

The position toward I tentatively want to move needs as it were a few presuppositions, namely, first, that for a political body to come into existence the power of a legitimate and recognized authority still seems to be required: a more or less imaginative figure incorporating a foundational beginning exercising an enforcing act of creating some polis (*creatio ex nihilo*). A performance to be thought of as at least interdependent on the imagination of oracle animation, mythic stories, founding fathers/mothers, etc. I tend to think of such a figure as an replicant of the archaic “artificial soul” that was assumed to giving life and motion to a body politic (Hobbes), in Walter Benjamin’s conception endowed with “mythic violence” and in Donna Haraway’s immemorial words “the god-trick”. An imaginative performance acted out by whatever gender with a certain élan and and the (t)ruce of a determinative goal or end (*telos*), namely to govern any body politic in peace and security which, in order to be a manageable, should be pointed out as a calculable idea for all citizens within a thinglike body as a sovereign nation state.

Obviously, within the limits and at the borders of such a political body, that is, within and without the frame of a modern state, its force of law is at work. Founded on a “imaginative act”, and at work within and beyond the confines of this “imageless imagination” of body politics, the law of such an institutional construct is exercised in its typical logocentric, calculative way.¹ So, as an additional condition of possibility, in order to any authority to be exercised as force of law within any state-like frame, the foundational power of Bachelardian vertical imagination should be presupposed as an indispensable force with possibly innumerable revitalizing tonic effects.

Thirdly, following Bachelard, “a stable and completely realized image clips the wings of the imagination”, so the powers, guided by and following the vertically ruling dynamics of the Bachelardian imagination, cannot be totalized (not completely calculable) and cannot be absolutely confined.² Hence, at the same time, as an indeterminable force of deconstruction, marginally overflowing imagination should be regarded as affecting, feeding, fueling, (full)filling any body politic, perhaps even both vertically and horizontally, inspiring to operate at its capitalized maximum, and across and beyond its borders (its future — its potentially panoptic dream of omnipotence). The supposedly archaic, mythic and modern vertically empowering legality of the imagination does allow in pain, and only painstakingly, defects, deflections and infections of its limits (“wild-fire”), working on and at its borders not only as maroons or refugees — a border art of the imagi-nation that does its workings inside-out and outside-in, beyond and in between the machineries of nation-states. Nalo Hopkinson’s story about the “glass wind (...) out of the deadlands” (‘Under Glass’) makes clear that not only pleasure is in the air. Establishing an imago (image) of a stable and total status, not only moloch-states such as the US, China, Russia require the impetuses of repression, hence perhaps inevitably they repress and produce effects such as Pussy Riot and “Adivasi dancing and singing”.³

¹ Gaston Bachelard, *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, The Dallas Institute Publications 1988, Second Printing 2002, 2.

² Bachelard, *ibidem*.

³ Mahasweta Devi, *Imaginary Maps*, translated and introduced by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Routledge 1995, 107.

Moreover, acts of art and religion (what is the difference?), briefly, imaginative research and artistic experiments, in order to be able to perform as thoroughly situated, as make-believe creative practices of justice, must be regarded as sufficiently instituted but not necessarily conditioned and managed by the desire of invincibility or victory of logocentric state-power. That calls for deconstruction to happen and to see that the inherited Platonic-Kantian hierarchy of the repressive top-down order of reason, understanding and imagination, should at least be regarded as reversible and indeed as porous. Bachelard questionably emphasizes however that “verticality” is a “destiny” compulsively desiring “victory”.⁴ Along with the change and dissemination of the instituted and transcendental subject of authority, the practice of artistic invention, even in its status of autonomous and free sovereignty with her/his performative exercises of the imagination, cannot any longer be regarded as a sheer counterforce of subordinating ruling authority neither as a tool propagating policies/lies of the calculative state-power of understanding and law. Presupposing that artistic invention cannot (any longer) be recognized as an instrument directed by a “truly vital telos”.⁵ For deconstruction to happen, some ear and eye for the other and otherness, other than the rule of law, is in an absolute sense imperative, and impossible (“Puran realizes what an impossible (for him) thing he has done”⁶).

In addition, modern legislation should be understood as a fabric of fiction, artificiality, inventiveness, etc. maintained by artificial sovereigns with imaginative power, criticizing and imagining change for the better, possibly oriented to a “metropolis” or a cosmopolis, but such a polis can only be understood as an impossible “telos”.⁷ Against the background of colonial ages the flight, dive and air of vertical dreams of empire find their repercussive vision in Silky’s after-image of colonial doubloons nailed to a mahogany table sinking for ever: “She could see Morgan clinging stubbornly to the Golden Table, refusing to relinquish all that gold.” (in: Nola Hopkinson, *Money Tree*).

The teleological language of Bachelard even fits well with the post-colonial “dialectical play of vertigo and victory” exposed in the rhetoric of Eurovision Song Contest 2022.⁸ Russia was (of course) categorically banned and it was more than obvious for Ukraine to “win” (often suggestively, mistakenly, at least prematurely, if not demagogically, referred to as “victory”). During the contest the artist representing Great-Britain, Sam Ryder, as a classical artist, explores with succes Bachelardian vertical metaphors of “air” and “gravity” propagating successfully an optimistic attitude in times of Covid-Brexit-depression. After counting all the votes, when Ukraine’s ‘victory’ finally turned out to have become a fact, President Zelensky invited Eurovision in the Ukraine in 2023.

Forces of law and order, instituted as modern art practices, have to face more than ever that “justice is an experience of the impossible”.⁹ To make aporetic experiences happen, indeed to make experiences of the impossible possible (as improbable and unbelievable and necessary),

⁴ Bachelard, *ibidem*, 57.

⁵ Bachelard, *ibidem*, 3.

⁶ Devi, *idem*, 177.

⁷ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*, Harvard University Press 2013, 203.

⁸ Bachelard, *ibidem*, 15.

⁹ Jacques Derrida, ‘Force of Law’, in: *Acts of Religion*, Routledge 2002, 240, 244.

imagination and propaganda art in particular have to be understood as daily political practices and exercises of constructing and amending law, as exercises of imagination that enlighten and deconstruct possible and plausible “emancipatory models of propaganda art”.¹⁰ Legitimate performatives, enticing invitations of hospitality, acts of justice and democracy to come, presuppose and require not only vertical imagination. Bachelard does the necessary argumentative efforts to make believe that, after the imageless ideas of “eternal peace” (Kant) and “eternal justice” (Hegel), the notion of “eternal return” (Nietzsche) should not be regarded as a static condition. His dreaming time, however, still sticks to the idea of a teleological (“rocking”) movement focussed on a particular end, goal and place: “a journey to the land of the infinite”.¹¹ No matter how paradoxical such a state is, Bachelardian Platonism of “vertical imagination” (63, 93), as “a unifying force” (152) can still have its special monomaniac escapist liberal effects in the regions where reception aesthetics (judgments of taste) rules.¹² It is not really necessary to shrivel all petty aesthetic collectors desires mostly related to the art market, yet creative performativity, as an art practice, can and rather should be done and understood much better, that is, more adequately conform ‘aesthetic education in the era of globalization’, as perpetual disseminations of legal force (force de loi) that give space to, if not perform, actions, in order to break closure, change repression and exploitation, taking care of neuroses, etc., and thus to let improbable effects of recognition happen as calls for justice to come, that is, to make other than phallic desires possible, say erratic and seductive pleasures/treasures that become more probable in facing that “the way to reach them is so inaccessible”.¹³

¹⁰ Jonas Staal, Propaganda Art From the 20th to the 21st Century, Leiden University 2018.

¹¹ Bachelard, 5.

¹² Platonism formulated as “a real verticality. This verticality is no empty metaphor; it is a principle of order, a law governing filiation...”. Bachelard, 10

¹³ Mahasweta Devi, idem, 110.