

From the bachelardian creative image to imaginative education: preliminary notes

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Gaston Bachelard "does not cease to denounce the rationalizations and creative processes that change the depth, richness and spontaneity of the life of images" (WUNENBURGER, 2005, p.43). The philosopher of the imagination refers to a notion of image that is creative, with which it is possible to think about an imaginative education. For this reason, it is important to present the notion of creative image based on the aesthetic work of Gaston Bachelard. It is not reduced to visuality, it includes linguistic, as well as other sentient faculties, olfactory, palatal, auditory and tactile. Here we understand it as a mediating body between the sensitive and intellectual dimensions. In addition, it is important to highlight that to be image must contain indications of your affiliation (image of something or someone), keep a distance and subsist as image (it is not mirror, it is not mimicry, it is not realism). It should make us believe in its appearance without deluding too much to become aware of the reality at stake (WUNENBURGER; ARAÚJO, 2006). That is, we must remain aware that it is an image and not the thing of which it is a kind of double.

Having said that, we set out for the notion of image for the philosopher of imagination Gaston Bachelard in the part of his work dedicated to the dreamwaypath².

In his book *Le materialism rationnel*, Gaston Bachelard (1990a) will bring us the idea of a complete anthropology, from the notion of the "twenty-four-hour man", man simultaneously of reason and imagination³.

The twenty-four-hour man is the one who lets himself be educated indistinctly by the two ways. He's the man who thinks and imagines.

Both in epistemology and in aesthetics, Gaston Bachelard's philosophy breaks with the

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² Bachelard takes into account two pathways to knowledge, dreamlike and intellectual, and his thinking focuses on a work in both ways (epistemological and aesthetic or poetic).

³ GOMES, A. L. F. A educação do homem das 24 horas. In: GOMES, A. L. F.; BRITO, S. B. (orgs.). *Festins de seda: o festival mythos-logos do imaginário e outras inventices de inspiração bachelardiana*. Natal: EDUFRN, 2016, p.263-271.

domain of perception (positivism) and with the immediate (realism)⁴.

Generally speaking, the Bachelard ouvre assumes that the phenomenon is not given, but is the creation of thought, and recognizes that not only the arts, but, science is also inventive and creative.

The twenty-four-hour man, as a category of thought, fulfills the important task of enabling reflection on approximations and distances between the two paths to knowledge (the dream pathway and the intellectual pathway). It makes it possible to highlight the founding character of the creative imagination in both ways.

In both ways, Bachelard showed the temporal discontinuity of knowledge, and the primacy of the instant, from which all beginnings are acts of creation, acts of novelty. In this sense, the History of Sciences would be, between errors and successes, a rhythm and not a cumulative continuity.

The creative instant is not in the thread of time, but in the growth spurt, and the duration does not act as a cause, but happens to the later, as a way of consciousness connecting the moments in some possible chaining.

When still concerned with the "psychoanalysis of the objective spirit" in science, Bachelard warned that creative imagination is at the basis of our affiliations which lead to subjective convictions. This finding is very clear in a passage from his book *La psychanalyse du feu*, where he says: before being the son of nature, fire is the son of man. With this, it also brings us the cultural dimension of science, as a construction of thought, as applied rationalism.⁵

The creative imagination is understood as a psychic production force, but has a not only cultural but also cosmic basis. This cosmicity of imagination, as well as of the imaginary, is possible to be observed mainly in BACHELARD's works focused on the "material imagination of the elements": water, air, earth and fire (BACHELARD, 1994a, 1991, 1990c, 1990b, 1989a). Where the thinker comes to the understanding that we are created by our dreams and by the same matter of our dreams. It is when he understands that the creative imagination is the support of reason and establishes the transit between the sensitive and the intelligible.

⁴ Elyana Barbosa (1996), in her book *Gaston Bachelard: o arauto da pós-modernidade* helps us understand the historical context of this rupture and how it occurs.

⁵ Em sua obra "Racionalismo aplicado" é onde podemos observar essa visão de ciência de modo mais sistemático e demonstrativo (BACHELARD, 1978).

Then, we come to the BACHELARD notion of image. The image for Bachelard is not conceived as object/thing/simulacrum. Its existence also depends on the movement of the creative psyche, both on the part of the individual that creates and user. The BACHELARD image is a function of creative imagination in its ability to create absolutely new worlds. It brings an inaugural meaning.

Therefore, imaginative image reading, as we usually refer to the Bachelardian reading approach, depends on a method without objective pretensions, without, however, returning to mere subjectivism. Because there is what it calls the transsubjectivity of the image, which consists of the ability to communicate the image between creator and fruit/reader, and among readers (BACHELARD, 1996)⁶.

This question appears especially in the second “phase” of BACHELARD poetic philosophy, characterized by himself as “phenomenology of imagination”.

In this phenomenological phase, he leaves aside his initial pretensions of the first phase (of the imagination of material elements), that is, he ceases to seek the archetypal rooting of images in the material archetypes of the collective unconscious⁷.

In his phenomenology of imagination, he develops the notion of “poetic reverie”, understood as a state of soul in *anima*, presenting a distinction of this in relation to the common reverie, and showing the way poetic reverie operates in the creator and enjoyer (BACHELARD, 1988). According to Wunenburger and Araújo (2006), Bachelard's poetic reverie designates a figurative power of imagination that exceeds the sensitive world⁸.

In the *La poétique de l'espace*, second book of his phenomenological phase, Bachelard states that image is a cause without cause. And what helps to explain this non-causality of the poetic image is precisely its instant metaphysical character, its novelty, its capacity for

⁶ Aqui estamos tomando a noção de leitura de um modo bem amplo, não restrita ao linguístico, mas abrangendo o visual e as outras dimensões sensoriais através das quais a imagem pode se manifestar.

⁷ The notion of archetype, Bachelard borrows from Carl Jung but gives him differentiated interpretation, especially after he establishes dialogues with Robert Desoille, what he writes in *La poétique de la rêverie*, book which is one of his second stage of his poetical's way (BACHELARD, 1996).

⁸ The poetic reverie happens in a state of *anima*, which is a state of consciousness rested, although all of creative process is coordinated by consciousness. Therefore, there is no submission to the servitudes of the biographical, historical and cultural dimensions, whether of the poet/artist or the reader, because poetic reverie is a cosmic reverie. This non-servitude already appears in his book *Lautreamont*, where he presents this break with the biographical dimension of the writer by taking the reading of his literary images only (BACHELARD, 1989b).

hierophania and updating⁹.

In *Fragments d'une poétique du feu*, which is an incomplete book because he dies before publishing it, he says that the image is a sudden event of the psyche (BACHELARD, 1990d). So the understanding of poetic image in the most mature phase of his aesthetic philosophy is of the order of what inaugurates worlds, of the order of what invents and reinvents from constant updates.

Then we find images that he develops, in these books of the phenomenology phase of imagination linked to poetic space, such as the image of the "the crazy one of the house" and the image of permanent childhood. Poetic space can be understood as the affective space, the image of poetic space accesses this affective dimension.

While they are archetypes in the sense of motor psychic forces and cosmic forces, they suffer a current engenderment, so to speak, a novelty engenderment, which happens both in the act of creation and fruition. That's why the memory for Bachelard is an always presentified memory, updated memory, which he calls "imagination memory" or "dream memory" (BACHELARD, 1996). It is not reduced to factual memories, but it is a kind of reminder of a future, of a will to come.

In the phase of the imagination of the elements he already brought the will, but there the emphasis is in the will to work, in the action of the imaginative psyche on the matters (material elements) and of these on the psyche of the creator.

In the phenomenology phase of imagination, it is already a will to transform, which no longer has to do with a willingness to work on the material elements dreamed. I would say that it is still a material imaginary, concrete, because it is not an abstract, formal imaginary, but cosmic imaginary.

There is still movement and hand-to-hand in this process of poetic reverie, but now the hand-to-hand is not against the materials of the reverie (BACHELARD, 1988). It moves with the uniduality time-space (poetic space), with language as its own kingdom, a plastic hand-to-hand, not subjected to the servitudes of meaning (BACHELARD, 1990d).

Without space we would not be able to think about time as a duration, so they are part

⁹ What was already found in the essay *Instant poétique, instant métaphysique* (BACHELARD, 1994b), and that a broader understanding is presented in his book *L'Intuition de l'instant* (BACHELARD, 19?).

of a uniduality. Memory is the greatest demonstration of this. Where is our memory besides in the things and sensitivities that send us back to them? These things and sensibilities are the BACHELARD poetic spaces (BACHELARD, 1988).

The *cogito* of the dreamer which he deals with in a chapter of the book *La poétique de la reverie* is an corporeal cogito and this corporification in the image is given by the creative imagination.

Now we return to the man of this complete BACHELARD anthropology, a man of the intellectual route and the dream pathway at the same time. A man who by being provoked by the world (matters, rested state of soul, dreamlike space, poetic language) acts upon the world to transform him and become himself.

The creative imagination is an overhumanity capacity according to Bachelard, and poetic image is the way of access to this imagination or imaginative life.

The image is therefore a kind of portal where one can access the possibility of imagining, imagining with the body and the spirit, because there does not seem to be this duality in bachelardism.

Therefore, the status of poetic image for Bachelard is to make us imagine. The image should lead us to imagine. If this does not happen we are no longer in the domain of image but of simulacrum, illustration, mimicry, reproduction, realism.

It is important to highlight Gilbert Durand's criticism (1993, 2004, 2013) about Western iconoclasm. He said the imagination throughout Western philosophy and cultural history was losing space and place. The imagination became the "crazy one of de house" or was being reduced to very specific spaces, such as the space of the arts, and the religious space of Christianity (exemplified in the Baroque). This has in counterpoint the rise of the domain of the technical-scientific society, but within a positivist and realistic perspective of science, which debugges and departs the image and imagination.

Then, returning to Bachelard, he restores this imaginative dimension, both way, intellectual and poetic. In different ways but it restores this creative imagination that has been soothed in Western history, and in both pathways of his poetic philosophy he shows us the power of images in making us imagine.

That is why the project of psychoanalysis of the objective spirit in the field of science

brings this understanding that science is also imaginary, this we see especially in BACHELARD's reflection on science as phenomenotechnics (BACHELARD, 1978).

Where images enter as potential elements of turbulence, because making us imagine would bring interference of subjective convictions into scientific knowledge, even within the BACHELARD parameter of approximate knowledge constantly subject to new rectifications.

The image in the poetic pathway is not subject to any commitment of scientificity and cannot be read using the concept as a tool, because it is not occupying the place of something, it is the possible access to imaginative forces.

And how would it be, in general, to educate based on the notion of imaginative Bachelardian image?

Thus, in order to educate by bachelardian images, or the imaginative education, would allow a dream formation of the subjects, in a way similar to what we conceive as scientific formation (WUNENBURGER, 2012, 2016).

Jean-Jacques Wunenburger (2005, 2018) talks about what this dreamlike formation would be, alluding to closer contact with nature, good art and literature, artistic fruition, craftsmanship using manuality, among others.

So educating by images requires a "dream like ecology", as formula Victor Hugo Guimarães Rodrigues (2013), and Ana Laudelina F. Gomes (2013), reiterates that, requires a study and development of our "dream house", symbolic space where we would like to live in the world, cosmo house (BACHELARD, 1996). It requires a "dreamlike aesthetic education" (RODRIGUES, 2013; GOMES, 2013). It requires an effective "right to dream"¹⁰. In turn, Batista (2020) talks about an "imaginary education" and he "understands the educator as a mediator who guides a spontaneous reading of poetic images, avoiding didacticism that inhibits the creative potential" (p.24).

Returning to G. Durand (1993) and his criticism of iconoclastic civilization, he states that there is a paradox in today's society where, while repressing the imaginative power of the image, we are constantly tempted by it.

Bruno Duborguel (1995), in his studies on this repression of the imaginative power of

¹⁰ Allusion to his posthumous book *Le droit de rêver* (BACHELARD, 1994b).

images, in the school environment and in education in general, ends up formulating theoretical conditions of a "new pedagogical spirit, possible to engender and encompass an effective education of the imaginative being" (p.17).

The Bachelardian's assumption, which Duborgel seems to follow, is that we only think if we imagine, if we can't imagine we can't think. Since images are the portal to imaginative life, they are also the possibility of thought.

In conclusion, BACHELARD theory, taken in its epistemological and poetic pathways, takes account of formulating two pedagogies: a pedagogy of reason and a pedagogy of imagination (BULCÃO; BARBOSA, 2011; GOMES, 2013; RODRIGUES, 2013; WUNENBURGER, 2012, 2016).

By the pedagogy of reason is the reason that educates us. By the pedagogy of imagination we are educated by imagination. And educating by imagination implies talking about education by images, in this sense of portal to imaginative life and, consequently, enabling thought.

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