And it is through this that the being will feel that he or she is, in a way, worthy of a place in the world. There is a pedagogy of belonging that the house constructs on its own. That is why Bachelard (1993, p.26) re-enchants us saying that she "shelters the dreamer, allows [him or her] to dream in peace".

The house is a shelter against the world, in favor of Being. It is a home, a value, a construction, a dream, a network of condensed gestures, elements and psychic movements. Through symbolic imagination, each part of the address is thought, dreamed, and built; it has a story to tell, a reason to exist. And it is in the midst of this tangle of senses that the first home is understood. Each corner, each part, each piece of furniture, for carrying years of thought and projects, for holding decades and decades of veiled senses, for having as a reason for existence the continuity of human existence, carries and communicates, through their images, meanings

of life and an immense baggage of messages to the human soul.

This pedagogy of the house would then be thought of as a pedagogy of welcoming, through an ontological force stripped of prejudices, which only welcomes the being that is shown through the imaginary. The house, which, according to Bachelard, is the cradle of the world, can be understood primarily as the birth factor and be welcomed in a belly, the mother's womb. Then, as a birth home, a place where we grew up and become humanized by the first images. Awakening archetypes to tell the being that he or she already has a place in the world. "Like Gaston Bachelard and Henry Corbin, Gilbert Durand puts the imaginative individual back in his or her true place, that is, in the heart and horizons of the practices (and his 'methods') of the imaginary" (DUBORGEL, 1992, p.302).

For Durand, there is no linearity to explain history, as historical vicissitudes lead to a confusion between the history of humanity and the history of the life and body. "Now, if history is a mystical and not a positive factor, it is the psychosocial ambiances that define the existential" (DURAND, 2002, p.388). We can then understand that this birth as a symbolic process in which we emerge from sleep and develop our imagination according to the explosion of senses that arrives in symbolic adolescence. With the development of youth, the age of reason is reached, in which the classifications of our species start from the history of the body, that is, an anthropomorphic mirroring of natural reality.

In this path of happiness, many intermediate cosmoses are developed, for example those described by *L'espace poétique* and, particularly, a privileged microcosm, the microcosm humanized by work and the human dream: the house, the human dwelling that recapitulates 'from basement to attic' the symbols of the world in its stone, in its beams, in its fireplace, in its well, in its humid and dark cellars, in its overhead and dry hovels. All the images, all the substantialist metaphors of the poets refer, after all, to this dwelling in the world, of which my house is the last symbol. Therefore, the symbol reveals us a world and the phenomenological symbolic, makes explicit this world which - in the antipodes of the world of science - is, however, ethically primordial, referent to all scientific discoveries in the world (DURAND, 2004, p.65).

It is what is characterized as the displacement of the explanation of phylogenesis by ontogenesis: "The supplementary error of historical explanations is to affirm that phylogenesis reproduces ontogenesis. [...] In such a thought there is a process of reducing the human race to

the genesis of one person [...]” (DURAND, 2002, p.389). In this pedagogy, Gilbert Durand states that it is more the psychosocial expressions that form a culture than the history. There are many other forces that can cause a society to lean towards meaning and no longer a continuous linearity.

As for pedagogy [...], which Bachelard finds confirmation: a pedagogy of open reason, a refusal of intellectual blocking, a refusal of the schizophrenic characteristics of our Western education. If we mention here these theorists of the most advanced scientific movement, that of microphysics, it is our conclusion to clearly mark to the naively scientific eyes that could read us, the 'seriousness' of Bachelardian poetics (DURAND, 1964, p.56).

This pedagogical understanding, which is not necessarily due to the verb, language, or science, but primarily by these other gestures that the home contains, makes us understand that the house, literally, in every corner, is a network of condensed gestures that will inform the being that he or she has a place. The house for Bachelard, studied through poets, will be systematized in its corners, informing a type of centers that multiply in other centers.

Every house is the center of a world for the dreamer, for one who, like the child, at birth will think that he or she is the center of the world. Each little corner is being formed as another center, for example, the centralizing tendency of boredom, loneliness, and even of the dreams themselves. In each corner, the child is experiencing these pieces of information that are being awakened and signified through archetypes and their play with the socialized senses of everyday images.

And all this web of relationships will allow the child, in rooting throughout the house, to then dream and live in peace. Based on this security that the house offers, for Bachelard, the human being creates houses and forms abodes, or, at least, it should be so for everyone, even though we know that there is an immense housing crisis on our planet.

The house will then carry all the information about culture, family, and how the whole society is linked to the repetitions of its ancestry. Although each house is extemporaneous, that is, unique in its time, the psychic protection that the house offers is universal, namely protection for the being to dream.

The house communicates early to the being that there is humanity, in time and outside

of it (ancestry). It is through the home that one is welcomed into the world; first, there is a rest in this symbolic cradle, and it is only later that the being is “thrown into the world” of responsibilities. There is a whole network of manifest gestures in an address that informs the being that he or she is immediately a value. The address then gives its advice early; the values of humanity, culture and family are there. Those who accept do not charge. In the same manner, a cradle, which seeks to continue in some way the mother's womb, communicates to the human a form of well-being and informs that it is a protection. This sense of guard communicates hundreds of virtues that are fixed in being, awakening the function of dwelling.

The images of a house awaken archetypes, as well as a whole germination of dream values. The Being feels that he or she, then, needs protection to dream, to dream well. Bachelard. Bachelard (1993, p.62) will also say that “against everything and against everybody, the house helps to say: I will be an inhabitant of the world, despite the world”. Why not continue, extend the dream values of a residence for a few more years? Why not think about a pedagogy anchored in the first gestures that ensure the possibility of Being? In an address one dreams, and in the other spaces that receive children, how is the notion of protection? It is a conception of pedagogical work that takes us to the extension of the dream values of the home within the school and brings us closer to other pedagogies.

While Bachelard effectively applied his practice as a teacher in high school in Bar-sur-Aube (there are also reports that between 1929-1935 Bachelard idealized a public school in the city, which effectively happened and came to be called 'Gaston Bachelard') and then at university teaching in Dijon and then at Sorbonne in Paris. Steiner experienced the direction of a school from his anthroposophical theory, the name of the school, Waldorf, came from the fact that Emil Molt, a director of a cigarette factory called Waldorf/Astória in the city of Stuttgart, when identifying himself and committing to labor causes, he suggested to Steiner to give lectures to workers about his education methodology. At the beginning of 1919, the workers themselves were interested that their children could receive a more adequate education and this initiative has prevailed today, where in the last decade Waldorf pedagogy has grown a lot in Brazil (ROCHA; SANTOS; PINHO, 2019, p.55).

In Waldorf Education, literacy begins later, around the age of eight, which is when reason begins to wake up, to narrow the imagination, because that is when we begin to understand time and death. This will shape and adorn the world in order to be eternal, and it is precisely this

symbolism that the house communicates, in its structure that repeats the will of ancestry to maintain our conditions of survival.

What an image of concentration to be, that house that 'squeezes' against its inhabitant, which becomes the cell of a body with its walls close together! The refuge has contracted. And, more protective, he became stronger outwardly. From refuge he became a stronghold. The hut has become a stronghold of courage for the loner who must learn to overcome fear in it. Such an address is educational (BACHELARD, 1993, p.62).

The continuity of the life of a family in the world represents a whole humanity that was built between walls (this is the real meaning of this heritage, belonging, welcoming, a place for discoveries, exchanges, and interactions). In the buildings symbolized by the knowledge that rises, the walls can be understood as a way of transmitting to others the desire to keep humanity of family alive and delimited.

We may subsequently move to another pedagogical center in the house, which is the kitchen, and it would be very interesting to consider transforming the school center into the kitchen as well. We know that, in the case of Brazil, the majority of children go to school because of food. Most social projects emphasize the importance of this, even in the isolation imposed by the pandemic, it has been noticed that some schools stopped teaching, but continued providing basic food for families of regularly enrolled students. Thus, the hunger for knowledge is preceded by material hunger, which is a motive for attendance at school. In this sense, the pedagogy of welcoming also focuses on the principle of anima in the kitchen. And it is at the kitchen table that we can also see a horizontality, in which everyone sits around the table and gets together to talk and eat. It is from this point that socialization recalls that even to learn to speak, since we were born, it is because of the need for food. The pedagogy of horizontality is related to a relationship of non-authoritarianism; here we may say that looks are stripped of authoritarianism, even though adult authority guides this sharing in mutual learning, insofar as everyone at the round table is equally benefited, fed, and welcomed.

This is where Bachelard makes us think precisely of these provocations regarding the alignment of the archetype of a house with elements. Since prehistoric times, it is through fire that man learned to sing; the kitchen fire is a call in which people come together to sing, dance,

and unite in the rhythms of everyday life.

It is a provocation in thought that brings formal education to the center no longer, but to what is happening on that margin. That springs between the will and the dream, present in the preschool in what happens at lunch break, in a pedagogy of leisure. It is in art classes that children make a mess with paint. And it is in this chaos that meaning exists for a whole plurality of the school, which ends up being on the sidelines, in which the pedagogy of welcoming may focus more attention.

Thus, to maintain this welcoming pedagogy for a longer time is to conceive that the child, while dreaming, will have more basis to even future conditions of the necessary creativity to be open to science. Professor Dr. Alberto Felipe Araújo (2019, p.38) states that “pedagogues and educators lack a pedagogy of imagination, of a Bachelardian flavor, which helps them to exercise themselves in the 'poetic art of reverie' and that, in our view, it can be reconciled with the pedagogy of the imaginary, as Bruno Duborgel considers”. The same is also said in the understanding that behind every man there is a great woman; moreover, we can say when we study the imaginary, we understand the sociological question that there is behind all animus there must be a great anima, consequently, behind every concept there is a great image. So, we can still pass on our deductions that, behind every work, there is a big dream, and the house, as a center of dreams, is precisely this force of possibility to maintain the Being as a Verb that understands that study is everything in Life. However, care must be taken in understanding the notion of Life from the concept of resonance and reverberation present in *The Poetics of Space* and how they can be understood in pedagogy.

At a first level, the poem gives itself to us through ‘resonances’: we ‘hear’ the poem, its resonances ‘dispense in the various planes of our life in the world’. At a second level, it provokes in us its truly poetic instance, no longer evoking only our empirical self, our biography, our contingency, but calling the being: moment of repercussion that ‘calls us to deepen our own existence ‘and’ picks us up ‘, in the double meaning of the term. Conversely, the psychologizing commentary, so busy in ‘describing’ feelings, is eternalized and plunged into resonances. [...] The pedagogy implied by the processes of paraphrase and information, or the translation and inspection-distrust of images, is therefore opposed to the pedagogy of poetic communication and imaginative drift, repercussion, admiration and delivery to the images like ourselves when we meet again (DUBORGEL, 1992, p.315).

Then, working on phenomenology in *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard intends to truly undertake a deepening of the spatial imagination; we return to a synthesis of its chapters, in which, in the first chapter of the book, the meaning of the cabin was unveiled, as precisely a starting point for overcoming the psychoanalytic aspects of the house in relation to the human being, for instance, the house's own anthropomorphy, in which it is understood that the attic represents the unconscious, while the basement is the place of sexual drives.

Understanding the image through the image is the great Bachelardian phenomenological challenge of perceiving, in this given context of an education of non-formal spaces, not through a translation of meanings, but through the feelings of the anima behind the animus. This human being that grows in his or her home, as a necessary boundary for growth, as well as protection from trauma, as in the chapter "Drawer, safes and cabinets", where these secrets are kept. The human being creates his or her instinctive protections against this world, this counter nature, as in the chapters "The nest" and "The shell".

The pedagogical aspect of space poetics can also encompass transgression, which Bachelard also has in mind in education for the moments of disobedience, when the child is taken by reflection in the corners in which he or she is isolated, as in the educational process of punishment, in which child should stay in the reflection corner.

All of these processes are linked to the miniaturization of the knowledge of life, that is, to transform the most palpable and even valuable educational knowledge, since condensation is a consolidation value: "I have the world the better the more able it is to miniaturize it" (BACHELARD, 1993, p.159). The child's relationship in admiring the macro, the big toys and, as he or she becomes an adult, he or she condenses the value of miniatures, jewelry, jewelry; in short, the value of small things goes beyond the big ones.

Finally, when we approach the notion of "intimate immensity," we think that it is time for the child to become an adult and to know the exteriority symbolized by forests. In this manner, rethinking processes occur, interacting dialectically with the infinite relationships between exterior and interior.

Finally, to conclude the chapter on the "Phenomenology of the Round," we understand another challenge of interpretive reading of this work by Bachelard, when he turns to the roots of Parmenidian sphericity, or is inspired by Jaspers and Van Gogh when saying that "life is round"

(VAN GOGH *apud* BACHELARD, 1993, p.236), he starts to characterize a metapsychological phenomenology of the relationship between being, community, and appearance. Spheres, as we well know, in our current society, of bubbles of relationships, are an invitation to congregations of thought. What needs to be remembered is that we live in a large sphere/house called the world that contains the intersection of all other spheres. The school is also a sphere that bears fruit for the maturation of being, as long as there is this sense of instinctive collectivity that transcends individuality in the process of leaving oneself to grow with the other, namely, the welcoming in which the processes unveil and watch over,

Helped us to 'de-philosophize', to remove all seductions from culture, to place ourselves outside the convictions acquired in a long philosophical examination of scientific thought. Philosophy matures us very quickly and crystallizes us in a state of maturity. [...] When you can say how you imagine, you are no longer imagining. It would then be necessary to mature (BACHELARD, 1993, p.239).

The dialectical complexity, between interior and exterior, maturing and un-maturing is continually altered by new perspectives and challenges in education. The pedagogy of the poetics of space is not a pedagogy of empty spatiality, of a vacuum, but rather a whole education, of the full and creative, always filled by new possibilities of meanings.

Conclusion

“One of the maxims of practical education that regenerates my childhood: 'don't eat with your mouth open’” (COLETTE *apud* BACHELARD, 1993, p.215).

Through the philosophical epistemological pluralism of welcoming pedagogy, we hope to understand the meaning that each house reverberates a being of humanity and if we multiply house by house, in the idea of society, we arrive at a scientific city. In this Bachelardian concept, this scientific city means precisely a coherent pluralism between different scientific pedagogies, where coherence comes from mutual knowledge, respect, and the denial respected by the epistemological act of selecting what is no longer current, denying and embracing what continues current in new knowledge. Remembering that Bachelard's scientific pedagogy is

entirely based on the valorization of error, mistakes move us, since there are no first truths, but rather first errors. In addition, it is worth mentioning that, in this scientific city, it is not the school that should be made for society, but, on the contrary, society is made for a school understood as a scientific city, so that the school is precisely this space of methodological experiments, application of theories, and innovation and overcoming of the difficulties of society itself.

The present investigation sought to demonstrate then a considerable reflective potential of education in *The Poetics of Space*. The diverse images that Bachelard brings from a systematic (phenomenological) study of the imagination opened up immense possibilities for pedagogical creativity, especially for those who seek to re-think the educational space. Without bringing answers, trying to clearly formulate the problems that lead a student to dream and have a welcoming pedagogy, of resting, in a safe space that receives the being for his or her journey, for dreamlike and alternately real existence, the present study followed its path from an experience of thought for the dignity of presenting a humble reflective exposition of free Bachelardian thinking.

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