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Gaston Bachelard's places of the imagination and images of space

Introduction: the mind and its places

In *The Formation of the Scientific Mind,* Gaston Bachelard contrasted the alchemist's workshop with the chemist's laboratory. The former was in the private home of the alchemist who had undisputed control over the experiments that took place there, just as he had over his pupils. In fact, the alchemist's teaching was a moral initiation rather than transmission of rational knowledge (Bachelard 2002 [1938], p. 58). Alchemic theories for Bachelard were developed from human beings' first and most immediate image of the world; this is an image dominated by emotions and desires. The alchemists did not see just combinations of substances, but rather copulations from which offspring was issued; they did not see metals as inorganic, but rather as having not only life but also souls (Bachelard 2002 [1938], Chapter 8). In a private space, the alchemist's imagination for Bachelard could rule unchecked by peers and free from the constraints and rules of public spaces. For the alchemist there was no distinction between his home and his workshop, between private and public, and between nature and his private image of it.

By contrast, the scientist's laboratory is 'no longer at home, in attic or cellar', but rather in a public space, which scientists leave in the evening to go back to their homes and families (Bachelard 2002 [1938], p. 58). In the laboratory, the scientist must overcome the alchemist's imaginative approach to nature and strive for a rational and objective method. This can only be done in a public space, in which rationality regulates both the relationships among people, and those between minds and objects. The instinctive images and ideas that the alchemist used as a basis for his art, become 'epistemological obstacles'[1] for the scientist, who needs to conquer objective knowledge against spontaneous images, dreams and desires that 'naturally' dominate the human mind. For Bachelard the 'too intuitive and too personal' character of alchemy must be a warning to science teachers who should aim to 'shield' their students from the emotional lure of some phenomena (Bachelard 2002 [1938], p. 61). He thought that, when engaged in rational discussion, we should aim at abstraction, and fight against our longing for images and personal meanings.

[1] The concept of epistemological obstacle, alongside with that of epistemological break, is central in Bachelard's epistemology.

But what happens when scientists leave their laboratories, and teachers their schools? And can we all really give up the world of images that is our first approach to reality, and that for Bachelard dominated our view of nature until the relatively recent emergence of science?[2] Sigmund Freud thought it impossible for people to give up pleasures that they have once experienced. He suggested that when children grow up and have to stop playing, they substitute that pleasure with day-dreaming (Freud 1985 [1908], p. 133). Bachelard presented us with a very similar situation. Scientific rationality demands that we give up spontaneous fantasies: we can no longer connect the study of chemical substances to dreams about sex, reproduction and life. At the same time we cannot, and indeed should not, give up the pleasure that the imagination affords us. We may not be able to 'play' in an alchemic workshop, but we can still day-dream. Our early imaginings should find a place in our adult life: Bachelard contrasted psychoanalysis with 'rhythmanalysis', which he described as 'a theory of childhood rediscovered, of childhood that remains a possibility for us always, always opening a limitless future to our dreams' (Bachelard 2000 [1936], p. 153).

Whereas the alchemist enjoyed a holistic life, the scientist, the philosopher and any modern person have to lead double lives. Bachelard envisaged a 'double anthropology' of the rational 'diurnal man' and the day-dreaming 'nocturnal man' (Bachelard 1972 [1953], p. 19) (Bachelard 1971 [1960], pp. 53-4, 212). For him, each of us should lead a life that follows a rhythm between rational and social time on the one hand, and imaginative and solitary time on the other (Bachelard 2000 [1936], chapters 1-2). These times correspond to different spaces. Here 'space' can be understood in two different ways, in relation to either type of time. Science is carried out in public places, and their configuration should not stimulate the imagination. Science also creates abstracts spaces: the spaces of geometry. Bachelard celebrated the epistemological break that non-Euclidean geometries had brought about. Non-Euclidean spaces are to be grasped by reason, rather than being represented by images. The places of the imagination follow the same axis in the opposite direction.[3] For Bachelard there are places where one can dream, and these would be rather different from those of scientific work. There are also dreamed spaces, which include the places we remember, although these are infused with our dreams, just as the places about which we read are infused with the memory of the places of our life.

[2] For Bachelard, science only emerged at the end of the eighteenth century.

[3] Here I follow Bachelard's view of his own investigation and indeed of our approach to objects: from the first, immediate encounter with an object, we can follow an axis towards objectification and science, or in the opposite direction, towards subjectivity and poetry; see (Bachelard 1964 [1938], pp. 2-3).

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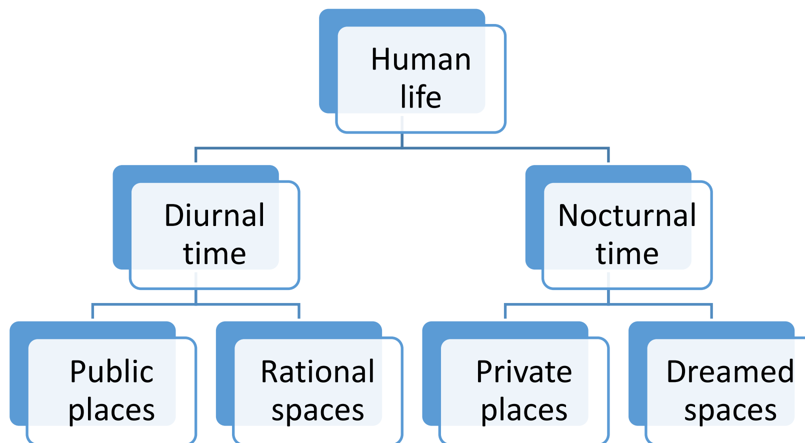

Fig. 1 Places and Spaces of Bachelard's double anthropology.

For Bachelard before the emergence of modern science there was a certain unity of the human mind, as the imagination and rationality were not properly distinct. By contrast in modern scientific times there is a dichotomy of the mind, and indeed of life, and Bachelard's life was no exception. In the unfinished book he was writing at the end of his life, he remarked: 'my work life [has] two almost independent halves, one under the sign of the concept, the other under the sign of the image...' He wrote that he led a 'double life' (Bachelard 1988, pp. 33, 34). These lines echoed those at the end of *La Flamme d'une chandelle*, when Bachelard emphasised that that book only showed half of his life, and that 'after so many reveries', he was impatient to learn again 'difficult' and 'rigorous' books thanks to which the mind 'constructs and reconstructs' itself (Bachelard 1961, pp. 111-112). These books would have been about science and rationality.

In these quotations, Bachelard hinted at the fact that he employed different methods in his books about science and about the works of the imagination, respectively. Whereas his philosophy of science did not change significantly, his interpretation of the works of the imagination underwent a conscious evolution. At first, he mostly, although not exclusively, analysed the works of the imagination from the point of view of the diurnal man, or scientific rationality. In works such as the *Formation of the Scientific Mind*, he aimed to 'psychoanalyse' objective knowledge, or, as he put in the *Psychoanalysis of Fire*, 'to cure the mind from its happy illusions' (Bachelard 1964 [1938], p. 4). He never changed his mind about the negative role that the imagination played in dialectic of scientific knowledge, but at the same time he became increasingly interested in analysing the works of the imagination in their own right.

His hermeneutics of space, or topoanalysis, as he called it, is part of his philosophy of the imagination, for which he sought a different approach from that of his philosophy of science. I shall discuss his search for this new approach in the third section of this articles, after taking a tour of

some of the places that Bachelard analysed in his works. I shall conclude with a reflection on the aims of Bachelard's hermeneutics of space.

Dreamed spaces and places where to dream

Notwithstanding the variety of emotions that Bachelard connected with particular places, his hermeneutics of place is above all about 'healthy' day-dreaming, and about places that suggest peace, silence, safety, rest and intimacy. The house (or home) [*la maison*], in all its embodiments, plays a major role. The house 'shelters day-dreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 6). Our imagination can work freely in a space that protects our subjectivity, that is in a space in which we are free from the demands of 'diurnal life', including social interactions, production of knowledge and production of objects. Precisely because it is a place where we experience day-dreaming, the house acquires great oneiric significance. Dreams feed on memories, and memories of former homes are preserved through dreams. For Bachelard, diurnal life, or 'the real world', disappears when our memory takes us back to the home of our birth, which is the house 'of absolute intimacy' (Bachelard 1992 [1948], p. 95). It goes without saying that the memory of our birth home is not objective: the oneiric home and the remembered home are interwoven in a dynamic unity that only exists in the dreamer's mind.

For Bachelard, although we may dream of ourselves as living with another person, or with our family, generally in the oneiric home we are alone. Solitude is the dreamed condition, just as it is the condition of happy reverie. The images that Bachelard suggests emphasise this isolation: the hermit's hut (Bachelard 1994 [1957], pp. 31ff), the house 'besieged' by winter (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 38), and the 'dark summers in the house' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 45).[4] Within the house, there can be deeper levels of isolation: one's room (Bachelard 1994 [1957], pp. 13-14), and even corners. In his words: '[e]very corner in a house, every angle in a room, every inch of secluded space in which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination: that is to say, it is the germ of a room, or of a house' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 136). The corner 'becomes a negation of the universe'; once again, Bachelard counterpoised nocturnal and diurnal life: the withdrawal into a corner give us pleasure (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 136), because it is rest from diurnal work, and affords us solitude. Images of intimacy can become

[4] 'The dark summers in the house' suggest a house in which shatters prevent sunlight and heat from entering, a rather geographically and culturally specific image.

increasingly small and concentrated, and include wardrobes, chests, drawers, and even small boxes, which suggest secrecy and 'an intuitive sense of hiding places' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 81).

The withdrawal and refuge that the house provides can take other forms in our imagination, such as nests and shells. Nests for Bachelard are 'simple houses', and images of 'rest and quiet' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 98); they afford a special solitude, but they are ambiguous, as they may simultaneously suggest refuge and danger (Bachelard 1972 [1943], p. 242). Nests, and even more so shells, are closer to nature than houses, and therefore more primitive; they can indeed be 'prehistoric', as Bachelard labelled Jack London's 'reverie' about nests (Bachelard 1972 [1943], p. 241). Reading and dreaming about them 'bring out the primitiveness in us' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p, 91). Primitiveness for Bachelard is connected with the life of the imagination, with poetry and emotions. Unlike reason, which for him evolves and brings about change, the imagination maintains its links with our primitive self. Unlike Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, whose theory of 'primitive mentality' had a tremendous influence on a number of disciplines in the inter-war France, Bachelard believed that the 'primitive' approach to the world is not lost to modern people, but rather survives in their imagination. This is why our dreams are populated by primal images.

Bachelard considered the house in its multifarious versions (as room, corner, nest, shell and others) as the image of intimacy. This is the 'centrality' of the house. But he also analysed the house in its 'verticality'.[5] Bachelard's vertical house is a synthesis of all other oneiric dwelling places; it has three or four storeys, each of which is the image of a psychic state. The house's cellar 'roots' the house in the earth (Bachelard 1992 [1948], p. 110), and in so doing it 'partakes of subterranean force'; descending into the cellar is a way to relive 'the primitivity and the specificity' of one's fears (Bachelard 1994 [1957], pp. 18-19). The ground floor is that of common life; it comes as no surprise that Bachelard had little to say about this floor which represents the 'platitude of common life' (Bachelard 1992 [1948], p. 110). The interpretation of the upper floors may at first sight look rather confusing. In *La terre et les reveries du repos*, Bachelard assigned 'sublimations' to the upper floors. In *The Poetics of Space,* he offered a more detailed analysis, in fact he appeared to offer more than one. At first, he seemed to follow Carl Jung's lead, and presented a house in which the cellar is the image of the 'irrational' unconscious, whereas the roof represents rationality. He employed Jung's images of the cellar and attic in order 'to analyse the fears that inhabit the house'. Bachelard quoted Jung as saying that 'the conscious acts like a man who, hearing a suspicious noise in the cellar, hurries to the attic, and, finding no burglars there decides, consequently, that the noise was pure

[5] Bachelard discussed verticality more generally in (Bachelard 1992 [1947], Chapter 12), and in (Bachelard 1972 [1943]).

imagination' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], pp. 18-19). Lucy Huskinson has pointed out the discrepancy between Bachelard's quotation and Jung's original, in which the conscious acts like a man who hears a noise in the attic and goes to check the cellar. Factually, as Huskinson shows, Bachelard relied on a French translation (of a different work from that erroneously indicated in the English translation of *The Poetics of Space*) that had already reversed attic and cellar. Huskinson interprets Bachelard's use of the inversion of Jung's image as evidence that Bachelard's household is affected by a less disturbing personal complex, whereas the Jungian household is 'within the grips of an autonomous complex'. In other words, Bachelard's image would be closer to a Freudian conception of the unconscious, 'by recognising only those personal complexes that can be repressed by the rationalisations of the lofty attic…' (Huskinson 2012, p. 72). I agree that Bachelard did not deal with 'disturbing complexes', and that he did not espouse Jungian psychoanalysis to the full, just as, I would add, he didn't Freudian. In fact, we should not attempt to read Bachelard's topoanalysis in terms of the production of a full theory of the psyche, or indeed any theory. He had quite different aims, as I shall discuss in the Conclusion, and a rather different approach from psychoanalysts, as I shall discuss in the next section. Here, it is important to point out that Bachelard read Jung, and his image of the psyche as a house, just as he read his other sources, including poetry and literature. In his analysis of the verticality of the house, Bachelard's use of Jung is not particularly different from his use of the writer Henri Bosco and the poet Joë Bousquet, just to mention two.

It is clear that Bachelard used the theory of the house as image of the psyche simply as an image, and indeed as one among others. Only a few pages after the passage discussed above, Bachelard presented the oneiric house as having three or four floors connected by stairs, that go down to the cellar, and also go up to the bed-chamber, which for Bachelard is a private space for dreaming. They also go further up to the attic, but this time the attic is not the image of rationality. The stairs to the attic are more 'primitive', because they lead to a 'tranquil solitude', which promotes the poetic exercise of one's imagination. Elsewhere, Bachelard presented other oneiric values attached to the attic: the attic brings to the house the elevated qualities of the nest, and it can also be a source of terror, similarly to the cellar in the *Poetics of Space*. As Bachelard put it, the attic is a 'changeable universe' (Bachelard 1992 [1948], pp. 109, 110). These variations make sense in Bachelard's approach because he did not aim to offer any theory, system or even a definitive catalogue of symbolic values that we may attach to places.

Another method? Towards a hermeneutics of dreamed spaces

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Bachelard did not change his mind about the imagination being an obstacle – a necessary one – in the dialectic progress of science. In his books on science, he always held the view that the scientific mind should be 'rectified' and 'purified' from instincts and dreams, and that we should aim at a 'hortophychism' (Bachelard 1970 [1934-35]); (Bachelard 1986 [1949], p. 48 and passim); (Bachelard 1951, especially Introduction); (Bachelard 1972 [1953]). However, at first, as mentioned, he studied the works of the imagination from the point of view of science. Then he started engaging with the 'nocturnal man' in addition to the 'diurnal man', and studying the works of the imagination in their autonomy. In order to do this, the rationalistic method that he employed in his science books proved increasingly less suitable. After *The Psychoanalysis of Fire,* he dropped the term 'psychoanalysis' from the title of his books on material reverie. He explained this choice in *Waters and Dreams,* where he wrote that his approach was now to 'live them [water images] synthetically in their original complexity' (Bachelard 1983 [1942], p. 7). Since the goal of his books on the imagination was no longer 'to cure' the mind, psychoanalysis, and especially Freudian psychoanalysis, was no longer his method of choice.[6]

Psychoanalysis, which studies dreams, was for him also less suited for his object, namely reveries, that is conscious imagining (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 26). In a process which recalls his own 'philosophy of no' (Bachelard 1968 [1940]); (Bachelard 1984 [1934]), Bachelard said 'no' to psychoanalysis, and adopted a new approach that in fact dialectically incorporated psychoanalysis. Indeed, in his works on the imagination, and the study of space in particular, psychoanalysis is still present, but more as a source of images and suggestions than as a method. In his study of space, Bachelard repeatedly mentioned Jung. Jung could be suitable to Bachelard's project in various ways, first of all for his rejection of Freud's 'rationalistic materialism' (Jung 1928, p. 151). Bachelard, author of a book titled *Rational Materialism* (Bachelard 1972 [1953]), reserved the 'rational materialistic' approach for the life of the scientific mind, whereas he aimed to study images, including our images of space, in an immediate, non-normative and subjective manner.

Bachelard also employed the Jungian concept of archetype. This, however, should not be taken as a full acceptance of the Jungian theory of archetypes. Bachelard believed that there is a 'primitive' and imaginative self that, unlike reason, does not evolve, and therefore is similar in people of all times. However, he never suggested that archetypes could be acquired and then inherited. Moreover, although he linked images to archetypes, he warned his reader that there is no causal relation between an image and an archetype (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xvi). More to the point, Bachelard

[6] Bachelard's use of psychoanalysis was rather eclectic from the beginning: he variously employed Freud and Jung and above all Marie Bonaparte and René Allendy.

had no theory; he rather observed that such images as the house would elicit the same set of emotions and reveries in a number of disparate authors. Another important set of concepts that Bachelard received from Jung is that of *animus* and *anima.* These were very fitting for his own dualism of the active rational life and of the imaginative life. However, the way in which he borrowed them also shows that his aims were quite different from analytical psychology or any other fully developed theory of the psyche. He realised that Jung's *animus* and *anima* would be received by his readers as sexist; he must have read Jung's pronouncements, such as 'a man should live as a man and a woman as a woman. The part belonging to the opposite sex is always in the dangerous neighbourhood of the unconscious' (Jung 1928, p. 170). Bachelard certainly had many normative ideas about how to live together in his rationalistic books. However, in his books on the works of the imagination he did not want to tell anyone how they should live their diurnal life. Indeed, as the father of a female philosopher who had published books on rationality and on Husserl, he may have found it difficult to accept that 'a woman would find it boring if her husband examined her on the *Critique of Pure Reason*', as Jung had remarked (Jung 1928, p. 177). Bachelard therefore made it clear that 'in trying to indicate… how the masculine and the feminine – especially the feminine – help fashion our reveries, we are limiting our observations only to 'oneiric situations'. As for 'the woman's situation in the modern world', he left it to 'experts' Simone de Beauvoir and F. J. J. Buytendijk. How little Bachelard was concerned with evaluating male and female psychology outside his own reverie is apparent by his lumping together the author of *The Second Sex* with an author whose aim was to show that 'there is an 'essential' difference between men and women, a difference in nature, capabilities, inborn qualities, abilities, talents and character, and *therefore* a difference in vocation, mission and destiny' (Buytendijk 1968, p. 26).

It is crucial to take Bachelard seriously when he tells us that we should read his books on reverie in *anima*, because they have been written in *anima* (Bachelard 1971 [1960]. p. 212). Reading in *anima* for Bachelard means to suspend critical engagement, and to receive images 'in a sort of transcendental acceptance of gifts' (Bachelard 1971 [1960], p. 65). Bachelard's topoanalysis, that is his exploration of dreamed spaces and spaces where to dream, is not a method in the strict sense of the world, and I agree with E. S. Casey who calls it as 'less a method than an attitude' (Casey 1997, p. 288). Not by chance, Bachelard's chapter of *The Poetics of Reverie* dedicated to *animus* and *anima* is about 'Reverie on reverie': he invited us to read his lines as we read poetry rather than rationalist philosophy.

In the last years of his life, Bachelard gave up his 'former obsession with psychoanalytical culture' (Bachelard 1971 [1960], p. 3), and adopted a new approach that he called 'phenomenology', which he defined as the 'consideration of the *onset of the image* in an individual consciousness' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xix). When reading descriptions of places, such as a house, a nest or a corner,

Bachelard was no longer interested in the causal link that they may have with their authors' psyches or lives. This marked a sharp departure from the method he had employed in *Lautréamont*, where he reconstructed the poet's biography and complexes from an analysis of his work (Bachelard 1986 [1939]). Similarly, he was not interested in these images' cultural past or historical setting; 'no scholarship' is needed for their reception, but rather a 'naïve consciousness' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xix). Like Husserl's, Bachelard's phenomenology is descriptive rather than normative, and is carried out by the individual. However, Bachelard's phenomenology is neither a method nor a science, unlike Husserl's presentation of his phenomenology in his *Cartesian Meditation* (Husserl 1960 [1931]). As Paul Ricoeur has emphasised, for Bachelard there was no crisis of the sciences, as there was for Husserl, because for the former 'crises take place entirely within objectivity… and can be resolved only through the progress of science' (Ricoeur 2007, pp. 161-62) (Husserl 1970 [1936]). For Bachelard, the sciences and rationalistic philosophy set the norms for our objective knowledge and our collective living, whereas his phenomenology and hermeneutics describe the personal experiences that we have when we withdraw into ourselves and let free our poetic and primitive self. Unlike Husserl, Bachelard never thought of phenomenology as a philosophical science that could be applied to the whole of human existence, nor did he think that it could 'clarify all species and forms of cognition' (Wrathall and Dreyfus 2006). Bachelard's is a 'phenomenology of the soul' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xx), as opposed to the mind; he explained that 'a consciousness associated with the soul is more relaxed, less intentionalized than a consciousness associated with the phenomena of the mind. Forces are manifested in poems that do not pass through the circuits of knowledge' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xxi). Objective knowledge, which for him is always discursive, is the domain of science. His phenomenology of the soul is an immediate activity, which does not aim to produce a theory of knowledge, nor literary criticism. In fact, in his study of space, he wrote that he had to forget his learning, and that 'nothing general and co-ordinated [can] serve as a basis for a philosophy of poetry' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xv).

Bachelard's reference for his phenomenology was Eugene Minkowki's *Vers une cosmologie*. In this rather peculiar study, phenomenology, psychopathology, and the philosophies of Louis Lavelle and Henri Bergson support 'a voyage' in the author's 'consciousness' which merges with 'the idea of a voyage around the universe' (Minkowski 1999, p. 13). What in particular Bachelard took from Minkowski is a less defined, and in his eyes richer, relationship between the subject and poetic images. Minkowski called this relation 'reverberation' [*retentissement*], as it avoids causality and undue generalisations. Bachelard was attracted by the dynamic and consciously imprecise character of the concept of reverberation, which suggests a relationship between the subject and the world that is 'more primitive' than their mutual opposition, as Minkowski writes (Minkowski 1999, p. 106).

Bachelard's hermeneutics of place may recall Martin Heidegger's hermeneutics in several ways. In particular, Bachelard's presented our relationship with space as pre-scientific and indeed pre-reflective, and in this it recalls Heidegger's presentation of how the *Dasein* inhabits the world. Moreover, when Bachelard wrote that he planned to study images' 'direct ontology' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xvi), he did not refer to any theory of being. His ability to understand the being of images of space is rather close to Heidegger's assertion that the *Dasein* is ontological not in the sense of having a theory of being, but rather in the sense that the *Dasein* is 'in such a way that [it] has an understanding of Being' (Heidegger 1962 [1927], p. 32). However, one of the many differences between Bachelard's and Heidegger's hermeneutics is that in the former's time is irrelevant. Time for Bachelard is the dimension of science, and does not play a role, indeed is negated, in his exploration of our pre-discursive relationships with images, including images of space. Bachelard's rejection of time makes his hermeneutics equally distant from Ricoeur's, in which the '"lived experience" of phenomenology corresponds, on the side of hermeneutics, to consciousness exposed to historical efficacy' (Ricoeur 1976, pp. 116-7). More importantly, Bachelard's hermeneutics is a far more modest enterprise than Heidegger's or Ricoeur's; it is not aimed at any comprehensive theory of being and it is only half of his philosophy: he may talk about ontology in discussing images of space, but he also discussed ontology and indeed ontogenesis when analysing scientific discourse. In *The Poetics of Reverie*, published only two years before his death, he emphasised that *anima* is not the whole of life, and expressed the wish to write another work of *animus*, that is a work of philosophy of science (Bachelard 1971 [1960], p. 212). His hermeneutics of space is about the imagination and dreams; but these make up only half of human existence. As I shall argue in the Conclusion, he aimed to put forward a pedagogy for the nocturnal man, just as he had done for the diurnal man in his books about science.

Conclusion

Bachelard's hermeneutics of place offers the reader an exploration of our relationship to those spaces that are meaningful to us. These spaces are dreamed spaces that feed off and recreate the places of our lives; first of all the house of our birth, which we re-live in the oneiric house. The latter in turn re-shapes and loads with new meanings our birthplace. Bachelard employed elements of psychology, psychoanalysis and phenomenology in order to produce a 'topography of our intimate being' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xxxvi), which is by no means aimed at an objective description. He made his renunciation of a structured method in his approach to space even clearer when he suggested that his topoanalysis is in fact topophilia (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xxv, 149).

His hermeneutics of space is about intimacy and solitude; this in his anthropology means that it applies to half of human life, the solitary part dedicated to rest, poetry and reverie, and opposed to

rational activities, science and objective thought. These two halves correspond to the two philosophies that Bachelard developed in his life: a rationalistic philosophy of science, and an imaginative philosophy of reverie and poetry. These two philosophies are opposed as to contents, methods, and the parts of the mind that they engage. They are also opposed with regard to the conditions in which they are carried out: one only in a dialectic exchange with other people, and the other in solitude. Time is central to the philosophy of science, which describes and explains the discontinuous progress of science. By contrast, time is absent from Bachelard's philosophy of the imagination, including his hermeneutics of space, in two distinct ways. The first is that for him the imaginative part of our mind is our 'primitive self' which does not undergo the changes that reason does. Second, the contents of reveries and poetry that Bachelard presented do not exhibit narratives; he studied autonomous images, considered in their singularity. Both views are debatable. He did not offer an explanation for the supposed lack of narratives of our imaginings, because he presented it in works in which he adopted a non-rationalistic approach that does not require justifications.

It is tempting to find a symmetry between Bachelard's philosophy of science, in which time is central, and his philosophy of the reverie in which space is important. This could suggest that Bachelard substituted time with space in his hermeneutics, and in so doing he distinguished it from Heidegger's and Ricoeur's.[7] However tempting and tidy this symmetry is, really it is stretched. I have already hinted at the great differences that separate Bachelard's project from Heidegger's and Ricoeur's. Bachelard's project was not only far more modest, but also partial, in the sense of only being half of his philosophy. More to the point, Bachelard investigated places as he did other images. He developed his thought about the house of one's birth and the oneiric house, the cave and labyrinth as part of his philosophy of the imagination of matter, alongside for instance the image of the snake and the root (Bachelard 1992 [1948]). Places are a central part of Bachelard's study of images but on his part there is no attempt to use space as the key-stone of a system or theory. In the English-speaking world *The Poetics of Space* was translated early (1964), while some of Bachelard's books have been translated into English more recently or are yet to be translated. As a result, his analysis of space has mainly been read out of context, as a stand-alone philosophy, rather than as part of a much larger project.

If he did not aim to present the reader with a theory, or a philosophy of space, what was the aim of his topoanalysis? Just as his philosophy of science, his study of the works of the imagination,

[7] See for instance (Kennedy 2011).

including his topoanalysis, was pedagogical.[8] Bachelard wanted to teach us how to live well; in his words, 'there is no well-being without reverie' (Bachelard 1971 [1960], pp. 152-3). His 'project' was to 'live *as* the great dreamers of images lived before him' (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. 117): reading about dreamed spaces would enable the reader to have better and richer reveries. The 'therapeutic' approach that he had renounced came back in another form. The aim was no longer to 'cure the mind of his happy illusions' but rather to teach the mind how to dream well. His concerns were 'wellbeing' (Bachelard 1971 [1960], p. 152-3), 'tranquillity' (Bachelard 1971 [1960], p. 173), and seizing the 'felicity of speech' offered by the poet (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xxx). His topoanalysis concerns 'simple images of *felicitous space'* (Bachelard 1994 [1957], p. xxxv). Many of his readers have received his work as a guide to wellbeing and indeed happiness. Bachelard has been seen as a teacher of 'the art of solitude' (Mettra 1983, p. 107), and offering 'repose', the 'happy origin' of which is reverie (Laurans 1983, p. 155). His was a pedagogy of reverie, which was successful with some of his readers, such as the poet Jean Lescure who wrote that Bachelard had taught him how to be happy (Lescure 1983, p. 11).

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[8] For my interpretation of Bachelard's philosophy of science as a pedagogical project, see (Chimisso 2001). For a defence of the enduring pedagogical value of Bachelard's philosophy, see (Favre 1995).

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