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Retelling Michel de Certeau

Fabio B. Josgrilberg

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Communication Studies

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for the Degree of Master of Arts at

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ABSTRACT

Retelling Michel de Certeau

Fabio B. Josgrilberg

This study is a theoretical exploration of Michel de Certeau's theories. The emphasis is placed on his notion of "tactics". Some of the issues to be addressed are: the tension existent in every social organization in terms of controlled "places" and dynamic "spaces", and the theorization of the figure of the "addressee" which, as this study argues, is a central and complementary step to de Certeau's ideas. The conclusion suggests an alternative reading of the notion of "tactics" supported by concepts developed by rhetorical theory.

To Rui and Tereza Josgrilberg.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Cultural Studies, the relationships between power and resistance, producers and consumers, media and audience and similar issues are always a fascinating and seemingly endless topic. The vocabulary around the issue varies greatly. For instance, one can talk in terms of addresser/addressee, producer/consumer or speaker/audience. Each vocabulary will offer different theoretical consequences. One of the central questions concerning such relations is the capacity of power to organize or control a society. A number of issues can follow these concerns such as the power relations involved in the production/consumption of such discourses, the techniques used to organize them, their efficacy in organizing society, the possibility of agency, the possibility of undermining such discourses and many other issues. All these issues are at stake in this thesis. Such questions will be addressed through the analysis of the status of Michel de Certeau's notion of tactics.

Why is it important to focus on the specific idea of "tactics" as it appears in de Certeau? The notion became somewhat popular in Cultural Studies to describe resistance against operations that aim to control and organize social space. In the anglophone world, the way de Certeau uses this concept is especially known due to his article "Walking in the City," which appears in the English translation of *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire* (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, 1984), and also was published in *The Cultural Studies Reader* (1993; 1995). In the

latter, de Certeau's piece is described by the editor, Simon During, as being marvelous, remarkable and "very influential in recent cultural studies just because it works both as an imaginative essay and as a piece of technical semiotic analysis" (During 1995, 25, 151). Notwithstanding exaggeration of the editor, it is reasonable to say that de Certeau has had some impact on the field. Nevertheless, this thesis does not turn to his theories because of their possible popularity. Rather, what moves this enterprise is the intention of offering a reading of de Certeau that concentrates on the performative use of language. To have the emphasis placed on language is important because to understand the notion of "tactics" within the limits and possibilities of language is to offer a good starting point to think about resistance or agency. Nonetheless, the notion of "tactics" does not offer an agenda, nor a recipe for revolution. Rather, "tactics" point to possibilities that are continuously opened and often escape theoretical discourse.

One can think of de Certeau's notion of "tactics" as a series of procedures that use and re-use the references of a "proper place" (a space that is controlled by a set of operations founded upon will and upon an uneven set of power relations). The metaphor for such procedures, as de Certeau suggests, is the utilization of tropes within a given language (de Certeau 1990, 64). As such, "tactics" organize a new "space," which is a "practiced place;" they imply a movement that escapes the power operations that attempts to control social space or, following the metaphor, a given language. According to the author, tactical operations are also correlative to enunciative processes. He argues that received meanings, for instance, are subjected to different uses according to different situations. What is at stake is a plurality of points of references that will interfere in a specific use. Different uses will create a proliferation of meanings, a poetics, which is the anti-discipline stressed by de Certeau. Therefore, there is a fissure

between the power that imposes a language and the use of such a language. However, the use of a language is not simply a free act. Rather, it involves the tension between what is received as admissible and the act of using it.

Are "tactics" as powerful as de Certeau portrays them? Criticism of de Certeau has not been very extensive. Perhaps such an absence indicates that de Certeau's theories are less popular than may appear to his sympathizers. If this is the case, this thesis is an attempt to promote the author's ideas. Conversely, criticism may be scarce due to the strength of his arguments. As for the more positive responses, it is necessary to highlight some aspects of these arguments. For example, at times, the supposed optimism attributed to de Certeau may be the result of a specific reading of the author's ideas, which this paper would like to question. Tactics, as a series of procedures undermining a place, may turn out to be a populist argument, where everything which is produced is consumed by an unaffected consumer who follows his or her own rules. The prompt and positive response to de Certeau's theories may also be the effect of a need to overcome a "hangover" caused by Foucault and postmodernism or, more accurately, some interpretations that followed them; interpretations that, in fact, have left very little or no space for agency.

Contrary to such apparent optimism, some criticism aims exactly at de Certeau's "anti-disciplinary" theory. At this point, then, some questions concerning his theories will be presented to introduce problems that we will be dealing with. Later, in the chapter "Practicing a Place," such questions will be addressed more attentively. The first question to be presented here is raised by John Frow (1991). As he suggests, are not tactics related to a system of discourses (Frow 1991, 59)? In other words, are not tactics also organized by the texts produced and controlled by a society? Do they not end up being recaptured or absorbed by hegemonic discourse? This suggestion may

appear reasonable if one considers that de Certeau argues that tactics do not have their own space; that they operate in the space of the other, the place, *le lieu* (de Certeau 1990, 60-1). Such absence of power or of space is also at stake in a question raised by Morris (1990). If tactics, as de Certeau observes, cannot retain what they conquer (de Certeau 1990, XLVI), should one then not be suspicious of this category which does not take the other (who is in a weaker position) anywhere (Morris 1990, 36)?

This pessimism may not be fully justified. In respect to Frow – who argues that the absence of text in the procedures described by de Certeau will end up being reconstructed by the analyst as an object (Frow 1991, 59) – Schirato argues that the former is influenced by the scientificity that de Certeau criticizes (Schirato 1993, 289). To put it differently, Frow's objection appears to be that because the procedures de Certeau describes cannot be identified theoretically, they lose their efficacy. Nevertheless, it is curious to notice that Frow does touch upon a central issue that allows tactics to operate. He recognizes, but appears not to accept it, that tactics profit from the "death" that haunts scientific discourse or any other hegemonic discourse. As he writes "it is the possibility of indeterminacy [author's emphasis], in the long run, that offers the best chance of popular resistance to technocratic rationality" (Frow 1991, 56). Frow is right, but it seems that this is not the whole answer. As this thesis wants to suggest, one needs to consider the performative use of language as key to understand the notion of tactics. In this sense, performative should be understood as a creative and productive use of language. Such a use is possible because of, among other factors, a dissociation between the terms of language and their referents.

Meaghan Morris – who in general has a more sympathetic position towards de Certeau – bases her critique in the division between place

and space, strategies and tactics. As she writes, "polarities (elite/popular, special/general, singular/ "banal") mark not only the semantic organization of de Certeau's work but the narrative thrust of his text (Morris 1990, 37). However, such divisions, as Buchanan observes (Buchanan 1993), may be seen in a different way. Rather than opposites, such distinctions should be read as being part of one single process: the attempt of a society to organize itself.

In addition, Certeau's critique of theoretical discourse appears to create some uneasiness for Morris. As she writes,

The immediate practical disadvantage of this construction of analysis is to reinscribe alienation [author's emphasis] from everyday life as a constitutive rather than contingent feature of the scholar's enunciative place (Morris 1990, 37)

Perhaps, de Certeau's observations do not point to a constitutive alienation. Rather, the author calls attention to the necessity of considering the limits and possibilities of language; limits and possibilities that are not restricted to everyday uses of language but also affect theoretical discourse. In fact, theoretical discourse and the everyday life practices are founded in one common ground: ordinary language (de Certeau 1990, 13).

Jacques Caroux also indicates a possible blindspot in de Certeau's theorization of everyday practices. He argues that de Certeau does not pay enough attention to the fact that the disciplinary apparatus may be pushing, or has pushed, the anti-disciplinary practices to a private realm; an anti-discipline does exist, but has very little influence in the public realm. He also adds that it is necessary to think about an anti-discipline in a strategic mode (Caroux 1982, 151). Caroux does not dismiss de Certeau's analysis, whose works he considers an excellent theoretical and methodological tool to analyze what the former calls "pratiques informelles de résistance" (Caroux 1982, 149). However, Caroux writes that "il reste à expliquer pourquoi, avec les bandes, la

'perruque', la solidarité [created around such practices] cotoie l'illégalité" (Ibid., 147).

Caroux's observations are subtle and need further analysis. Nevertheless, for the sake of this introduction, it is sufficient to say that there is a difference between opening new possibilities and a radical reorganization of the disciplinary apparatus. In addition, to assume that tactical procedures have an informal, and possibly, a private character is perhaps to think in terms of the division between place and space - or to have a clear distinction between the public and the private sphere. Yet, power and subjects depend on each other. For instance, if subjects are escaping the sphere of power, if they are at the edge of illegality, it may be the case that the organization of power will, one way or another, be re-organized in order to keep its efficacy.

If a division between place and space may have led some authors to criticize de Certeau, ironically such division may also lead to an optimistic - perhaps too optimistic - approach such as Fiske's (1988). Among other considerations, Fiske argues that tactical procedures can oppose or exploit the system without necessarily confronting it and, yet, that they can never be defeated (Fiske, 1988, 298). The author's argument, following his reading of de Certeau, is that "everyday life" implies a change of practices in relation to what people receive and what they do with it. In his words:

This change of relationship to the text when its moment of power is not its strategic original production, but the tactical reproductions from its resources, is accompanied by a change of relationship to language itself, a change from the scriptural to the spoken, from the *énoncé* to the *énonciation*, from *langue* to *parole* (Fiske 1988, 301)

The relation between place and space here finds its correlative in the pairs scriptural/spoken, *langue/parole* and *énoncé/énonciation*. Fiske's

optimism could be thought differently if it is taken into account that the spoken exists only within the scriptural or that *langue* and *parole*, or *énoncé* and *énonciation* must be thought of together. If, on one side, language allows for different uses, it also constrains these uses. For instance, a focus on *langue* will result in a more stable use of meanings, whereas a focus on *parole* may open up new possibilities. However, in de Certeau, such a division does not exist. *Langue* and *parole* must be thought of together. This is one of the reasons why language offers at the same time limits and possibilities. All these criticism towards de Certeau will be dealt with later in this thesis. The intention of introducing Frow's, Morris', Caroulx' and Fiske's analyses at this point seeks to present some of the issues that are at stake in this text.

In addition to the questions already raised above, I would like to add some of my own. De Certeau's theorization of tactics concerns essentially language. Most of the terms he uses as correlatives to tactics have a linguistic origin, such as "tropes" and "enunciation". Even when the issue at stake is walking on the street or cooking, the authors use a linguistic metaphor to describe such practices. Such practices can be brought together in a discussion of language if language is considered one of the determinant factors in the perception of reality and, therefore, in the performance of such practices. Thus, de Certeau metaphorically employs concepts such as fiction, stories and rhetoric that are based in language. The importance of language in his work is also clear if one looks at some of the main influences in de Certeau's theorization of tactics: Ludiwig Wittgenstein, Sigmund Freud, and authors related to the development of the mystical thought¹.

If we consider that de Certeau's theories are concerned with

¹ As de Certeau explains, "Il faut préciser que , dans le vocabulaire du temps [the time of the mystics], 'mystique', désigne essentiellement un

language, and that there are no categorical divisions between place and space, *énoncé* and *énonciation*, or *langue* and *parole* (points that will be argued for in the following two chapters), one can extend de Certeau's arguments. The fundamental question that will be considered here concerns the function of the addressee or the interlocutor in de Certeau's theory. If de Certeau is right in describing the enunciative process as correlative to tactical procedures (de Certeau 1990, 56-7), what is the function and the status of the addressee, which any enunciative act implies? To what extent is the addressee important to the efficacy of tactical procedures? The question of the addressee may be an important factor to think about when addressing the notions of tactics, although de Certeau pays little attention to its function. In the analysis of the function of the addressee dwells an important aspect for understanding how tactical interventions may succeed, backfire or occur without the tactician's acknowledgement. Yet, such an analysis may help to understand how tactical operations may lead to other forms of organization, marginalities and solidaridarities.

The analysis presented here will profit from some ideas developed by the North American School of Rhetoric. This option implies that I will be re-telling de Certeau from a different place, or from my place and the way Certeau and Rhetoric have reached me. But, then, one should ask, why is Rhetoric the chosen partner to perform this enterprise? The reading that is presented here will argue that de Certeau's notions of tactics, strategies, places, spaces point to a social tension of a society trying to organize itself. Understood in this sense, the suggestion will be to try to think of de Certeau's metaphors as part of different arguments where the referent of the object discussed is absent. This kind of dispute is in the realm of Rhetoric.

In fact, Certeau's proximity to Rhetoric can be identified in the

traitment du langage" (de Certeau 1982, 29).

author's own texts. For instance, tactics is by no means an expression original to de Certeau's work. In the military and political vocabulary tactics often account for two basic problems: (1) *How* to do the right thing, and (2) *when* to do the right thing (*kairos*). In addition, the concept implies the articulation of an intention to the dangers involved in taking a specific action in a battlefield. Similarly, in Rhetoric, the notion of tactics also refers to the aforementioned "when" and "how" questions and also to the possibility of making the best possible decision according to any given situation (the contingent). In de Certeau, in a general manner, tactics relate to the operations that escape and undermine a place (e.g. hegemonic discourses). Rather than sym-bolic, tactics are di-abolic. In a way, all three descriptions of tactics relate to a common problematic, that is, the possibility of acting within given conditions - the battlefield, the contingent or within hegemonic discourses.

The proximity of de Certeau's work to Rhetoric is not only in their common vocabulary. De Certeau himself identifies Rhetoric as one of the theories that would better describe the function of tactics (de Certeau 1990, 63). As he suggests,

Alors que la grammaire surveille la 'propriété'
des termes, les altérations rhétoriques
[tropes] . . . signalent l'utilisation de
langue par des locuteurs dans les situations
particulières de combats linguistique rituels
ou effectifs (de Certeau 1990, 64)

In short, both Rhetoric and tactics refer to a common issue: uses (of a language). It is this hint left by de Certeau (the correlation between tactics and tropes) that leaves the door open to advance his argument and to question the function of the addressee, as was suggested earlier.

A closer look at the classical definition of Rhetoric may be useful to start understanding how such a task can be performed. According to Aristotle, rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic, for both are not restricted to any science and are known, consciously or

not, by all men (*sic*). The Greek philosopher also states that rhetoric can be reduced to an art, a system, as one can analyze why one succeeds or not in proving an argument (*Rhet.*, i. 1,1). An art, Aristotle explains, is not intended for specific individuals but, rather, for groups of people (*Rhet.*, i. 2,11). The purpose of the rhetorical art is not persuasion itself, but is to find the means of persuasion in each particular case (*Rhet.*, i. 2,1). In addition, it is important to note that rhetoric is always addressed to a potential judge of one's speech. Yet, this art is not intrinsically good or evil - it is "transideological", to borrow an expression from Linda Hutcheon (1995).

To sustain her or his argument, the rhetorician makes use, among other strategies, of proofs. Proofs can be inartificial (contracts, witnesses, etc.) or artificial. Artificial proofs are "invented", for instance, when one uses a metaphor (*Rhet.*, i. 2,1). Among the different kinds of Rhetoric, Aristotle gives special status to the deliberative kind. The deliberative orator is concerned with what is expedient, and what is expedient is good (*Rhet.*, i. 6,1). Good is whatever desirable for its own sake (*Rhet.*, i. 6,1) - happiness, justice, virtue, health, are all examples of what is good.

Already in this traditional description, one can draw some comparisons between de Certeau's ideas and Rhetoric. As a starter, one can look at the very title of the most popular text of de Certeau in the field of cultural studies: *L'invention du quotidien: 1. arts de faire* (1990). Just as the rhetorician "invents" her or his artificial proofs in order to sustain an argument (e.g. using metaphors), people on the street "invent" their ways (the everyday life) by using tropes (tactical procedures) suggested by de Certeau. But, as observed above, rhetoric supposes an addressee, and so does tactics. In this case, who is the tactician's addressee? What is the addressee's importance in the tactical moment? These are some questions that this thesis aims to

answer in order to determine the status of tactics in de Certeau's work.

To conclude this introduction, the goal of this thesis is to analyze the status of tactics in de Certeau's work with the focus on language and with special attention to the function of the addressee. As previously mentioned, this enterprise will be carried out with a rhetorical "eye", and will seek to clarify the limits and usefulness of the notion of tactics². Concerning the organization of the chapters, this text will follow the following strategy: The first two chapters, "Organizing a Place" and "Practicing a Place (Space)" offer a reading of de Certeau. While their focus, respectively, will be on "place" and "space," they each will point to the centrality of the idea of a performative use of language in his work. The chapter "Language and the Space of Tactics" will examine the possible parallels between de Certeau's work and Rhetoric, and develop a detailed analysis of the function of the addressee. The conclusion, "Things to Do with de Certeau," will elaborate upon de Certeau's notion of tactics and develop its pertinence to the concerns of Cultural Studies.

² Indirectly, the approximation of de Certeau and Rhetoric touches also another issue: the continuous marginalisation of Rhetoric within the theoretical fields that deal with culture and society (Charland 1999; Hariman 1986), a marginalisation also noticed by de Certeau (de Certeau 1990: 231-2).

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZING A PLACE

As we saw in the previous chapter, de Certeau differentiates "space" and "place". Here, we will develop the idea of "place". In order to do so, it will be necessary first to see how the author employs this concept in his texts. Then, we will need to review the ideas of Michel Foucault, who probably was de Certeau's most important interlocutor in the discussion of hegemonic discourses. Finally, in order to bring the discussion to a more specific level, we will conclude with the analysis of historiography and of the idea "la culture populaire".

Place and Strategies: a Definition

The differentiation between "space" and "place," as envisioned by de Certeau, became popular in Cultural Studies after the publication of *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire* (1980; 1990) and its translation as *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984). As we shall see, "space" and "place" are not opposites, but two related aspects of a single complex issue: the dynamic organization of a society. In *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire*, de Certeau suggests the notion of "place" (*lieu*) to indicate a *proper space*, where the elements that constitute it are organized in a stable form (de Certeau 1990, 172-3). A "place" arranges its elements in reference to each other. As such, two elements can never be at the same location. As de Certeau writes, "Un lieu (place) est donc une configuration instantanée de positions" (Ibid., 173). Hence, a place, among other things, represents a victory over time (*une configuration instantanée*) and organizes its elements not

considering their movement – e.g. a text.

A place is organized by a series of procedures that the author names "strategies" (de Certeau 1990, 59). By strategies de Certeau means the calculation, the manipulation of power relationships made possible by the isolation – sustained by will and power – of an object (Ibid., 59). According to the author, strategies organize, determine a place that can be administered in relation to an exteriority composed of targets and threats. De Certeau argues that examples of such procedures can be found, for instance, in modern science, politics and military (Ibid., 59). In what concerns strategic procedures, de Certeau identifies one major mode of organization in modern Western society: writing (Ibid., 198). Through writing men and women attempt to organize a society founded in the stability of the text as there is no universal-cosmological Voice that will serve as the basis for such an organization.

The Scripturary Machine

De Certeau ascribes a fundamental role to writing in his theories. Here, that practice will be analyzed in terms of the organization of society in general. Later, writing will be reconsidered with respect to specific examples. According to de Certeau, writing is a modern myth³. In the Western world, what once was regulated by a mythical discourse has become regulated by the mythical practice of writing (de Certeau 1990, 198). In addition, writing as an organizing practice became a self-regulating machine (Ibid., 201), much in the way that Foucault describes his disciplinary apparatus as being a power that cannot be possessed but that exercises itself.

The development of the scripturary machine is articulated over what

³ By myth, de Certeau implies "un discours fragmenté qui s'articule sur les pratiques hétérogènes d'une société et qui les articulent

de Certeau calls "la perte de la Parole" (Ibid., 203). Otherwise put, the mythical (cosmological) discourse that organized society cannot be heard anymore. "La perte de Parole" implies an uncertainty in which the authorities organizing society become problematic: Who is speaking? Who is speaking in the name of whom? Who can speak? In this situation of indeterminacy a constant departure, an endless practice is necessary as modern society attempts to redefine itself without "la Parole". From this point on, "être se mesure au faire," writes de Certeau (Ibid., 203).

What does writing consist of? For de Certeau writing is "l'activité concrète qui consiste sur un espace propre, la page, à construire un texte qui a pouvoir sur l'extériorité dont il a d'abord été isolé" (Ibid., 199). In this performance, the author distinguishes three main elements: a blank page, a text and the movement (strategic) towards the change of the social reality from which it stems (Ibid., 199-200). From this basic definition of writing, de Certeau draws most of his analogies concerning the organization of a place (from descriptions of the savage in Montagne's texts, to his analysis of history, to the organization of academic disciplines, to the social text in general through its various instances, etc.). Writing renders stable – in terms of time, position, etc. – the dynamic organization of a society; it renders readable the object of history that disappeared and left only traces of what it once was.

With writing (a mythical practice of a society trying to organize itself) the Logos of a society is incarnated and its subjects are inserted within a text (Ibid., 206). De Certeau makes an analogy between the body and the book to illustrate this point. The law made flesh by writing is written on the body; it places the body, it calls the body, it marks the body. Here, there is a paradox: the body called goes

symboliquement" (de Certeau 1990, 198).

through a feeling of pain and pleasure. There is the pleasure of being called and, therefore, recognized: "Donne-moi ton corps et je te donne sens, je te fait nom et mot de mon discours," says the law (Ibid., 219). But such inscription also implies pain, as the body opposes the law. The final boundary of this opposition would be the scream. For de Certeau, the scream is perhaps the only expression that is not collected by the institution (Ibid., 219).

The last manifestation of the body's opposition to the law (the scream, the body in pain) is a particularly interesting observation made by de Certeau. Here, de Certeau's pessimism, or rather, his temperance is evident as he does not deny that a myriad of operations seek to control the body. In addition, the particular reference to the scream brings him very close to Foucault's analysis. The argument of the latter is that in this moment of incompatibility between the body and the disciplinary apparatus, the apparatus will adapt to the conditions of the body; that is, the body will show the conditions for the apparatus to function.

Concerning the organization of modern society, not only can the Parole (a universal organizational principle) not be heard, but also the organizing text produced by the scripturary machine has lost its credibility (Ibid., 223). The Speaker does not speak anymore, and writing does not organize anymore: "A cette écriture [that aims to speak in the name of the real], cadavre exquis, ne s'attache plus aucun respect" (Ibid., 223). If writing had for a period of time worked as an organizing principle speaking in the name of the "real", the "mise en nu" of writing procedures reveals a loss of credibility. Nevertheless, the loss of credibility of writing does not imply that writing is no longer a strategic procedure organizing a place. Writing does not cease to be a necessary practice, even given its limits in representing the real.

In his text "L'innommable: mourir" (Ibid., 276), de Certeau

discusses the necessity of writing and its relation to death. Death is what the author calls the *unnamable* (Ibid., 277); it is beyond reason, beyond what one can do in order to avoid it. The person who is actually dying – one can appear to be dying and be saved by a doctor, but at some point in life no one can save a person from dying – falls under a situation where he or she cannot be worked on, nor work. As in the modern Western society the absence of work is the non-sense, so the dying person (*le mourant*) represents a crack within discourse. In this sense, death is the index of every alterity (Ibid., 277).

How exactly do these observations about death relate to writing? According to de Certeau, every writing implies a death, that is, something that cannot be said: "Ce qui ne peut se dire – un impossible adéquation entre la présence et le signe – est le postulat du travail" (Ibid., 282)¹. The analogy with death follows as one can talk about it without actually having died. For this reason, death precedes the discourse about it. However, death is also the destination of discourse about it as death is beyond what one can say. For de Certeau, writing presents a similar pattern:

Elle [writing, l'écriture] épelle une absence qui est son préalable et sa destination. Elle procède par abandonnements successifs des places occupées, et elle s'articule sur une extériorité qui lui échappe (Ibid., 282)

If death is the condition and fate of every writing, what would be the solution? All that de Certeau suggests is that such a condition must be recognized from the beginning. Reflecting about his analysis of the dying person, he writes: "Je participe au leurre qui localise la mort ailleurs . . . en l'identifiant au mourant, j'en fais l'endroit où je ne suis pas . . . le mourant dont je parle reste ob-scène si ce n'est pas moi" (Ibid., 282).

¹ As it will be demonstrated later, when de Certeau's ideas will be discussed alongside Rhetoric, the postulate of "what cannot be said" is

In conclusion, writing, with all its limits and possibilities, is the main strategy to organize a place. Writing is not intrinsically good or bad but, rather, it is a necessary practice that helps organize society. However, as with every practice involving representations, writing has its limits in delivering what it promises - the real. The overall mistake of theoretical discourse, be it in the academy or in the offices of government, is to not confront the death implied in their discourse - one cannot talk about the way things "really" are. As a main organizing principle, de Certeau's analysis of the scripturary machine echoes Foucault's ideas, such as the role of divisions, classifications and the function of writing itself in the process of organizing society. This relation will be discussed next.

Foucault: a Storyteller

Michel Foucault became well known for his analyses of the organization of power or the micro-politics of power that control society. Alongside his various insights, he developed a vocabulary which, though not necessarily original, often relates to the operations of control. Among such words, one could cite, for instance, the panopticon, governmentality, and the disciplinary apparatus⁵. The development of Foucault's ideas has a lot to do to with his research concerning the history of prisons, hospitals, sexuality, and other subjects. Depending on how and which texts of Foucault one reads, his work may sound pessimistic, and at times deterministic, leaving very little space for agency. For this reason, de Certeau is often placed in opposition to Foucault in Cultural Studies, as the former seems to offer a more optimistic interpretation of the structures that organize

applicable to language in general.

⁵ Concerning Foucault's vocabulary, de Certeau remarks that the variation of terms may already be indicative of a myriad of procedures that are at stake in the phenomena the former wants to analyze (de

society. However, this opposition is problematic. Perhaps it is more accurate to place Foucault's insights concerning the disciplinary apparatus in relation to the strategies and even to the tactics that de Certeau writes about. This relation appears in two forms: 1) Foucault addresses the function of strategies when he analyses the micro-politics of power; 2) Foucault's own writing profits from a panoptical view (which is a strategy) to organize his research (de Certeau 1997, 192). His work is based upon strategic procedures, in that he is an intellectual sustained by the power of his position in the academy. Conversely, Foucault's writing can be read ironically and be considered a tactical operation that profits from a panoptical view to question power.

In *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire*, de Certeau observes that his pursuit of microbe-like practices follows from and is the counterpart of Foucault's analysis of power (de Certeau 1990, 145-6)². In other words, the discipline and the anti-discipline are parts of the same equation. De Certeau does not deny the power of the "disciplinary apparatus" or "strategical" procedures that organize space. Rather, he focuses on the status of their discourses and how they are received or "consumed", to use one of de Certeau's key words. That there are operations of control sustained by power based on a series of techniques is not a question for de Certeau. Nevertheless, the author's stance towards Foucault is not conciliatory. As the former observes, "who is he (Foucault) to know what no one else knows, what so many thinkers have 'forgotten' or have yet to realize about their own thought?" (de Certeau

Certeau 1990: 75).

² It is important to note here, following Giard's introduction to *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire*, that de Certeau's book is not a response to Foucault as the former had already developed some of his major ideas elsewhere. However, it is accurate to say that Foucault's observations, especially in the book *Surveiller et Punir* (1975), which for de Certeau is Foucault's master's book, has an important role in *L'invention du quotidien*, first published in 1980 (Giard, Luce in De

1997, 183). According to de Certeau, Foucault writes about the death "that founds all language without really confronting the death within his own discourse" (Ibid., 183). This fact does not invalidate Foucault's endeavor. Rather, as will be discussed in the next chapter, it points to the necessity of recognizing the theoretical importance of story telling (de Certeau 1990, 119).

De Certeau reads Foucault's project as a search for the common matrix that organizes "both the penal code (the punishment of human beings) and the human sciences (the knowledge of human beings)" (de Certeau 1997, 197). Such a matrix would be the technology of power. Foucault's work would suggest that "Meanings must be grasped in terms of relations . . . What must be rediscovered is the overall organization of meaning which has determined specific meanings [author's emphasis]" (de Certeau 1997, 175). The quest for "a common matrix" is explicit, for instance, in Foucault's *Surveiller et Punir* (1975). As Foucault himself writes, the goal of the book is "une histoire correlative de l'âme moderne et d'un nouveau pouvoir de juger" (Foucault 1975, 30). Later in the book, he suggests that instead of dealing with penal history and the history of human sciences (humanities) separately, one should look for a common ground. As he suggests, "chercher s'il n'y a pas une matrice commune et si elles ne relèvent pas toutes deux d'un processus de formation 'épistémologico-juridique'" (Foucault 1975, 31). In *Surveiller et Punir*, in order to carry out his enterprise of locating the aforementioned common matrix, Foucault traces the development of punishment from the Eighteenth-century on in some countries of Europe and America and the various relationships between knowledge and power.

In general terms, with respect to penal justice, the process studied by Foucault leads to three basic technologies of power concerning penal punishment: the sovereign (tyrannical punishment), the

Certeau 1990: XII).

analogical punishment (*la cité punitive*) and the administrative institution (Foucault 1975, 153-5). By the end of the eighteenth-century, and the beginning of the nineteenth, these three technologies still coexisted although the third would later become prominent (Ibid., 155).

Bluntly, Foucault traces the development of penal justice as follows: first, there was torture, as a demonstration of the power of the sovereign and vengeance, for the law is the will of the prince; to violate the law is to directly attack the prince. The aim was to make people fear royal power. In terms of technique, the body of the guilty one was the target of the prince's wrath. Then, came the theory of the social contract and punishment based on representations: a crime hurts the society as whole - power becomes hidden. The goal of punishment thus was the correction and not revenge. The target was the "soul" rather than the body, although the body was always at stake. Yet, there was a circulation of representations within the social body, referring to the disadvantages of performing misdeeds, which aimed at discouraging others from committing the same crime. Finally, with the coercive institution, the goal remained correction and education of the guilty person, but the technique of punishment changed. The imprisonment of the guilty became the main feature of penal justice, a practice that was criticized by many thinkers that wanted to change penal justice at the time. In the prison, a system of authority and knowledge takes charge of the body and the time of the prisoner. There is a subjection of the individual, who is isolated from the social and juridical body. At this point, punishment - not the proclamation of the punishment - also disappears from the eye of the public (Foucault 1975, 153-5).

Similar features of correction and surveillance are also found in such institutions as hospitals, schools, and the army. Surely, what is at stake is not simply a transference of methods from one field to another, rather it is a matter of a technology of power that spreads

itself by innumerable procedures with a similar goal: the control and surveillance of the body. The key word here is "discipline". By discipline, Foucault suggests a series of methods aiming at controlling the body. Such methods are constituted of minuscule procedures that determine the subjection of the body, the imposition of a docility-utility relationship with the power that organizes space (Foucault 1975, 161). The author identifies four major techniques of control: division (the tables), prescription of actions, exercises, and tactics (operations that warrant a more economic combination of forces) (Foucault 1975, 196).

The division of space and the placement of its elements aim at an order. Discipline organizes a space that is always cellular, argues Foucault (Ibid., 168). There, every element is defined by its position in reference to the others and, yet, such elements are interchangeable (Ibid., 171-3). However, the simple division of space is insufficient. It is also necessary to control the activities of each place. The control of such activities implies the management of time, the establishment of divisions, the organization of cycles of repetitions, and the limitation to specific occupations within a place (Ibid., 175). Finally, the disciplinary apparatus demands a power relationship that renders it more effective (Ibid., 192). In short, it is necessary to control the body in an economical way (the most productivity with as little effort as possible).

The will to discipline based on power, knowledge, divisions, a control of time, and an organization of elements within a space suggests a series of similarities between de Certeau's description of the scripturary machine and Foucault's disciplinary apparatus. However, if one looks more closely at the analysis made by Foucault, more interesting correspondences can be found between both authors. For instance, in regards to the control of time, Foucault observes that:

On ramasse la dispersion temporelle pour en

faire un profit et on garde la maîtrise d'une
durée qui échappe. Le pouvoir s'articule
directement sur le temps (Foucault 1975, 188)

In addition, the disciplinary apparatus determines a linear time, where each moment is related to each other, oriented to an end (Ibid., 188). This serial time, writes Foucault "c'est un effet et un objet de la discipline" (Ibid., 189). Though the manipulation of time may present its specificities in Foucault, a great deal of its effect touches issues close to de Certeau's work as, for instance, when the latter writes about historiographical procedures. Perhaps, the main difference between both authors is the fact that for Foucault it appears that the manipulation of time practically effaces other temporal configurations that the body may be subjected to, which would not be true in de Certeau. For Foucault, the limit of such control (exercises, divisions etc.) would be the body itself. As he writes, "Dans l'exercice qu'on lui impose et auquel il résiste, le corps dessine ses corrélations essentielles, et rejette spontanément l'incompatible" (Ibid., 182). Such rejection happens when the disciplinary technique applied is too artificial, and the body rejects it. The consequences of such adaptation is not only the creation of a cellular individuality, but an organic one as well: "Le corps, requis d'être docile jusque dans ses moindres opérations, oppose et montre les conditions de fonctionnement propres à un organisme" (Ibid., 183). This last instance of resistance is not foreign to de Certeau. As observed in the previous section, the "scream" (rejection by the body) becomes many times the only reaction possible. Nevertheless, de Certeau also points to different practices that escape control. Foucault seems to only start thinking about other forms of resistance late in his work as, for instance, when he discusses the return of "subjugated knowledges" (Foucault 1980, 81). Or, as Butler observes, in a more implicit manner, at some points of Foucault's texts the body appears to be what exceeds normalization, becoming a kind of

substitute to psyche (Butler 1997, 94). De Certeau attempts to theorize about these possibilities of resistance that Foucault points to in his later work. Nevertheless, it is not rare to find researchers following Foucault, the theorist of power, and forgetting the "subjugated knowledges".

If, on the one hand, it is true that both authors envisage the limits of discipline in different ways, on the other, the importance of Foucault's analysis of the disciplinary apparatus is not denied by de Certeau. As he observes, Foucault constituted a new zone of study, "that zone in which technological procedures have specific effects of power, obey logical dynamisms which are specific to them, and produce fundamental turnings aside in the juridical and scientific institutions" (de Certeau 1997, 189). But, again, this proximity to Foucault's work is followed by the concern with what he left aside, a preoccupation that will gradually distance de Certeau from Foucault.

Another interesting aspect of de Certeau's reading of Foucault relates to the latter's method of writing. In the eyes of de Certeau, Foucault's inquiry about the technology of power is formed by two gestures:

Le premier geste *découpe* certaines pratiques dans un tissu indéfini, de manière à les traiter *comme une population à part*, formant un tout cohérent mais étranger au lieu d'où se produit la théorie . . . Le deuxième geste retourne l'unité ainsi découpée. D'obscur, tacite et lointaine, elle est inversée en l'élément qui éclaire la théorie et soutient le discours [every emphasis is the author's] (de Certeau 1990, 99)

In short, what de Certeau is observing is the fact that Foucault profits from a panoptical view to organize his account of penal justice and the human sciences (de Certeau 1997, 192). If it might be correct to say that Foucault elucidates the micro-politics that organize discourse, the coherence of his work is the result of his selection of facts and

capacity to use the references available. What de Certeau wants to bring to light is exactly those practices left out by Foucault and other intellectuals. The goal is to try to understand how such practices articulate with the panoptical principles that organize discourse.

Therefore, as suggested earlier in this chapter, the technology of power that Foucault recognizes may relate to the notion of strategies developed by de Certeau in two instances: First, the recognition by de Certeau of the panoptical procedures as one of the main strategies organizing space and, second, the identification of Foucault's own panoptical procedures to create his text. The first refers to an overall gesture that appears to have become the principle of organization of a society and its discourses, specially in the Western world. The second concerns the ellipses, metonymys, and other rhetorical tropes that orient Foucault's enterprise; figures of speech that overlap with his theoretical method and the constraints of the place from which he speaks.

As for writing, Foucault also stresses the role played by it both in the organization of the penal justice system and in disciplinary apparatuses in general. Concerning penal justice, he observes that the written law becomes the "stable monument of the social pact" (Foucault 1975, 113). With the printed law, the penal rules of a society cease to be concentrated in the hands of the sovereign to become part of the public domain, reinforcing the hidden power that punishes the criminal. Concerning the written word and the disciplinary apparatus, writing, through the practice of exams, is described as central to the modern disciplinary society. For the author, "disciplinary writing" allows 1) the creation of correlations; 2) makes possible the storage of documents; 3) creates comparative fields; 4) allows the formation of categories; 5) establishes averages and 6) determines norms (Foucault 222-3). Hence, through the written exam (not only school tests but also the doctor's evaluation etc.) the subject is given an identity. In

Foucault's terms, the subject loses his or her subjectivity and becomes objectified through such documents. The subject now is an object that can be described within a comparative system of documents (Ibid., 223-4).

Are writing and exams, practices that define a norm, the only principles organizing society? Following de Certeau's questionings, what is the status of other practices like those of oral tradition? (de Certeau 1997, 187-9). According to Foucault, this new Law (*Le Normal*) is added to other powers (spoken word, texts, tradition), but it establishes itself as a principle of coercion (Foucault 1975, 216). Or, as he later explains, discipline as a technology of power does not replace other powers, but infiltrates them to guarantee a better distribution of power - although sometimes it disqualifies some such powers (Ibid., 251-2). De Certeau would probably agree with most of the observations made by Foucault concerning writing. In contrast, as the de Certeau suggests, is it not pertinent to ask what is the status of such powers and their "old" technologies in relation to this new *modus operandi* (de Certeau 1997, 188)? Finally, as de Certeau asks: Is not Foucault's ability to reveal the machinery a sign of a flaw in the discourse produced by the disciplinary apparatus? (de Certeau 1990, 80). In short, something escapes it. Yet, what the subjects make of their individuality and the tasks ascribed to them is not an issue for Foucault.

To conclude, de Certeau's scripturary machine and Foucault's disciplinary apparatus share a vast common ground. The article "L'économie scripturaire" (de Certeau 1990) offers a striking number of coincidences that may make one wonder about the degree of influence of Foucault's texts on de Certeau. However, a number of issues raised in that article can also be found in de Certeau's earlier works such as his study of "la culture populaire" and history. These may also help to

concretize de Certeau's ideas. Focusing on culture and history offers an easier way of understanding some of the strategies at stake in the organization of a place.

History and the Quest for the Other

De Certeau's critique of historiography plays a fundamental role throughout his work, including his analysis of culture. However, the impact of de Certeau's epistemological concerns seems to have created a greater response among historians than among cultural theorists; the latter tend to focus their debate around the notions of tactics and strategies, rather than looking at de Certeau as a critic of their academic practice. Regarding history, de Certeau questions the historians' and his own capacity to represent the real. In order to do so, the author points to a series of operations within historiography that render the object of history graspable. In other words, de Certeau describes how history as a discipline organizes its place.

Following a question raised by Buci-Glucksmann concerning the polysemy of the Other in de Certeau's work (Giard, Martin & Revel 1991, 53), our discussion can start by asking if there is a polysemy of strategies. Do strategies in the production of history (the writing of history) function in the same way as in other social contexts? To the question of the polysemy of the Other, Giard suggests that the category of alterity is not unified in de Certeau's work. According to Giard, the functioning of alterity varied in each method or theoretical apparatus visited by de Certeau (Giard, Martin & Revel 1991, 135). The concept of strategy can be analyzed in a similar manner. Each method or culture presents its own set of operations to control and organize a space,

⁷ Here, it is important to bear in mind how de Certeau understands history: "j'emploie le mot *histoire* au sens d'historiographie. C'est dire que j'entends par *histoire* une pratique (une discipline), son résultat (un discours) et leur rapport" (de Certeau 1993a: 63).

methods that may vary from period to period. History, as field of knowledge, has its own strategies, which may or may not echo some of the strategies of other social domains. In addition, the variation of strategies already suggests the complexity of practices that organize society.

What, then, would be the status of history for de Certeau? In "History: Science and Fiction" (de Certeau 1997), an article first published in English in 1983, three years before his death, he makes the following claim:

A *mise en scène* of a (past) actuality, that is the historiographical discourse itself, occults the social and technical apparatus of the professional institution that produces it. The operation in question is rather sly: the discourse gives itself credibility in the name of the reality which it is supposed to represent, but this authorized appearance of the 'real' serves precisely to camouflage the practice which determines it. Representation disguises the praxis that organizes it (de Certeau 1997, 203)

What is in check here is the very condition of historians to represent the "real". According to de Certeau, the production of history is regulated by the laws of its place, although, in general, it does not recognize the limits that such a situation implies. True, it could not be different, as the historian could not start writing but from his or her place. Nevertheless, what is necessary is to make clear how the object of history is produced. For de Certeau, the historian works between two categories of real: the known (*le connu*) and the implied (*l'impliqué*) (de Certeau 1993a, 46). The known is the object of study that the historian "resurrects from the past," whereas the implied is produced by the scientific operation. These two categories of real are not opposites in de Certeau's work. Neither of them can be eliminated for the benefit of the other, nor can they be brought together into one category (Ibid., 46). As he explains: "Elle [the reference to the real]

est impliquée par la *création* de 'modèles' proportionnés à des pratiques, par leur confrontation avec ce qui leur résiste (Ibid., 56). The work of the historian wanders between these two categories. Such wandering, according to de Certeau, does not suggest that the reference to the real is not there. In fact, in Modern Western historiography, or more specifically, in the French context, the reference is somewhere else (*déplacé*).

Another way to think about the category of the real in de Certeau, is to look at his differentiation between "nature" and "culture", respectively *le donné* and *le créé* (Ibid., 80). Again, these two concepts must be thought of together. The analogy, here, could not be simpler. De Certeau offers, among other examples, the transformation of minerals already refined². That is, the material (primary information) is transformed into standard products (secondary material) (Ibid., 82). In this perspective, the historian does not make history, he or she makes *from* history (*faire de l'histoire*). Research then is located between a tendency toward "nature" or toward "culture", which is different from saying that it is natural or cultural.

The transformation of "nature" is not a fiction. The historian transforms nature. "Il participe au travail qui change la nature en environnement et modifie ainsi la nature de l'homme" (Ibid., 82). For de Certeau, the historian modifies the space in ways similar to an urbanist or an architect (Ibid., 83). The transformation of nature, again, is always dependent upon a *lieu* and the techniques of production available to the historian in a given period (Ibid., 80). However, every technique implies a distortion that is often denied; thus, modern Western historiography operates in a way that effaces its condition of production.

² Already refined as the material is found in particular collections, archives, etc. (de Certeau 1993a, 82).

Again, the object of study is controlled by a set of operations (strategies) and analyzed within the "proper place" created by power relations that authorize the historian to speak in the name of a dead past. This aspect of de Certeau's critique may create a certain uneasiness in some historians. According to de Certeau, historians play the role of the prince that they are not (de Certeau 1993a; 15); they believe that they are the subject of an operation when, in fact, they are the technicians of such operation; they find their place in a kind of fiction (Ibid., 15). De Certeau stresses the relation between historians and power primarily from the sixteenth century on. At that time, historians worked close to the prince for the public good. On the one hand, the historical accounts sustained the prince's authority by founding power in a genealogy. On the other, the production of the historian gave a political lesson to the prince (Ibid., 13-4). According to de Certeau, later the scientific institution of the State takes over the role of the prince (Ibid., 18).

An interesting example of the relation between power and historians in modern Western culture is found in de Certeau's analysis of the function of the computer in history. In brief, the computer plays the role of an authoritative citation that gives legitimacy to historical discourse. The computer and its statistics give the necessary scientificity to the historical account which would otherwise be too close to a fiction (de Certeau 1997, 207-214). In this sense, the historian pays to the computer the equivalent of the "Dedication to the Prince" in seventeenth-century books. That is, the historian offers "a recognition of obligation with respect to the power that overdetermines the rationality of an epoch" (Ibid., 213).

Among the operations used to describe historiographical practices, one gesture, in de Certeau's eyes, seems to capture the essence of such procedures: writing, which as shown before, also captures the spirit of modern society in general (de Certeau 1993a, 12). For him, writing has a

mythical and ritualistic character as it articulates absence and production within a space (Ibid., 12). To put it differently, historical writing articulates the absence of its object - the dead, the Other that cannot speak. This articulation happens while the historian attempts to recreate the object of history, which is a productive operation that occurs according to the conditions of the present situation. Hence, writing implies an operation grounded in an empty space. The analogy here, again, may be found in the most elementary form of writing: "écrire, c'est construire une phrase en parcourant un lieu supposé blanc, la page" (Ibid., 12). For de Certeau, writing captures the picture of a society able to manage the space it creates (Ibid., 12).

In this process of writing history, the author also points to a recurrent strategy: *la coupure* (division, separation, interruption)¹. Writing history is the discourse of separation, suggests the author (Ibid., 9). Here, it is possible to notice the similarity of de Certeau's approach to culture and history. While in "La beauté du mort" he analyses the notion of *culture populaire* in terms of "a geography of the eliminated," in *L'écriture de l'histoire* he speaks of a "discourse of separation." The three main operations or divisions that de Certeau identifies in historiographical procedures are: 1) the division between past and present; 2) the separation from a religious tradition, that the writing of history denies but is indebted to, and 3) the separation between discourse and (social) body (Ibid., 9).

Just to exemplify one of the strategies used in historiography, one can focus on the division between past and present. The key word here is chronology, which is a procedure that allows the researchers to talk in terms of periods as Middle Ages, the Industrial Revolution, etc. Every chronology in a historical account presumes a beginning, or, a "zéro

¹ Again, procedures that resemble Foucault's analysis of writing.

fictif," to use one of de Certeau's terms (Ibid., 107). The indication of such starting point, from which the researcher will develop his or her argument is made from the present situation of the historian. For example, in 2000 one speaks about the French Revolution. This procedure already creates a curious distortion. As de Certeau observes, the temporal vector is inverted as it goes from the present to the past (Ibid., 106). Such an inversion is produced by the victory of the historian over time. Another interesting effect of the establishment of a temporal line is the accommodation of two contrary positions in a single narrative¹⁰. As de Certeau explains, in order to understand two antinomies it suffices that one of the terms be located in the past (Ibid., 104). In short, the set of operations described above allows one to control the opposites terms in one single space - the text. The consequences of establishing the "zéro fictif," "le non-dit," do not stop at the inversion of the temporal vector or at the accommodation of contraries. The empty departing point determined by the historian, the "non-lieu fondateur" which is the postulate of historical research, indicates the "erasure" of what came before; it implies the elimination of a past, a past that does not have a proper name (the Other), which is, following de Certeau, *la loi de l'autre* (Ibid., 108).

In the repeated divisions and separations produced by historical discourse, the figure of the effaced Other becomes crucial to de Certeau's analysis. The author suggests that heterologies (discourses on the Other) are at the core of modern Western culture. As he writes: "L'intelligibilité s'instaure dans un rapport à l'autre; elle se déplace (ou 'progresses') en modifiant ce dont elle fait son 'autre'" (Ibid., 9). In regard to history, de Certeau borrows Alphonse Dupront's statement to define what probably captures a great deal of his own project: "La seule

¹⁰ As observed earlier in this paper, the definition of a place implies a stable configuration of positions, wherein two elements cannot occupy

quête historique du 'sens'" demeure en effet celle de l'Autre" (Ibid., 8), and he adds that "ce projet, contradictoire, vise à 'comprendre' et à cacher avec les 'sens' l'altérité de cet étranger" (Ibid., 8). This Other, however, will always haunt the present and question the organized discourse (Ibid., 10).

Finally, with respect to these observations regarding de Certeau's approach to history and the "strategies" of historiography, a last remark might be necessary. For de Certeau, the discourse produced by the historian is a capital invested in symbols that can be transmitted, and can move, grow or be lost (Ibid., 22). Sustained by a practice (writing) and theoretical models, discourse fades through an erosion due to the alterity it believes to control, that is, the Other that the historian attempts to reconstruct.

La culture populaire¹¹

Many of the strategies concerning history apply to de Certeau's analysis of culture. An understanding of how he sees history was necessary in order to introduce his approach to culture due to the centrality of his analysis of historiography in his thought. Now, we return to issues close to Cultural Studies. In "La beauté du mort" - where again the dead works as a major analogy - de Certeau, Julia, and Revel question the division between elite and popular in the work of some French intellectuals, and place the work of Charles Nisard at the center of their analysis. They observe that the idea of *populaire* repeatedly is related to the naïve, the natural, truth, or infancy (de

the same position.

¹¹ Before tackling the question of culture, a clarification might be important. "La beauté du mort" deals with the idea of "culture populaire," which is not the same of its literal translation to English, that is, popular culture. While popular culture in the English world is usually related to media production, "*culture populaire*" in the article at stake here refers to a broader notion that may include folk culture and worker's culture. Media production is not necessarily part of it.

Certeau, Julia, & Revel 1993, 53). Yet, very often the operations of theoretical discourses relegate *populaire*, their object of study, to a distant origin, hence eliminating its threat (Ibid., 59). Such conclusions silence (kill) the culture the researchers want to talk about. Death sustains the discourse of the intellectuals. In summary, what guarantees the conclusions achieved by the researchers of that period is a knowledge linked to a power that authorizes such a knowledge (Ibid., 47). Rather than simply attacking an "ideology" of the time, what is at the core of de Certeau and his colleagues' critique is the relation between the theoretical methods and their object of study and the society that authorizes such a knowledge (Ibid., 47). To put it differently, the critique has more of an epistemological character than an ideological one.

One of the main features of the theoretical discourse being criticized is what de Certeau, Julia, and Revel call the "geography of the forgotten" or the "geography of the eliminated" (Ibid., 63-4). As they explain, "toute organisation suppose une répression" (Ibid., 71)¹². In identifying the geography of the eliminated, the authors stress the incapacity of modern theoretical discourse to address the question of culture. According to the authors, "Ces études sur la culture populaire se donnent pour objet leur propre origine. Elles poursuivent à la surface des textes, devant elles, ce qui est en réalité leur condition de possibilité" (de Certeau 1993b, 59). Hence, the idea of a "culture populaire" and the studies dedicated to it coincide in their origin: the proper place (*lieu*) of the researcher. However, the gestures that inaugurate the theoretical discourse, the procedures that allow the researcher to write about culture are denied or forgotten (Ibid., 59).

¹² Later, in the chapter "Tactics: A Risky Business," the notion of repression, unconsciousness, forgetting, that is intrinsic to the use of language, will be discussed following Kenneth Burke's notions of entitlement and terministic screens.

In such a "geography of the eliminated," de Certeau, Julia and Revel highlight some regions that are ignored, such as violence, childhood and sexuality. For example, in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the folklorists erase the wars (Ibid., 68). Popular insurgence just appears as a deplorable objet that should be "preserved": "les traditions françaises baolies ou defigurées" (Ibid., 68).

The picture presented by de Certeau and his colleagues in relation to theoretical discourse may look extremely pessimistic – at least from the perspective of the researcher. This is an interesting contrast to some "rosy" uses of his work within Cultural Studies. For example, de Certeau and his colleagues argue that "nous [the researchers] sommes incapables d'en [the culture populaire] parler sans faire qu'il n'existe plus" (Ibid., 60). Rather than pessimistic, we could perhaps more accurately term de Certeau's position realistic. His approach is based on the acknowledgement of a pathological condition, including his own. Not even a cultural revolution would overcome the limitations of theoretical discourse. Another culture would also require repression because language is founded in the ambiguity of what it announces and what it implies (Ibid., 71-2). For de Certeau, "Sans doute faudra-t-il toujours un mort pour qu'il y ait parole" (Ibid., 72).

What then would the solution be? For de Certeau, a possible improvement of methods or a changing of convictions will not do the job. What is necessary is a political action (Ibid., 48-9). Possible ways to start thinking of such problems will be discussed in the next chapter. For the moment, and within the questions presented in "La beauté du mort," it is worth noting that de Certeau forces us to face such questions as: From where does one speak? What can one say? From where do we (researchers) speak? (Ibid., 70).

In short, what de Certeau, Julia, and Revel question in "La beauté du mort" is the status of theoretical discourse that claims to be the

herald, the protector, or even to be identified with *la culture populaire*. Theoretical discourse obeys its own rules and strategies that allow it to study and fabricate the so-called *culture populaire*, or, in other words, to organize its place. Knowledge is based on procedures that are authorized by power relationships that imply a repression of the object studied; it implies the creation of a topography that will render the object readable. Finally, there is no division between elite and popular. The core of the problem is our culture, the culture of the researcher, "*notre place*" (Ibid., 71).

In conclusion to this chapter, the idea of "place" suggested by de Certeau points to an organization of space, wherein time and positions are controlled. The appearance of stability is sustained by power relationships and operations that efface their conditions of production. These forms of organization of place, such as the product of the historian, the notions of *la culture populaire*, are what de Certeau is criticizing. However, the existence of places is needed, in the sense that some agreement about references and proper names that help guide a society is necessary. Tactics, as will be shown next, can only operate within a place. The spaces opened by tactics are in effect the practicing of a place, a place with a dynamic and complex organization. Tactics cannot be thought of without a place just as *parole* cannot be thought of without *langue*, or *énoncé* without *énonciation*. What is the target of de Certeau's critique is a kind of place where there are dissociations, performed by technical operations, that do not take into account the other practices organizing society or, in other words, the death the haunts the "stable" organization of a place (the dependence on Other). De Certeau's critique applies to every organization, that is, to academic disciplines, nations, marginal groups, or society in general. No one is autonomous. Everyone depends upon the Other.

CHAPTER 3

PRACTICING A PLACE

This chapter could be entitled "Space" for, de Certeau writes, "l'espace est un lieu pratiqué" (de Certeau 1990, 173). It is called *Practicing a Place* to emphasize the absence of a proper place for tactics to operate. The previous chapter described how different strategies work to organize different places. The focus of this chapter will be on how tactics interfere in the balance of such organized places.

Space and Tactics: a Definition

When considering the idea of space, "le lieu pratiqué," de Certeau points to some characteristics that differentiate it from a place. Space is marked by a "crisscrossing of movements," it is the "effect produced by a series of operations," a "polyvalent unity of conflictive programs" or a "unity of contractual proximities." Every analysis of space should take into account vectors of direction, velocity, and time (de Certeau 1990, 173). This geographical metaphor works, then, in a variety of situations, but with one main idea: the possibility of working out different spatialities within a controlled place. The text, for instance, is a space limited in size and structured in a way that makes it readable and coherent - in other words, it is a place. There, every element has its position and time is fixed. According to de Certeau, in relation to the text, reading is the space created by the reader. As an operation in development, reading obeys rules that are unlike those that

allowed the construction of the text. For example, in the act of reading, time is not fixed, whereas in the text it is. Another illustration of the idea of space is the city street. The street is a fixed space full of points of references and boundaries for pedestrians - one goes there but not here because the way is blocked. Nevertheless, the street also renders walking possible for pedestrians who, within that limited space, create their own itineraries. Pedestrians, thus, turn the streets into a practiced place (Ibid., 172). Yet, de Certeau offers a military metaphor, which to our view is the one that most of his critics have problems with. The idea remains the same, that is, the possibility of working out a space, that one does not possess, within a given place. Here, one can think of space as created by a series of movements inside the enemy's visual field. However, such movements cannot imprison the "enemy". Such movements profit from the fissures in the adversary's field and contingent opportunities. What they conquer, they cannot retain (Ibid., 60-1).

A place, as presented in the previous chapter, is organized by a series of strategies that control and render a dynamic body stable. In regard to space, the key word is tactics. In the introduction of *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire*, de Certeau describes tactics as "un calcul qui ne compte pas sur un propre" (Ibid., XLVI). In other words, tactics refer to operations that do not have their own place; they practice a place. While the place represents a victory over time, tactics depend on time. Tactics profit from time, or as the author explains, "du fait de son non-lieu, la tactique dépend du temps, vigilante à y 'saisir au vol' des possibilités de profit" (Ibid., XLVI.). This "non-lieu" forces a movement. The intellectual mode of tactics is not discourse (a text), but an act (Ibid., XLVII). De Certeau's enterprise is driven toward the pursuit of these infinitesimal movements within the fissures, fractures of the social text. These

subtle movements, the author calls the art of the weak (*l'art du faible*), borrowing from an old description of Rhetoric, as the art of making the weaker argument the stronger.

**Walking on a rope: the Dynamic of Tactics,
Spaces, Strategies, and Places**

When discussing the function of "*l'art de savoir-dire*" (an art that is the theory of tactics and its practice) and stories (*récit*), de Certeau presents a circular movement that illustrates the dynamic involved in every spatial organization. First there is a given place (*un lieu*). There, an intervention of memory at the right moment occurs (*kairos*). Such intervention produces an effect in the established order and produces a new arrangement of space. Hence, as de Certeau explains:

La série a pour commencement et pour fin une organisation spatiale; le temps y est l'entre-deux, étrangeté survenue d'ailleurs et produisant le passage d'un état des lieux au suivant. En somme, entre deux "équilibres", l'irruption du temps (Ibid., 128)

Another way to try to understand this process, as de Certeau himself suggests elsewhere in *L'invention du quotidien*, is to think in terms of Kant's example of a tightrope walker. Walking on a rope implies the departure from one balanced situation to another. Every step is the recreation of a new equilibrium, but this re-creation of equilibria, a process that characterize an "art," is a continuous process (Ibid., 114). The non-stopping movement creating new equilibria, inventions that "appear" to keep the balance, echoes the mystical influence that is always present at work in de Certeaus's texts¹³.

¹³ The conditions of such intervention imply the articulation of a memory with an opportunity (*occasion*). These aspects will be discussed later in this section.

¹⁴ Contrary to common belief, de Certeau never abandoned his religious

The continuous search for equilibrium has a mystical aspect that is very important to keep in mind. As Giard observes, the question of God was present to the end of his life (Giard, Martin & Revel 1991, 10). The idea of mystical experience appears in his analyses of culture and history, as for instance in notions like "the absence of the Other." To some extent, the mystical experience is transferred to other fields where the encounter or quest for the Other - the object of history, the "pagan" culture for the missionary, the so called *culture populaire* for the cultural theorist etc. - is at stake.

With regard to some of the premises of de Certeau's mystical thought, the author presents an interesting definition of his relation to God. In *L'étranger ou l'union dans la différence* (1969), de Certeau gives the following explanation:

Le Dieu de ma foi ne cesse de tromper et de guider le désir qui cherche à le prendre. Il le trompe, car rien de ce que je sais n'est lui. Il le guide, car je ne l'attendais pas là où il vient . . . il n'est le Même qu'en resurgissant comme l'Autre (de Certeau 1969, 5)

If we replace the phrase "The God of my faith" (*Le Dieu de ma foi*) by "culture" or by "the object of history," the above quotation remarkably captures much of de Certeau's work. Of course, this is an oversimplification. Nevertheless, it captures an essential aspect of the author's heterological project: the Other, which is absent, is the basis of discourse, it has a foundational character even while it undermines discourse. Therefore, as the Other is never controlled, as it is always escaping and undermining our convictions, there is a need for new departures from acquired equilibria (knowledges that achieve some degree of stability).

quest. This fact is attested by Giard (1991), who is responsible for the author's oeuvre. It is interesting to notice that in the English translation of *L'invention du quotidien. Arts de faire I* (1990), *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), de Certeau is described by one of the reviewers on the back cover as a former Jesuit, when, in fact, he remained one until his death.

In sum, a former equilibrium in space works as a starting point for interventions that will create new balances. To stop would be an illusion, it would indicate the reliance on the proper place as discussed in the previous chapter. This movement, in what concerns the social text, implies a series of endless departures. The ground for this hypothesis is somewhat simple. For de Certeau the cosmological Voice that organized space cannot be heard anymore ("nos dieux ne parlent plus"), as Aristotle concluded long ago. With the development of society, the "truth" ceased to depend on a Speaker. "Elle [la vérité, the truth] sera le résultat d'un travail - historique, critique, économique" (de Certeau 1990, 203). The identities that once were believed to be received from the Speaker are lost. "Desormais, l'identité dépend d'une production, d'une marche interminable . . . L'être se mesure au faire" (Ibid., 203)¹⁵.

The tactical operations (turn, use, walk, read, etc.) are also part of this *démarche* that attempts to organize space, and it is also responsible for the pluralization of references. Such movements compose an "art" (*l'art du faible*) that operates within the place, an "art" that is a practiced art, an art that is performative. As previously observed, this art finds its correlative in the process of enunciation. Inspired by the model developed by Benveniste, de Certeau highlights four aspects of the enunciative process that are also relevant to understand the notion of tactics. According to him, the enunciation refers to: 1) language in use, "l'effectuation du système linguistique par un dire qui en actue des possibilités;" 2) the speaker's appropriation of a language; 3) the determination of an interlocutor (real or fictional), a contract, and 4) the establishment of a present which is marked by an

¹⁵ Lyotard touches a similar question when he discusses the absence of a universal rule to settle a dispute. With the absence of a referent, or a third to settle the dispute, "phraser est sans fin" (Lyotard 1983, 27, §17).

"I" that speaks (de Certeau 1990, 56).

However, the correlation tactics/enunciation is supplemented by other influences. De Certeau's analysis of the enunciative process, and of language in general, is also highly influenced by the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who throughout the former's work matches Freud in importance (Ibid., XXVII). With regard to Wittgenstein, de Certeau writes:

Rarement la réalité du langage a été aussi rigoureusement prise au sérieux, c'est-à-dire le fait qu'elle définit notre historicité, qu'elle nous surplombe et enveloppe sous le mode de l'ordinaire, qu'aucun discours ne peut donc 'en sortir' et se mettre à distance pour l'observer et dire son sens [author's emphasis] (Ibid., 25)

Briefly, for Wittgenstein, the way language had been assumed to work was a misleading factor in philosophical inquiries and was responsible for a great deal of contradictions in the field. One of the main errors concerning language was the assumption that there must be some sort of relationship between a word and a determined meaning. In his analyses, Wittgenstein suggests that meaning is related to use, in his words, "the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (PI 43). The understanding of meaning as use is related to the author's notion of "language-game." According to Wittgenstein, in each particular language-game a word may acquire a different meaning (use). Therefore, to be able to understand an assertion in a determined dialogue is to know the possible movements that allow one to participate in a specific game. As the author writes: "To understand a sentence means to understand a language. To understand a language means to be master of a technique" (PI 199). Wittgenstein's arguments are at the base of de Certeau's definition of *langage ordinaire*, the common place where every discourse is founded. To be caught in ordinary language indicates that the capacity of mastering is taken away from the master. This indetermination, which is different from saying that there is an absence of meaning, is what allows tactics

to re-use what is received.

As for the "I" that establishes a present in the enunciative act, the mystical aspect of it cannot be ignored either, and it is also important to note the different spatiality it suggests within a proper place. In his "Mystic Speech" (*L'énonciation mystique*) (de Certeau 1976; 1997), de Certeau calls attention to the status of the mystical "I," following, again, much of the work of Benveniste. According to de Certeau, the act of utterance "lends mysticism its formal characteristics - it is defined by the establishment of a place (the "I") and by transactions (*spirit*)."

The utterance is separated from the formal organization of the statements (de Certeau 1997, 89). To put it differently, the act of utterance opens a new space (mystical) within discourse. Nevertheless, the "I" is an empty space that announces the speaker, "a siteless site" related to the fragility of social position or the uncertainty of institutional referents" (Ibid., 90).

In a way more or less similar to the mystical utterance, the "I" who perform the enunciative act (the tactical operation) also determines a different spatiality in relation to the proper place. According to de Certeau, the linguistic enunciation and the pedestrian enunciation (the performative act of using a place) resemble each other, as they both concern different spatial practices in relation to a proper place (de Certeau 1990, 148). In the case of the pedestrian, de Certeau makes the following observation: "Dans le cadre de l'énonciation, le marcheur constitue, par rapport à sa position, un proche et un lointain, un *ici* et un *là* [author's emphasis]" (Ibid., 149). The pedestrian, while walking within the city planned by an urban planner obeys a different spatiality from the one imagined in the blueprint. In the case of the linguistic enunciation, the adverbs here and there also imply a different organization as they point to the locutory seat (Ibid., 150).

The "I" that determines a different spatial practice within a place

has yet another function: the determination of the interlocutor, as previously observed in this section. A more detailed discussion of the determination of an addressee will be left for the next chapter, when the issue will be approached with the help of some ideas developed in rhetorical theory. For the moment and for the purposes of this section, it suffices to remain with de Certeau's explanation:

Ce repérage (*ici-là*) nécessairement impliqué par la marche et indicatif d'une appropriation présente de l'espace par un 'je' a également pour fonction d'implanter l'autre relatif à ce 'je' et d'instaurer ainsi une articulation conjonctive et disjonctive de places [my emphasis] (Ibid., 150)

Again, the process described above - the determination of an addressee - carries some of the characteristics of the mystical utterance as de Certeau understands it. The mystical speech creates dialogic spaces based on a *volo* - "God only speaks to those who . . .," "I only address those who . . ." (de Certeau 1997, 91). This fact, according to the author "delimits in language a path of circulation and circumscription" (Ibid., 91). To raise some of the issues that will be discussed later, it appears to be the case that the "*volo*" de Certeau writes about relates to similar issues raised by the notion of *identification* in Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Burke, 1952; 1969b). Briefly, both notions ("*volo*" and "*identification*") delimit a space of circulation of signs not only by the power of the argument but also through a disposition demonstrated by the audience. The goal is to identify the rhetorician's ways with the audience's ways in order to have a successful argument.

Considering that enunciation, as a performative act with all its implications, offers a general analogy to tactical procedures, it is possible now to move on to another operation: *le récit* (story). For de Certeau, stories organize spaces: "Les structures narratives ont valeur

de syntaxe spatiales" (de Certeau 1990, 170)¹⁶. They create what he calls a space for action (*un théâtre d'action*) (Ibid., 182). By story the author means an action that is descriptive, but also creative and with a foundational character (Ibid., 181): "Elle [the description] a même pouvoir distributif et force performative (elle fait ce qu'elle dit) quand un ensemble de circonstances se trouve réuni" (Ibid., 181-2). The foundational character of stories guarantees the *fās* (the mystical basis) which is not prone to analysis, a basis (*assise*) that is disseminated, miniaturized and polyvalent (Ibid., 183-4). Hence, stories are a pre-condition for the analysis or the judgement that aims at regulating them - "des récits marchent devant les pratiques sociales pour leur ouvrir un champ" (Ibid., 185). Therefore, once more, there is a circular dynamic. The discourses produced by a society stem from stories, and they (discourses) only become effective when they also become stories - that is, stories suggest an idea of credibility. Lastly, the concept of stories is not restricted to literature, but is part of oral narratives and their endless movement that works to organize spaces, confront them, and move their boundaries (Ibid., 181).

As organizers of space, stories determine limits in relation to an exteriority. However, the limit, the border, presents a paradox. A demarcation is made possible only by the encounter with the other, that is, an exteriority that is a threat or a target, who/which is controlled from inside the delimited place. Hence, the paradox: "A l'intérieur des frontières, l'étranger est déjà là, exotisme ou sabbat de la mémoire, inquiétante familiarité" (Ibid., 189). In short, the limit works as a

¹⁶ As presented in the last chapter, here one can find a problematic that also concerns Foucault's work. Do stories - in the case of Foucault and his account of the disciplinary apparatus - have a strategic or tactical character? Do they organize places or spaces? According to de Certeau both: "Les récits effectuent donc un travail qui, incessamment, transforme des lieux en espaces ou des espaces en lieux (Ibid., 174). Is this a paradox? No. As it was described earlier, places and spaces must be thought together. The issue here is the continuous organization of

frontier that leaves open the door of the space aimed at being controlled; the circumscription of a space presupposes the existence of the Other.

The emphasis on oral narratives suggested earlier recurs in de Certeau's texts, which repeatedly stress the necessity of looking at oral practices in attempting to understand culture. According to the author, despite all the effort of a scripturary machinery to control space, oral practices perform a continuous work of escape and are usually set aside by a society that is heavily based on a scripturary practice. Nevertheless, de Certeau avoids the division between oral and written. In fact, the kind of orality de Certeau is proposing to analyze functions within the scriptural society; there is no such thing as a "pure voice" that the analyst can translate. For de Certeau, "Ces voix ne se font plus entendre qu'à l'intérieur des systèmes scripturaires où elles reviennent" (Ibid., 196). The importance of orality is also emphasized in *L'invention du quotidien 2. Habiter, Cuisiner* (1994), where he defines orality as one of the three priorities of what would be a *science pratique du singulier*.

According to de Certeau, the voice (*la voix*) exists only under the figure of a citation within the (social) text written by the scripturary machine (Ibid., 227). As such, two characteristics mark these citations: they work as a pre-text and they are reminiscent. The citation makes possible the construction of the text (it is a pre-text), but they also disturb the text (they are reminiscent) (Ibid., 228). Orality is an exteriority without which writing would not be possible: "*la voix fait écrire*" (Ibid., 235). Nevertheless, the text is for the voices (*voix du corps*) a stage that constrains and alters their character but, conversely, the scene is also altered by the voices – "*voix altérées et altérantes*" (Ibid., 236).

new equilibria.

The fundamental role of orality as an organizing principle is repeatedly stressed by de Certeau. Reading, for instance, is made possible by oral communication, which is one of the aspects that guarantees its tactical status. Here, as observed in the *Introduction*, the pair writing/reading can be substituted by production/consumption (Ibid., 243). De Certeau does not deny that the relationship between consumers and producers is uneven. What he questions, though, is the activity of consuming as being a passive one (Ibid., 245). The author refuses the idea of consumers passively absorbing products, and being molded by them. Such an understanding, he argues, can be traced back to the Enlightenment and the development of the idea that the book will educate society (Ibid., 241-2). Yet, the relationship producer/consumer – media/consumers, for instance – envisaged as a passive one finds yet another analogous model: it reproduces the relationship Church/faithful (*fidèles*) (Ibid., 245). Therefore, contrary to such passive perspectives, de Certeau asserts that reading is a productive activity. To read is an active/creative exercise that is made possible by oral communication (Ibid., 244). As he explains:

Une mémoire culturelle acquise par l'audition,
par la tradition orale, permet seule et
enrichit peu à peu les stratégies
d'interrogation sémantique dont le déchiffrement
d'un écrit affine précise ou corrige les
attentes. De celle de l'enfant jusqu'à celle du
scientifique, la lecture est prévenue et rendue
possible par la communication orale (Ibid.,
244)

By emphasizing the importance of orality, the power of the text as a stable system controlled by the author loses part of its efficacy. By analogy, reading is to writing what tactics are to a place controlled by strategies; in other words, reading is a movement within a controlled space.

What is, then, the status of the text? For de Certeau, reading is the effectuation of the text. The text only has signification when it is

read, it depends on the reader. For this reason, the text is organized by a code that escapes it. Hence, the text only becomes text in its relation to the reader. Such relation is marked by two combined "attempts". One refers to the will to organize a readable space (to write) and the other is related to a "démarche", a movement within the text (to read) that is necessary to effectuate it (Ibid., 247). For de Certeau, the possibility of a literal meaning of a text is the result of social power (Ibid., 248); it is the effect of the division between writing and orality.

De Certeau's analysis may suggest an overpowered reader, and he himself recognizes it. Such emphasis, he argues, aims at reminding us that one cannot simply take readers for fools (Ibid., 255). Nevertheless, to the question of an overpowered reader, the author points to the fragility of his or her position: "Qui lit en effet?" (Ibid., 251). For de Certeau, there is no doubt that the scripturary society extends its powers to most remote places of our imaginary, as happens with the media (Ibid., 254). However, to accept such an argument is not the same as considering such power to be absolute. As previously mentioned, different uses and different practices imply a plurality of results (*la culture au pluriel*). Were social texts absolute, society would be homogeneous and stable.

Concerning the reader's fragile position, de Certeau gives an answer that reflects much of his position towards God, history, culture and other subjects he deals with. In fact, his response is a quote from another author, Jacques Sojcher: "Ce n'est pas moi comme vérité mais moi comme l'incertitude du moi, lisant ces textes de la perdition. Au plus que je lis, au plus que je ne les comprends pas, au plus que ça ne va pas du tout" (Ibid., 251). The insecurity intrinsic to the act of reading is the effect of the reader's lack of a proper place. According to de Certeau, the reader is never the owner of the place (*lieu*), rather

he or she is a voyageur within the other's place (Ibid., 251-2). This position, or rather the absence of a place for the reader, echoes once more the mystical thought of de Certeau and also his approach to the process of enunciation. As mentioned above, the mystical "I" who speaks, who performs an action, has an "empty form." He or she speaks from a "siteless site related to the fragility of social position" (de Certeau 1997, 90).

At the beginning of this discussion about the essential character of orality, a quote from de Certeau mentioned "une mémoire culturelle." Memory is another key to understanding de Certeau's description of tactical movements, although it is a question that the author did not have the time to develop carefully¹⁷. In brief, the author defines memory as follows: "une présence à la pluralité des temps et ne se limite donc pas au passé" (Ibid., 320)¹⁸. This abstract definition reflects a refusal to locate memory as being a phenomenon whose activity is dependent exclusively on past experiences¹⁹. To better understand the functioning of memory in the way de Certeau envisages it is again easier if one looks at his examples. The topic appears in his discussion about the Greek *métis* (an art of thinking). In a general manner, de Certeau identifies in the notion of *métis* a close model to the tactics he wants to study, but he stresses the dependence on contingent situations.

¹⁷ The analysis of memory is briefly addressed in *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de Faire*. According to Giard, de Certeau regretted the fact that he did not pay much attention to memory in the book and had plans to discuss it more carefully, perhaps, in the third volume of *L'invention du quotidien* that never appeared (de Certeau 1990: XXII).

¹⁸ De Certeau differentiates memory (*mémoire*) from *souvenir*. According to him "Il [the *souvenir*] brille comme une métonymie par rapport à un tout" (de Certeau 1990: 133).

¹⁹ Burke's description of memory addresses similar questions, although he is more critical of Freud than de Certeau appears to be. Nevertheless, Burke's description may help to understand what is being discussed here. According to him, "There are many kinds of unconscious memories which, though not explicitly recalled, are recallable on demand" (Burke 1966: 69).

Following his description, the *métis* counts on the "right moment" (*kairos*), it changes a proper place (metaphors) and it does not retain what it does - "elle disparaît dans son acte même" (Ibid., 124). Therefore, as a memory, such knowledge has no proper place, it is not suitable to a general description, it is a "espace d'un non-lieu mouvant à la subtilité d'un monde cybernétique" (Ibid, 133). Although the dynamic and complex world of memory is not prone to conceptualization, de Certeau attempts to describe some patterns of its functioning. According to him, memory intervenes at the right moment and depends on the contingent; its articulation to the situation is the tactical instant. This articulation is not created, but sought out (*saisie*). The opportunity is made available "par des circonstances extérieures où le bon coup d'œil sait reconnaître l'ensemble nouveau et favorable qu'elles constitueront moyennant un détail de plus" (Ibid., 130). The capacity of memory to intervene in a given moment, with no predictable characteristics, dwells in the memory's dynamic organization, the subtleties of its cybernetic world as previously described (Ibid., 131).

Enunciation, orality, memory and stories are at the core of the reading of de Certeau's work that is being proposed here. The concepts of enunciation, orality, memory and story allow us to understand tactics as a performative operation. In addition, these four key terms leads to a focus on the use of language, rather than on resistance figured as revolution, upheaval or war. In sum, enunciation offers a model for the use or performance of language understood as a system. Orality - not as "pure voice," but as a practice within scripturary society - relates to the chief mode of the social relationship. Memory, in turn, is the knowledge acquired through social relationships, a knowledge that cannot be conceptualized but is triggered according to contingent situations (the tactical moment). Finally, storytelling is fundamental organizing procedure; it transforms places into spaces and spaces into places.

This four term model raises a number of questions. First, how should theoretical discourse deal with tactics? Second, how do they problematize the critiques of de Certeau's work? Finally, assuming that de Certeau's analysis is useful to understand the dynamic organization of society, what are its shortcomings? These issues will be dealt with in the following sections and in the next chapter.

The Theoretical Value of Fiction

If tactics escape theoretical discourse, how can one talk about them? A further examination of the examples given in the first chapter - the study of *la culture populaire*, history, and Foucault's account of the disciplinary society - may offer some insights. Once more, Foucault is a good starting point to discuss such questions. Tactical operations appear in Foucault's texts at least in two ways: 1) as movements of escape within the order described by Foucault, and 2) as the very means (ie. tropes) by which he develops his argument. Tactics escape Foucault's discourse for in his attempt to find a common matrix, the technology of power, he overlooks the dynamic on the other side of the chain, where consumers, readers and pedestrians obey different language-games. As de Certeau puts it, in this sense, Foucault's work presents a monotheist view, whereas the dynamic of society is polytheist. In fact, it is a matter of a polytheism within the monotheism of the panopticon presented by Foucault (de Certeau 1997, 188). Although the absence of references to the dynamic that organizes a society in relation to panoptical procedures may be a "blindspot" in Foucault's work, his capacity to describe these organizing procedures may itself testify to how what is received and imposed by power may be redisplayed otherwise. It is Foucault's ability to use (select, divide, etc.), a performative act, the material available to him, which opens the possibility to think about the disciplinary apparatus. What is Foucault delivering to his

readers then? As de Certeau observes, Foucault is a storyteller (Ibid., 192). The stories told by Foucault manifestly have their origins in a fissure in the disciplinary apparatus that allows him to ironically profit from a panoptical perspective to question panoptical procedures. At the end, the story Foucault tells his readers, which is a performative act, is a fiction.

The analysis of culture, more generally, is not free from "fictionality". De Certeau argues that cultural theorists cannot talk about culture without killing it and that the idea of *culture populaire* is founded in the very discourse of the intellectuals that aim to analyze it. How would de Certeau, then, do things differently? First of all, the constraints imposed by language are undeniable and this includes de Certeau's own limitations as a speaker¹. As presented in the previous chapter, there must always be a death for speech *parole* to exist. Nevertheless, there remains the necessity of taking the risk to say something, to organize references that will render a society livable². De Certeau does not suggest a model to study culture. In fact, he admits that, in an article co-authored by Giard, "nos catégories de savoir sont encore trop rustiques et nos modèles d'analyse trop peu élaborés pour nous permettre de penser le foisonnement inventif des pratiques quotidiennes" (de Certeau, Giard & Mayol 1994, 361). Nonetheless, the authors point to some texts, such as the work of Wittgenstein and Austin, that might offer hypotheses for thinking about those issues (Ibid., 358). In *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire*, de Certeau also calls attention to attempts to recover voices that are silenced, such as in Deleuze's *Anti-Oedipe* and Lyotard's *Economie libidinale* (de Certeau 1990, 236).

¹ The use of language is discussed more carefully in the next chapter.

² See de Certeau's "Les révolutions du 'croyable'" about the necessity

Although de Certeau did not have the time to develop further his ideas concerning the study of ordinary culture, he and Giard do suggest some points upon which such research should focus: the oral, the ordinary, and *l'opératoire* (de Certeau, Giard & Mayol 1994, 353). The importance of the oral was discussed above. Briefly, the oral has a foundational character in social exchange. There is no communication without orality (Ibid., 355). *L'opératoire*, in turn, refers to the practices (operations) that organize a culture. As de Certeau and Giard write, "la culture n'est pas l'information, mais son traitement par une série d'opérations en fonction d'objectifs et de relations sociales" (Ibid., 358). Such operations have three aspects: aesthetic, polemic, and ethical. The aesthetic character of these operations finds its correlative in the poetic gesture that re-uses a given language while transforming it. The polemic refers to the fact that to take a language and re-use implies a power relationship. For this reason, such operations also have an ethical character because they point to a resistance against an imposed model (Ibid., 358). Finally, the authors insist that research should focus on the "ordinary". The "ordinary" (*l'ordinaire*) of a culture refers to the practices that consume - not a passive but a productive consumption - what they receive obeying particular codes of reference, and personal interest (Ibid., 360). Rather than being homogeneous, the ordinary culture is formed by a plurality of codes, references and interests. In other words, there is a plurality of language-games, to use one of Wittgenstein's expressions, following rules linked to particular situations.

This brief outline does not aim to offer a model of research. Rather, they are clues to start thinking about what is usually left aside by modern research methods when they attempt to study culture. In addition to such references, de Certeau's approach to history may also

of authorities (references) (de Certeau 1993).

offer other insights. In the debate published in *Histoire, Mystique et Politique: Michel de Certeau* (1991) the question about de Certeau's model of doing history was raised by Pierre-Jean Labarriere (Giard, Martin & Revel, 1991: 154). Martin responded that when he asked de Certeau about models, the latter suggested to pursue what resists the model. One could first construct an imperative model to then tackle what it does not deal with (Ibid., 154). Giard, in turn, gives a more detailed analysis. Her reading of de Certeau suggests that the latter does not give a specific status to models, nor does believe that they have the capacity of delivering a truth that is hidden behind the facts. Giard like Martin also argues that for de Certeau there is the necessity of pushing every model to its limits in order to demonstrate what the model is capable of and what it leaves as a remainder – that which cannot be named, labeled, accessed or, in one word, controlled (Ibid., 154). Yet, and this is perhaps a good way to summarize de Certeau's position towards models, Giard writes that this exercise of pushing a model to its limits is an "exercice inconfortable qui substitue à l'idéal de vérité l'exigence de véracité" (Ibid., 155). As such, the model is used by the historian as a tool; it is in service of the historian, but he or she can never become a slave of a model, even if he or she masters it better than other methods (Ibid., 155). In spite of the clarifications offered by de Certeau and Giard, what is presented by de Certeau is a picture of historians who cannot tell the "truth", cultural theorists that cannot talk about culture and a Foucault who does not deliver what he wants: the organizing principle of a society. However, this does not imply the impossibility of writing or talking about such problems. Rather, it points, first, to the necessity of

²² Lyotard is concerned with similar problems in his discussion of "impiety" and Plato: 'Le simulacre est trompeur comme idole (eidolon); mais pris comme eikos (vraisemblant), il aussi un indice sur le chemin du vrai, du 'propre' (Phedre 261 sq.)' (Lyotard 1983: 42).

recognizing the theoretical value of *fiction*.

Throughout this paper, the idea of fiction has appeared in different situations: as the fictions of cultural theorists and historians who believe to speak in the name of the real; as the fiction implied in writing; as the fiction that organizes society and other circumstances. However, the idea of fiction should not be taken as a mere alienation from the real. For de Certeau:

Fiction, in any of its modalities -mythic, literary, scientific, or metaphorical- is a discourse that "informs" the real without pretending either to represent it or to credit itself with the capacity for such representation (de Certeau 1997, 202)

Where does a fiction acquire its legitimacy after all? For de Certeau the act of believing is an investment made by subjects in a proposition held as right (de Certeau 1990, 260). However, believing is a rather complex process. What and why is something believable? How can one believe something? In an article published in 1985, the year previous to his death, de Certeau states that a technical concept for believing is missing in anthropology including religious anthropology (de Certeau 1985, 252). The author, then, develops an argument about the act of believing centered in the notion of an Other which founds discourse and escapes it. The relationship with the Other, writes de Certeau, appears "sous de formes interrelationnelles (la relation à autrui), temporelle (la loi d'une durée) et pragmatique (la résistance des choses)," that is, to belief is a "*pratique de l'autre*" (Ibid., 252). It is important to notice here that the focus of de Certeau's argument is on the operations involved in believing instead of on the object of belief (*article de foi*).

De Certeau draws part of his analysis of believing on Aristotle's notion of *endoxa*. According to the author, *endoxa* points to what is acceptable to everyone, the majority, or the prudent men (*sic*). But,

what is acceptable? De Certeau finds in Aristotle a cycle: "est 'endoxo' (admis) l'énoncé tenu par un locuteur 'endoxo' (admis)" (Ibid., 257). Although, the problem of a definition of prudent men and women still is a problematic, as it was in Aristotle's time, what de Certeau stresses in the Aristotelian formula is the impossibility of an autonomous philosophy (Ibid., 257). That is, what is acceptable always depends on the social relation, it depends on what was received previously (*le reçu*) as *endoxa*. The simplest analogy is a child learning to talk. What he or she learns from his or her parents, friends and relatives will allow him or her to produce his or her own discourse: "C'est un discours des autres qui rend possible la construction d'un discours propre" (Ibid., 256).

The procedures that organize what is received demands a time (*la loi d'une durée*) to define who may speak and what may be spoken (*l'énoncé*) and a time to assure the coherence of the *énoncé*, its consequences and its relations to other *énoncés* (Ibid., 258). The problem today is that such authoritative organizations are disseminated. As de Certeau observes, "l'endoxal s'est disséminé aux quatre coins du monde en macro- ou micro- constellations des locuteurs référentiels" (Ibid., 259). Nevertheless, for de Certeau, the received (*le reçu*) still forms the basis for practices that will create social or scientific organizations. Every belief stems from what it has received as admissible (Ibid., 259). De Certeau calls the dissemination of what is believable (*les croyances*) a *poétique*. What such a poetic produces as believable has an incomplete meaning and its representations are metaphors that allow different representations. Regarding the act of believing, the author argues that it involves two postulates that are in tension but that cannot be overcome: "il y a de l'autre, et, d'autre part, il doit y avoir du sens [author's emphasis]" (Ibid., 260). Hence, the believable is the representation of an aesthetic experience (the

admiration of the other) and of an ethical *a priori* (Ibid., 261).

The selection of what is received and the selection of speakers obey analogous procedures in both social and scientific areas. When it comes to the institutional treatment of what is received, the institution substitutes the poetic that disseminates what is received in order to speak in the name of it - the institution acquires a enunciative character. Playing the role of the speaker, the institution gives coherence to what is received and, then, re-presents it (Ibid., 261-2). The risk in this process, according to de Certeau, is the detachment between the institution and the poetics of the *reçu*. According to him,

L'institution qui réglait les croyances se transforme alors en une institution technique. Elle cesse d'être elle-même reçue ou croyable, sinon au titre de la croyance générale qui, dans le paradigme culturel d'aujourd'hui (ou d'hier?), s'attache à une scientificité (Ibid., 263)

Refusing the general belief in scientificity, de Certeau stresses the theoretical value of fiction. Fiction's credibility stems from the operations (of believing) described above as *la pratique de l'autre*.

Tactics Undermining Places or Places Organizing Tactics?²³

The *Introduction* of this thesis presented some critiques of de Certeau. After going through de Certeau's ideas, it is time now to discuss such readings more carefully. While the observations made by Frow, Morris, Caroux and Fiske (who is rather an enthusiast of de Certeau) will reappear, we will consider the work of others as well. Once more, our discussion will start with Frow's remarks. Frow observes

²³ This section will leave aside Fiske's (1988) case because it is not a critique of de Certeau's work. For more about the relation between the work of John Fiske and de Certeau, see Buchanan (1993), Morris (1990: 22-33) and Silverstone (1994: 263-4).

that tactics have a "semiotic and systemic dimension" and that it is necessary to emphasize this aspect in de Certeau's work because it is easy to miss it due to the latter's insistence on the "singularity and particularity of practices" (Frow 1991, 59). As he writes:

The point is that uses and doings are codified, and that these generative codes will necessarily feed back into the process of textual production. There are no codes of reading to which there will not correspond (at least potentially) a set of codes of writing. The appeal to a pristine (and invisible) experience [author's emphasis] of the text is both unwarranted and in principle dangerous . . . The danger is this: that in the absence of realized texts which can be subjected to determinate analysis - in the absence of a definite and graspable object - the analyst will inevitably reconstruct such an object (Frow 1991, 59)

To this, it is worth adding Proulx's similar observations. Proulx, however, appears to be more prone to accept an active audience. His analysis stresses the usefulness of de Certeau's ideas for thinking about media and his questioning owes much to his reading of Foucault. Proulx offers the following analysis:

Alors que pour de Certeau, il y a un clivage très net entre stratégie du pouvoir et résistance à celui-ci, Foucault définira de même dans un premier temps, les pratiques de résistance comme réponses aux stratégies anonymes du pouvoir. Mais dans l'analyse complexe de Foucault, ces foyers de résistance seront en même temps les lieux à partir desquels le pouvoir s'installe et prend prise (Proulx 1994, 194)

And later he asks:

Par ailleurs, les pratiques individuelles de résistance sociale et culturelle ont-elles encore aujourd'hui la possibilité de se traduire par une action collective dans la soi-disant société de communication?²⁴ Ne sont-elles pas, au contraire, immédiatement récupérées par des stratégies marketing de contrôle continu des tactiques? (Ibid., 194-5)

²⁴ The question concerning the socio-political impact of tactics is also raised by Caroux (1982). This problem will be discussed later.

As far as we are concerned, there is no reason to believe that de Certeau's development of the notion of tactics represents an autonomous operation in relation to the disciplinary apparatus, to use a Foucauldian terminology. As it was observed in our description of de Certeau's scripturary machine, resistance is often reduced only to a "scream" of pain. A Foucauldian argument would suggest that this limit of the body implies an adaptation of the apparatus to the organic condition of the body, as power needs the body to perform its disciplinary operations. De Certeau probably would not refute such an argument. However, this recognition of the power of adaptation of the disciplinary apparatus does not imply its total control over its subjects. No theoretical frame, be it postmodern, Marxist, liberal, or other, can successfully imagine modern Western societies as having a stable organization. At most, one can see a temporary hegemony.

In a given hegemonic situation, depending on the approach, resistance may be located at the body who screams, at the economical contradiction intrinsic to capitalism or at the sovereign subject, if one still believes in a liberal model. De Certeau follows a line of thought that recognizes that the body *may be and often is, but not necessarily is*, the last instance of resistance. Nevertheless, he wants to call attention to the *performative* character of practices other than the ones related to power, control, and domination by using a linguistic analogy: enunciation. The argument that tactics are also systematic has more to do with modes of operations than with simply obeying a textual code, which is only part of the enunciative process. The text may be a departing point for a tactical (enunciative) operation, but the tactical moment (the enunciative act) implies other aspects alien to the organization of the text. The enunciative process implies a previous text; however it is also a deflection of the text, as the writing of the

text (an operation of control that is also performative) itself deflects the objects it aims at representing. It is this performative act that renders meaning a very complex issue. Bearing in mind the enunciative correlation, the examples of the pedestrian, the reading act, and others presented by de Certeau to describe tactical operations should also be understood as performative acts.

In regard to the reconstruction of the analyst (Frow's critique) and the fact that marketing strategies will recover tactical movements (Proulx's critique), it is clear that this may occur and often does. However, this eventual "recuperation" will feedback to the social text, transforming the social reality, in a way that involves a tension within everyday practices. Neither the word of the analyst, nor the strategies of marketing, represent the end of the symbolic exchange. Just as the analyst depends on everyday practices (the Other) to create his or her discourse - as Foucault's disciplinary apparatus depends on the body - everyday practices also depend on what they receive - what is *endoxo* - to create their own stories. What is at stake here is a productive activity that always depends upon and is in constant tension with an Other.

Frow also raises the question of the bi-polar and monolithic idea of power presented by de Certeau (Frow 1991, 57-8). Morris makes a similar remark when she observes that polarities "mark not only the semantic organization of de Certeau's discourse but the narrative thrust of his text" (Morris 1990, 37). Such interpretations may have a common origin. As observed above, de Certeau stresses the performative character of everyday practices by profiting from an enunciative correlation. Hence, the metaphor usually implies a pair such as speaker and interlocutor, *énoncé* and *énonciation*. Perhaps that is why there is an apparent bi-polar model in de Certeau's text. However, the enunciative metaphor refers to every particular symbolic situation

involving an interaction of two sides. Therefore, the metaphor applies to different relationships produced by different language-games. By the same token, different language-games will produce different forms of tactical procedures. Moreover, to think in terms of a bi-polar model, is to think about places and spaces as distinct categories. Again, the enunciative correlation suggested by de Certeau wants exactly to avoid a division that has its correlative in the distinction between *langue* and *parole* and *énoncé* and *énonciation*.

Morris, as observed earlier in the *Introduction*, is also suspicious of a category of Other that does not arrive anywhere. Moreover, she questions the alienation of the intellectual towards everyday life, which, according to her, is contingent and not constitutive of academic practice (Morris 1990, 36-7). In what concerns the first remark (where does the Other arrive at?) Poster's observations about de Certeau's work may be helpful: "The theory of the everyday is surely no outline of revolution, no grand strategy of upheaval. Instead de Certeau's position serves to confirm the unsutured nature of the social" (Poster 1992, 103). In other words, tactics point to a social dynamic, rather than to an agenda. However, as it will be argued in the next chapter, tactical operations may or may not lead to more specific goals. In regard to the alienation of the researcher from everyday practices, such alienation is constitutive to the extent that language in general implies a deflection from reality. This does not imply that the researcher cannot talk about everyday practices. Rather, it points to the necessity of acknowledging that as a representation, the discourse of the researcher has an *ordinary* status, a condition that must be admitted from the beginning and should not be hidden in his or her professional practice.

Earlier in this section, a quote from Proulx raised the question concerning the possibility of everyday practices becoming a collective mode of intervention (Proulx 1994, 195). Proulx's concern about the

apparent lack of a collective character of the anti-discipline is shared by Caroux. For Caroux, de Certeau "ne prend pas suffisamment en compte les menaces que le processus de sérialisation fait peser tant sur la sphère des relation sociales que sur la sphère politique" (Caroux 1982, 151). In his view, industrial capitalism and the secularization of society push the anti-discipline to a private realm. Following his readings of Sennett, Habermas, and Arendt, he observes:

Le constat est le même: ces conduites de privatisation, ces réseaux d'antidiscipline accompagnent deux processus qui touchent la société civile, la destruction de ses capacités relationnelles autonomes et de ses capacités institutionnelles (Ibid, 154)

This movement towards the private sphere, however, does have a collective character for Caroux in the sense that such movement creates new solidarities. However, such solidarities have an almost illegal character as they do not have a strategic aspect, in the sense that they do not affect the collective organization of power (Ibid., 147-151).

In our *Introduction*, it was observed that the possible private character of tactical operations is in part a result of the division between place and space which appears to echo a clear distinction between the public and the private spheres. In the case of de Certeau, the separation between place and space does not exist. To think in terms of public and private, which be may useful in some cases depending upon the meaning of the distinction, is to run the risk of excluding a series of other instances and activities that contribute to the organization of society; it is to believe that society is made livable only by bureaucratic institutions that do not depend on the activity of their subjects. Nevertheless, Caroux and Proulx are not wrong in asking such questions. Tropes, trickery and other tactical operations may avoid actual resistance or may backfire. Conversely, one cannot take such movements simply as a passive anti-discipline. In the worst case scenario, such anti-discipline demands at least a new organization of

power. The organization of power depends on the body to exist and, if there is a fissure in this process of control, other forms of power may be being organized. Finally, as Poster elaborates, de Certeau's theory of tactics is not a formula for revolution, but points to the tensions involved in social relations.

A final commentator of de Certeau's work worth of discussion is Roger Silverstone (1994). He suggests that de Certeau understands the dynamic of everyday life in a dichotomous way that cannot be sustained (Silverstone 1994, 160). Instead, in his discussion of television and everyday life, Silverstone argues for an "essential tension".¹⁵ As he explains:

It [the essential tension], of course, refers to a dialectic at the heart of social reality. This dialectic is that of the play and place of media in social life. It is a dialectic of freedom and constraint, of activity and passivity, of the public and private, and it is worked through at the interface of institutional forces and individual actions, historically situated and embedded in the contrary discourses of everyday life (Ibid., X)

Such an argument does not seem to be at odds with de Certeau's analysis. The idea that there is no division between place and space, that the oral can only be understood within the scripturary machine, that stories transform places into spaces and spaces into places, appears to point to the "essential tension" (dialectic) that Silverstone is arguing for, although the author suggests otherwise.

Silverstone also calls attention to another very important issue in de Certeau's work: the inconsistency and contradictory aspect of the latter's metaphors to describe the social dynamic (Silverstone 1994, 163). Silverstone is right. De Certeau's metaphors suggest confrontation (war and guerrilla), banality (play and rent), and even theatricality

¹⁵ Essential in the sense of a constant tension and not as something intrinsic or unchangeable to one of the sides involve in the dialectical process (Silverstone 1994: X).

(trickery). In regard to de Certeau's metaphors, it is interesting to note that many commentators of his work tend to focus only on some of his metaphors, and, depending on the ones chosen, de Certeau appears to offer a more optimistic or pessimistic approach. For instance, Fiske seems to have a predilection for adaptation, trickery, manipulation, and guerrilla warfare (Fiske 1988, 288-9). Silverstone also stresses the military metaphor but alongside the geographical one (Silverstone 1994, 120). Proulx argues that de Certeau's paradigm is reading (Proulx 1994, 180). Every metaphor offers its limits and possibilities, but it is remarkable that those who stress the war metaphor tend to read de Certeau as offering a binary and monolithic understanding of power. In other words, to focus on the war metaphor may lead to an A versus B picture, A and B being coherent organizations.

The inconsistency of de Certeau's vocabulary may be either a result of a conscious strategy that refuses to analyze a variety of social interactions in the same manner, or an indication of the author's struggle with his own ideas. In any event, we still see the fundamentally *performative* character of tactics, as they are correlative to the enunciative process. Indeed, performativity is central since reading, use, spatial organization, and play all imply a performative act. It is thus now to performativity that I shall turn, and in the next chapter draw on rhetorical theory to deal with question of enunciation.

CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE AND THE SPACE OF TACTICS

Michel de Certeau dedicated a great deal of his work to stress the active participation of everyday practices in the organization of the social fabric. His emphasis on operations other than the so-called disciplinary ones is not the result of a naïve understanding of the power relations at stake. Instead, it arises in an acknowledgement that the authorities (symbolic or actual persons and institutions) that organize society are losing, or have lost, their legitimacy due to an excessive technization of power and because of a pluralization of points of references. The author seeks to suggest ways to start understanding the dynamic of a society trying to organize itself without a Speaker, without a universal rule.

If de Certeau's work, in what concerns agency, may look optimistic in relation to more deterministic theories, it is probably because the author has clearly shifted to a different object of research. De Certeau seems to have taken risks in theorizing the active participation of subjects, but while he is very careful in calling attention to the performative/creative/productive character of everyday practices, he is less concerned with, or did not have the time to describe, how tactical operations may develop into solidaridarities, fail to do so, or may occur without a tactician's intention. This is to our view the main shortcoming of de Certeau's theorization of tactics. If it is true that a plurarity of points of references, solidaririties, communities and language-games offer the ground to tactical operations to succeed, de

Certeau tells us very little about the process that originate them. Such a theorization is needed to bring de Certeau closer to issues more often debated in Cultural Studies. This chapter will deal exactly with these aspects of tactics. However, to acknowledge that resistance may not succeed does not mean that tactics are not a changing factor in the organization of space. Tactics must be read as a continuous movement attempting to profit from contingent situations, a movement that marks the unsolved business of the social, rather than a move of A against B. In order to advance de Certeau's argument, tactics will be analyzed from a rhetorical perspective, following his own suggestion that they are correlative to enunciative processes and tropes. By opting to focus on enunciation and tropes, this discussion will be developed primarily in terms of language. In doing so, this analysis will set aside other aspects such as the material conditions of or the psychological factors involved in resistance. Nevertheless, this emphasis on language does not deny problems involving both material and psychological issues.

De Certeau's correlation between tactics and tropes is not the sole motive that make us turn to rhetoric. Solidarities and communities imply some sort of agreement among individuals. Such agreements are achieved by persuasion and identifications that depend on contingent situations, and this is the realm of rhetoric. Tropes, as tactics, are part of the performative use of language that leads to such identifications. Bearing this in mind, this chapter will stress two basic notions: (1) the status of language as a space of conflict and identification that limits and open possibilities, and (2) the figure of the addressee as a determinant factor of an effective tactical operation. In order to do so, it is important to address the issue of the contingent and the unavoidable necessity of place. This first step is necessary to locate the space of agency within language.

The Given Place

According to de Certeau, strategies refer to a series of operations that aim at organizing space. One of their main procedures is the exclusion of the Other. In the case of modern Western culture, the gesture that best captures such operations of elimination is writing. Such elimination also produces a discourse on the Other, a practice that effaces its origins and its relations to power. Therefore, as an object of study, the Other is absent and is produced (as a different other) by the strategies that organize social space (a discipline or a society). However, the absence of the Other has a foundational role; its absence allows different texts to proliferate. Conversely, the absence of the Other also points to the death that haunts every discourse. Finally, strategies provide a "victory" over time as they organize the elements of place in a stable relationship. Why is this insistence on the organization of places so important? The emphasis on the creation of places is fundamental because every function, move or characteristic involved in the notion of tactics presupposes a place. The dependence of tactics on a place is analogous to the dependence of a rhetorical trope on the existence of an organized language. Tactics, as tropes, need something to play with, to make fun of, to use and to re-use. The existence of tactics is inseparable from a place, as the written cannot be thought of without the oral, or as one cannot separate *l'énonciation* from *l'énoncé* or *parole* from *langue*.

Paradoxically, if it is true that a myriad of disciplinary procedures aim at organizing social space, within these proper places dwells a limiting and liberating capacity for those who are subjected to them. It is limiting because what the place presents as admissible (*le reçu*) will determine much of one's perception of reality and subjectivity. However, as far as language is concerned, the relationship between what is received as "true" and its referent – tangible or not –

is not fixed. Therefore, the utilization of the same term in a different way becomes a possibility. The dependence on the Other, nonetheless, is unavoidable. A suggestive analysis of this paradox is offered by Butler in her *Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (1997). According to the author, "power not only acts on a subject but, in a transitive sense, enacts the subject into being" (Butler 1997, 13). Later she observes: "Subjection exploits the desire for existence, where existence is always conferred from elsewhere; it marks a primary vulnerability to the Other in order to be" (Ibid., 21). Why, then, is it possible to act in a manner not necessarily in accordance with the structures of power? Simply put, the process of internalization of norms is not a mechanical one. Subjects do not simply repeat, as a tape recorder would, what they are told. They may, but they also may not. Resistance can be located in this fissure, which also suggests a temporal gap in the chain of sign exchanges (Butler 1997, 94). Yet, the space for different uses of terms imposed by power can be reversed in a unconscious process of internalization, in an overlapping of discourses that can create contradictions within the structure of power, and lastly on the body that screams against an excessive artificial form of power and other instances (See Butler's discussion "Between Freud and Foucault", Butler 1997, 83-105). The way de Certeau, and rhetorical theory for that matter, envisage the possibility of a creative use of language is a result of the aforementioned dissociation of the referent, of the absence of a universal Speaker and of the way human beings use language.

To the dissociation of meaning and its terms, the use of language and the absence of the Speaker, it must be added the indetermination of the contingent. An illustrative analysis of the consequences of such indetermination is offered by Aristotle. According to him, there is no way to avoid the contingent. For instance, when he discusses art as a

rational quality and as one of the virtues that leads to truth he suggests that "art" deals with chance, that is, variable conditions that one encounters. Quoting Agathon, Aristotle writes, "Chance is beloved of art, and art of chance" (*Ethics*, VI, 4). His analysis of the contingent also appears in his *Rhetoric*. Rhetoric, as the "art" of finding the means to persuasion, also relies on the contingent. Rhetoric is an "art" that aims at finding tools to persuade in any particular case (*Rhet.*, I, 2,1). In other words, the rhetorician cannot predict the best argument until he or she is faced with the situation to be dealt with. Aubenque describes Aristotle's understanding of the contingent as being "c'est qui peut être ou n'être pas" (Aubenque 1997, 66). In other words, the contingent is indeterminate. Indetermination gives the rhetorician space to construct his argument. If it was not so, if the contingent was fixed, there would be no variation, there would be no disputes in the world and humans would live in a state of absolute knowledge without room for arguments or for the rhetorician. As Aubenque explains, if it was established in advance that the ill should die or live, why bother calling the doctor (*Ibid.*, 68).

The ontological indetermination of the contingent affects both tactical and strategic operations. That is, not only is the space opened by tactical operations constrained and liberated by the contingent but also the stability of a place is undermined by a certain degree of indeterminacy. The place, in what concerns tactical operations, is part of the contingent situation that is imposed on them. Such a situation is inevitable as every social organization presupposes some sort of organization. Although the place aims at offering a configuration of social space, which in fact is necessary, what is important to bear in mind is that every organization will also be marked by indeterminacy. This relative condition results from, among other factors, the ontological indeterminacy of the contingent.

As limited as a configuration of place may be, some sort of organization is necessary and inevitable. For this reason, to some extent, the necessity of organizing places, which is an endless process, echoes the necessity of the rhetorician (represented by the figure of the *phronimos*) to deliberate. Perhaps, the best way to understand this need for references is to look again at one of de Certeau's example. The author's analysis of the dynamics that organize the city in his classical article "Marcher dans la ville" (de Certeau 1990) seems to capture a great deal of the importance of place. In the text, de Certeau presents the relation between a rhetoric of walking and the panoptic eye of the urban planners that attempt to organize the space. In short, the movement of the passers-by cannot be grasped by the "blueprint" as drawn by the architects or engineers. Nevertheless, the streets and their proper names still work as references for the pedestrians. The pedestrian, illustrated by figure of the *Wandersmanner*¹⁷, creates his or her own itineraries within a space full of proper names. This movement is like a text that he or she writes without being able to read (de Certeau 1990: 141).

In sum, the challenge of every society is to organize its references under the ontological indetermination of the contingent. There is no "speaker" to determine what to do or what is going to happen. Nevertheless, every society needs references to exist¹⁸.

Language as the Space of Constraint and Liberation

As previously discussed, understanding how human beings use language is fundamental when attempting to comprehend why the notion of

¹⁸ "... A la fois 'pèlerin' . . . , 'errant' . . . et surtout marcheur" (Certeau, 1982: 25).

¹⁷ "Elles [the authorities, representations or people received as croyable] permettent une communication et une créativité sociale, car elles fournissent, à l'une, des références communes, à l'autre, des

tactics is a useful tool for thinking about agency and resistance. Moreover, a discussion of language in general is important because it will facilitate the analysis of the function of the addressee as will be proposed here. The necessity of recognizing the status of language in human relations is emphasized by de Certeau himself. To start thinking about the social dynamic involving places and spaces and strategies and tactics requires acknowledging the existence of a common place: the ordinary language (de Certeau 1990, 13). De Certeau, we saw in the previous chapter, draws much of his approach to language on the work of Wittgenstein. Following this line of thought, language is ordinary because the meanings of its terms are determined by their use within specific language-games (PI 7 and 43). Therefore, both theoretical discourse and everyday life conversations follow patterns and are conditioned by situational factors. This does not imply that "fire" cannot actually mean fire, but simply that the word can be used with different effects in different situations. Hence, to understand the meaning of a word is to understand its use in a sentence, which implies the mastering of a technique (PI 199).

However, instead of restricting this study to de Certeau's discussion of the use of language¹⁹, my suggestion is to analyze the matter in relation to Burke's *dramatistic* view of language, an approach that can also be located within the field of contemporary rhetorical theory. In short, the dramatistic theory understands *language as symbolic action*. Such an approach is particularly interesting for the purposes of this paper because it highlights the performative use of language. According to this view, language is understood in terms of "its poetic and rhetorical uses (its functions as expression and as

voies possibles" (de Certeau 1993b: 18).

¹⁹ Other linguistic sources influenced de Certeau such as Benveniste's theory of enunciation, as discussed in the previous chapter, and less explicitly Greimas.

persuasion, or inducement to action" (Ibid., 367). In addition, the theory refuses to reduce language to a system of correspondences between word and thing. Instead, the analysis of language starts with problems of "terministic catharsis" (Ibid., 367).¹³ However, our choice of Burke is not only because of the possible parallels one can trace between his and de Certeau's ideas, but also because Burke's rhetorical analysis offers important insights, especially through his notion of identification, to think about how people manage to agree and use language in a similar manner. Such uses will lead to the formation of different solidarities, communities and language-games. Therefore, by bringing in Burke's ideas to our discussion of de Certeau, we hope to advance the latter's argument as de Certeau only gestures towards such issues.

First, before dealing with the notion of identification, let me trace some parallels between Burke and de Certeau in order to relate their theories. Burke begins by assuming that human beings are symbol-using animals. In other words, people use words or representations to express themselves and make sense of the world. However, according to Burke, human beings are not simply symbol-using animals, but also a symbol-making and symbol-misusing animal (Burke 1966, 6). As a symbol-using animal human beings use words to talk about nonverbal events, objects and feelings. In this process, words function as a screen between the human beings and the nonverbal. However, a problem then arises: people talk about the nonverbal in terms of what they are not, that is, symbols (Ibid., 5). Therefore, to talk about things in terms of what they are not indicates that there is an implicit negativity in

¹³ Terministic catharsis for Burke implies "transformation" in the sense of the technically developmental, as when a major term is found somehow to have moved on, and thus to have in effect changed its nature either by adding new meanings to its old nature, or by yielding a place to some other term that henceforth takes over its functions wholly or in part" (Burke 1966: 367).

language. In addition, as was aforementioned, human beings are also symbol-making and symbol-misusing animals, for a term can be used to describe different or new situations and things. This aspect of language is perhaps what led Hutcheon to humorously remark that it is some sort of a miracle that people ever manage to communicate, especially when communicating in a ironic mode (Hutcheon 1995). Nevertheless, people do manage to communicate, and even succeed at irony.

This "miracle" has certain *a priori* that allows for it to happen. To use words properly, it is necessary to know that it is not the thing it stands for (Burke 1966, 12). The substitution of a thing for a term implies a process of *entitlement* and abbreviation. Such a process will allow for the use of non-determinate words such as "dog" and "car" (Ibid., 361). The following example will help make this clearer. For instance, Burke's example "The man walks down the street" can be understood as a title for a situation. To function properly the sentence needs a "forgetting" (Ibid., 75) of some aspects of the situation described - whether the man is tall or short or is walking fast or slow. In addition, by abbreviation, the situation can be reduced to a "man-walking" situation or a "walk-situation." As Burke puts it:

"Entitling" of this sort prepares for the linguistic shortcut whereby we can get next "universals" such as "man," "dog," "tree," with individual men, dogs, and trees serving as particularized instances or manifestations of the "perfect forms" that are present in the words themselves (Ibid., 361)

Entitlement, however, is a result of a social process, and not only of individual uses. Burke understands the nature of words as being "receptacles of personal attitudes and social ratings due to the fact that language is a social product" (Ibid., 361). Understood in this sense, nature offers signs for words - which is what Burke calls *linguistic realism*. In other words, nonverbal things are not simply placed before human beings, but "[are] emblematic of the spirit imposed

upon [them] by man's linguistic genius" (Ibid., 362).

The notion of entitlement may also contribute to understanding some of the issues discussed in Culture Studies. Take, for instance, the recurrent problem of identity. As in Portuguese, Latino, American, black, white, man and woman, and consider one of these identities, for example, Latino. Recent theories in Cultural Studies admonish that identity is fragmented, that it is not fixed, and that probably notions of "becoming" are more accurate than "being". Despite the possibility of deconstructing the idea of Latino, or of highlighting the different processes involved in the social subjection (discourses) and its internalization by the individual one can also look at the issue from a linguistic point of view.

The word Latino is a title formed by images (images convey intangible ideas in terms of tangible ones) organized by ideas (the realm of reason and dialectic procedures) (See Burke 1969b, 84-90 concerning the relation titles, images, ideas). In other words, one can think of a Latino as a person from the geographical area called Latin America, which is formed by developing countries, in a tropical and subtropical climate, mostly marked by "x" and "y" cultural influences. This list of rationalizations (ideas), which creates a series of images, could continue indefinitely. These various ideas already account for the fragmentary character of identity and, yet, each idea in turn implies a "forgetting" of some sort. The title Latino, then, agglomerates images organized by a series of ideas, that is, the word Latino is a title for a situation that involves different aspects and which imply an *abbreviation* of a myriad of issues.

The consequence of this conception is that to use a word implies a forgetting of some aspects of the word. This forgetting suggests an *unconscious*, not only in terms of psychoanalytic theory, but as derived from what Burke calls "terministic screens." According to Burke, every

terminology *directs the attention* of its user. As he writes: "In brief, much that we take as observations of reality may be but the spinning out of possibilities in our particular choice of terms" (Ibid., 46). As everyone *must* use terms to express him or herself, one always depend on terministic screens which are socially determined. For this reason, Burke differentiates the unconsciousness as understood in psychoanalytic theory, in terms of *repression*, and the unconscious as a consequence of the terministic screen being used.

However, even within the limits of terministic screens, language implies a principle of perfection, of finishedness. Burke asks: "What is more 'perfectionist' in essence than the impulse, when one is in dire need of something, to so state this need that one in effect 'defines' a situation?", as he argues that even poetry is driven by this impulse of perfection, although in more subtle ways (Ibid., 16). To put it differently, every definition or word is driven by this principle of perfection in the sense that it intends or pretends to account for a situation or thing in its completeness. Nevertheless, the principle of perfection intrinsic to symbolic systems does not imply that perfection is or can ever be achieved.

To sum up, when the term Latino is used it implies a series of operations that will determine its use - there is a circular movement that determines different meanings in different situations. The use of the term is constrained by varying terministic screen(s). The word has also a summarizing aspect, the idea of entitlement, which is induced by the principle of perfection. The use of the word is a symbolic action, and the word is transformed according to given situations, terministic screens, and the process of entitlement. That is, depending on the terministic screen, the word Latino can be used in a depreciative way, with appreciation, as one is proud of calling him or herself Latino(a), and in many other ways. Furthermore, since a dramatistic approach

highlights problems of expression and persuasion, the use of term will result in a re-action (Ibid., 367).

How can such a view of language be linked to de Certeau's analysis, and more importantly, how can it be linked to the question of tactics which is the central concern of this thesis? To begin with, Burke's dramatisitic theory, understands language as symbolic action, as expression and persuasion, which both imply an act that transforms the meaning of a term. In other words, Burke's analysis describes a performative use of language. De Certeau, in turn, as discussed previously, is also concerned with performance. There is a difference in their approaches, as Burke often looks for his examples in verbal uses of language, whereas de Certeau extend his ideas to a variety of situations: walking in the city, consuming, cooking or living. Nevertheless, Burke is also concerned with the *symbolic* and the way language influences people's perception/deflection of reality. This brings Burke close to de Certeau, as the latter appears to be pointing in the same direction as can be noted in his article "Marcher dans la ville" (Walking in the City), where he discusses how style¹⁰ and uses *criscross* in order to "former un style de l'usage, manière d'être et manière de faire" (de Certeau 1990, 151). Therefore, it should not surprise us that most of de Certeau's correlative terms to tactics have a linguistic origin (enunciation, tropes, etc.).

As for the principle of perfection inherent to the use of language, it complements de Certeau's analysis. De Certeau touches the same issue in a somewhat different manner than Burke. For example, according to de

¹⁰ Quoting Greimas, de Certeau writes that "Le style spécifie 'une structure linguistique qui manifeste sur le plan symbolique . . . la manière d'être au monde fondamentale d'un homme'" (Certeau 1990: 151).

¹¹ "L'usage définit le phénomène social par lequel un système de communication se manifeste en fait" (Certeau 1990: 151).

Certeau, Foucault is speaking from his place, therefore within a specific set of conditions. But, in order to speak there must a death of the Other (the object of study). That is, Foucault silences other practices that are also part of the dynamic organization of society to render his text stable. Therefore, the text (a use of language) aims at perfection in the sense that its elements are disposed in a way that erases possible tensions or fissures, and in that it implies forgetting of some sort as in Burke's example "The man walks down the street." De Certeau's analysis of such silencing places less emphasis on the desire of stability as an effect of the use of language per se or, if he does, it is a characteristic that is usually identified with the written text. For him, the desire for stability stems from the loss of a universal Speaker. After such a loss, the text becomes the main organizing principle of society and will gradually lose its efficacy.

However, this idea of finishedness is also implied in the oral use of language. Burke's approach may complement de Certeau's as the former claims that the principle of perfection, finishedness, and stability is a characteristic of language in general. De Certeau, in his very poetic style, makes a similar claim when he argues that there must be a death for speech to exist - "Sans doute faudra-t-il toujours un mort pour qu'il y ait parole" (de Certeau 1993b, 72). A quote from Burke is instructive: "There is a principle of perfection implicit in the nature of symbol systems; and in keeping with his nature as symbol-using animal, man is moved by this principle" (Burke 1966, 17). Concerning de Certeau's metaphorical use of death, Burke may again help to understand such a metaphor. When analysing Edgar Poe's work, he states that "perfection means *literally* a finishedness. The 'perfect is the *completely done* [author's emphasis]" (Burke 1966, 26-7). In the case at stake, Poe's poem "Raven," death offers the imagery for the idea of perfection. When de Certeau claims that there must always be a death for

speech to exist, he is point at the principle of perfection intrinsic to the use of language.

Returning to the question of of terministic screens, where does it fit within tactical and strategic operations? Terministic screens are neither fixed in number, nor in structure. Both strategies and tactics operate under given terministic screens, which may be the same or not, and they direct attention toward specific aspects of reality. In a way, a "terministic screen" suggests what in de Certeau would be the given uses of a language, uses that are determined by what is received as admissible. To some extent, terministic screens imply a scene from which one acts. Such a scene is created by social interaction in a somewhat similar way to the "théâtre d'actions" created by stories (récit). But, is it not a distortion of de Certeau's ideas to bring together tactical and strategic operations, and for that matter spaces and places, under the concept of terministic screens? To my view, the answer is no.

The distinction between places and spaces (practiced place) that de Certeau makes appears to be a way of emphasizing the power relations involved in the social dynamic of a society and the necessity of recognizing that places are not stable and coherent sites. In what concerns the use of language, both places and spaces, strategies and tactics, obey similar patterns of operations (tropes) in their use of language. Places and spaces must be thought of together as in a constant tension resulting from different uses of language, or from the tension created by different terministic screens. De Certeau's analysis of stories clearly points to such a dynamic. As the author observes, stories - telling, creating and re-telling - imply a performative use of language that transform places into spaces, and spaces into places in an endless work (de Certeau 1990, 174). Burke's dramatistic view does not overlook this tension either. When discussing the quest for knowledge, the author suggests that a dramatistic design would be of this sort:

One acts; in the course of acting, one

organizes the opposition to one's act (or, in the course of asserting, one causes a multitude of counter-assertions to come running from all directions . . .; and insofar as one can encompass such opposition, seeing the situation anew in terms of it, has dialectically arrived thus roundabout at knowledge (Burke 1966, 367)

And, then, the he sums up:

Thus roundabout, we'd say that action leads to passion (or suffering the opposition) - and passion leads to revelation (Ibid., 367-8)

Burke's example here deals with the possible contribution of a dramatistic view of language that could be offered to the scientific field¹². The design, however, is drawn from his general analysis of language as a site of tensions.

To conclude this section, as far as language is concerned, resistance is possible because language has no absolute status or no fixed relation between meanings and things. There is a fissure between received meanings and their use. The way language is used is determined by previous uses of it, but there is also a series of factors that produces change. Among such factors are the negativity implicit in the use of language, the plurality of terministic screens and the "forgetting" suggested in the notion of entitlement. Despite all these factors, the use of language is still moved by the principle of perfection, which, in de Certeau's terms, points to the death that will found every speech. To acknowledge all these factor does not imply that determined uses of terms may become accepted and that many times such uses are imposed and reflect a situation of domination. Yet, even in such cases there are no guarantees that such uses are going to be mechanically accepted by the members of a group. Still, it does not follow that from this indeterminacy the dominant uses of terms will change, to put it simply, they may or they may not. In any case, such

¹² The idea is that if one sets a laboratory to test something, he or she is necessarily "giving voice" to the thing tested (Burke 1966: 367).

new uses of language, which are correlative to tactics and tropes, will lead to the creation of new language-games, solidarities and communities. These issues are dealt with in the next section.

The Tactical Moment

In the last chapter, while discussing the dynamic organization of spaces, enunciation was presented as being correlative to tactical operations. Among the characteristics highlighted were: (1) the notion of language in use, (2) the speaker's appropriation of a language, (3) *the determination of an interlocutor (real or fictional)*, a contract, and (4) the establishment of a present marked by an "I" that speaks (de Certeau 1990, 56). These aspects are intrinsically related to de Certeau's conceptualization of space (*practiced place*), which, among other complementary descriptions, is defined by de Certeau as an unity of contractual proximities (Ibid., 173). Following a similar line of thought in his analysis of the mystical utterance, the author argues that the mystical speech creates dialogic spaces based on a *voló* - "God only speaks to those who...", or "I only address those who..." - which "delimits in language a path of circulation and circumscription" (de Certeau 1997, 91). Elsewhere, de Certeau states that "tout discours est défini par un destinataire et un destinataire. Il suppose un contrat [my emphasis] tacite entre eux (de Certeau 1993b, 196).

The conditions that establish the contract between the tactician and his or her interlocutor may be the determinating factor through which tactics may evolve from a dynamic movement to a more enduring form of solidarities. However, it is important to note that such solidarities are limited in their capacity to change the structure of power. As de Certeau observes in his analysis of the events of 1968 in France, there is no equivalence between "prendre la parole" and "prendre les affaires en main" (de Certeau 1968, 21). In fact, the capture of speech, the

moment where an "I" actualizes language, points to a work that is yet to be done (Ibid., 21-2). Nevertheless, even the determination of the contracts previously described is no simple business at the level of language. As we observed earlier, this is the main shortcoming of de Certeau's analysis of places and spaces and, for that matter, of society and culture in general. The reason why an individual or a group identifies with particular uses of languages or practices is a "tricky" issue. Some authors have addressed the problem in terms of desire. For instance Probyn writes about a "relational force among individuals" (Probyn 1996, 25). Desire makes everything or anything of a culture matter (Ibid., 27). Grossberg, in a similar vein, writes in terms of "affective investments" (Grossberg 1992, 81). Despite the function of desire in the process of identification, which is an important one, the question of why someone identifies with a group can be examined from a rhetorical perspective in terms of a speaker/audience relation. A rhetorical perspective would be more instructive because the determination of why one's desire is driven to specific objects of desire is a very problematic issue. Is such a desire symbolic (socially constructed)? Is it sexual drive? Is it linked to pleasure? In fact, in what concerns desire, Butler's position towards this problem is more accurate. As we observed earlier, her analysis points to the "desire for existence, where existence is always conferred from elsewhere" (Butler 1997, 31). Given the difficulty to theorize why one's desire is linked to a specific identity or cultural form, an approach focused on language, such as rhetoric, gives a clearer object of study to look at. When the attention is directed to language, processes of identifications must be analyzed in terms of their operations and not in terms of their content. In other words, it is possible to avoid the trap of determining, or getting too close to, notions of identification that echo an essentialism stemming either from the object of desire (the object has some intrinsic characteristic that attracts people) or from the individuals (the

individuals of a same group have the same desire). The only desire that one should bear in mind would be the desire for existence.

De Certeau's clearest attempt to theorize the capacity of a social group to organize itself around some meanings appears to be his article "Le croyable, ou l'institution du croire" (de Certeau 1985)¹³. The discussion that follows is an attempt to advance his concerns about the production of what is received as admissible and its use. As we observed, although de Certeau is very keen to describe the dynamic of social organization, he tells us very little about how it is ever possible to achieve agreement of some sort. We want to propose here the notion of identification, as it appears in rhetorical theory, to think about such a process of achieving agreement. Following Burke's explanation, Rhetoric "considers the ways in which individuals are at odds with one another, or become identified with groups more or less at odds with one another" (Burke 1969b, 22). Identification, as such, is an accessory to persuasion (Ibid., XIV), which is the traditional term linked to Rhetoric as defined by Aristotle. Why is identification the chosen term and not persuasion? Burke explains:

We might well keep in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience (Ibid., 46)¹⁴

The notion of identification then suggests a relationship between the speaker and the audience. If an argument is to succeed there must a

¹³ De Certeau discusses the formation of a social group around uses of language in his *La fable mystique* (1982). However, the text is specific about the mystics of the Middle Ages. At most, the book can offer some ideas, such as the discussion of the enunciation, to think about the issues raised in *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de faire* (1990).

¹⁴ Burke also observes that, depending on the case, one can focus on persuasion and/or identification to extend some aspect of the analysis

consubstantiality between both parts (Ibid., 20). However, consubstantiality or identification does not mean consensus. As mentioned earlier, rhetoric is concerned with how individuals at odds with each other become identified with groups more or less at odds with each other. Therefore, following Burke, "Identification is, by the same token, though roundabout, to confront the implications of division [author's emphasis]" (Ibid., 22). If there was no division no conflict would exist, therefore no work for the rhetorician. The notion of identification necessarily implies "its ironic counterpart: division" (Ibid., 23). In short, the concept presupposes that two parts are apart.

The idea of division implicit in the notion of identification appears in a different but similar way in de Certeau's work, as it is suggested in the title of the book *L'étranger ou l'union dans la différence* (1969). "*L'union dans la différence*" points to a plurality of language-games (*la différence*) founded (*l'union*) on a common ground, that is, on ordinary language. But union in de Certeau and identification in Burke are not the same concept. Nevertheless, de Certeau's plays the role of the rhetorician proclaiming the identification of men and women who are apart or divided; an identification (union) that presupposes a difference or division. The concerns of de Certeau are the same of the rhetorician, or Rhetoric in a general manner, which is "the state of Babel after the Fall" (Ibid., 23). In other words, what is at stake is the possibility of men and women organizing themselves in a world where there is no universal rule.

Why, then, do two parts identify? The identification is based on responses to given situations and related to particular knowledges - or memory in the sense of a dynamic knowledge, which are not classable and are triggered according to contingent situations. In this process of identification, desire is just one part, be it symbolic, sexual, linked

(Burke 1966, 46).

to pleasure or simply the desire for existence. In the process of identification, tactics, as tropes, are part of the performative use of language that aims at an addressee. Therefore, tactics should be understood as having a rhetorical function aimed at an audience. The goal is to identify the audience's ways with the tactician's ways. The audience can be understood through the figure of the judge. The judge can be a group, an individual, or even the rhetorician him or herself in a reflexive moment. Rhetorical enunciation demands an interlocutor, whether real or imaginary. In either case, the audience's recognition is a necessary condition. Bearing in mind the concept of identification and the fact that Rhetoric is always addressed, one can attempt to think of tactics as "tropes" that are part of a continuous rhetorical dispute. To put it differently, a society trying to organize itself without a universal rule, or without the guarantees that once the written text aimed at offering, is involved in a process of identification between parts. The tactical moment, the trope, can be understood as an operation of a process of persuasion as if someone attempted to organize and validate the uses he or she makes of the meanings received within a given situation. Such operations contribute to his or her understanding of reality. In this process, as we will see later, an audience is presupposed in the validation of such operations.

Regarding rhetoric, Burke also observes that "the resources of identification can operate without conscious direction by any particular agent" (Burke 1969b, 35). Therefore, there is always the risk of one identifying him or herself with arguments that may be disadvantageous to him or her. Tactical operations are also haunted by such a possibility. As de Certeau explains, "the 'I' that speaks (that act of enunciation) is 'a siteless site' related to the fragility of social position or the uncertainty of institutional referents" (de Certeau 1997, 90). But what kind of tropes are tactical procedures? To identify one trope with all tactical procedures would be a mistake. In fact, if a tactics/tropes

correlation is correct, different tropes account for different tactics which are particular to given situations (de Certeau 1990, 63-4). Moreover, although one can list and attempt to define a series of tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, irony or synecdoche, as Burke explains, such figures of speech "overlap upon one another" (Burke 1969a, 505). This is a fact that makes it even more difficult to identify only one trope with all tactical operations. Burke's own example of such overlapping is helpful. In his study of tropes and their role in the description of the "truth", Burke suggests that metaphor could substitute for perspective, metonymy for reduction, synecdoche for representation, and irony for dialectic. He gives the following example:

A dialectic [irony], for instance, aims to give us a representation [synecdoche] by the use of mutually related or interacting perspectives [metaphors] - and this resultant perspectives of perspectives will necessarily be a reduction [metonymy] in the sense that a chart drawn to scale is a reduction of the area charted (Ibid., 503)

An analysis of each particular trope and its possible correlation with tactics is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the relation of irony to tactics is suggestive. For Burke,

Irony arises when one tries, by the interaction of terms upon one another, to produce a development [author's emphasis] which uses all the terms. Hence, from the standpoint of this total form (this "perspective or perspectives"), none of the participating "sub-perspectives" can be treated as either precisely right or precisely wrong. They are all voices, or personalities, or positions, integrally affecting one another (Ibid., 512)

The idea of tactics seem to echo a great deal of Burke's understanding of irony in what concerns the articulation of different positions in one act without dismissing any of the positions. If one thinks in terms of the geographical metaphors suggested by de Certeau, the analogy would be as follows: the tactician acts from a social position within a place that is not determined by him or herself. In the tactical moment, or the

act of enunciation, such a position is incorporated in order to organize a different perception of the social space in relation to the arrangement determined by a place. Therefore, the tactical moment (ironic) presupposes the incorporation of two different spatial perceptions (metaphors) that will determine a different position in relation to the original point of departure. The tactical movement becomes Other, as it is not the same as the original position, it is a development¹⁵, as Burke argues, of a former organization of perspectives or metaphors. It is in this sense that we want to suggest an understanding of tactics as correlative to the ironic trope.

Whenever one uses language there is a tension between received meanings and one's own different uses of such meanings. Therefore, irony, as Hutcheon observes, while gesturing to such authors as Kenneth Burke and Jacques Derrida, is intrinsic to communication (Hutcheon 1995, 9). So are tactical operations as de Certeau discusses them. Consciously or not, the way people use and re-use meanings imply the tension between a previous meaning in a given place, and the new use, which is determined by contingent situations and by the performative use of language. That is why de Certeau suggests that tactics are the moving force of history (de Certeau 1997, 67). This is also what is at stake in de Certeau's "The Laugh of Michel Foucault" (1997)¹⁶ and the irony of history.

What is important to note is that tactics cannot be reduced to individual uses but also depend upon social organization. Here, a

¹⁵ Development here does not necessarily mean progress or a better situation.

¹⁶ In the article "The Laugh of Michel Foucault," de Certeau discusses a statement made by Foucault, who, during a conference, when asked about his position as a speaker, answered that he is sitting laughing at his audience. For de Certeau, "This surprising inventiveness of words and things, this intellectual experience of a disappropriation that opens possibilities, is what Foucault marks with a laugh. It is a philosophical signature of the irony of history" (de Certeau 1997: 194).

comparison to Hutcheon's analysis of the ironic trope is again instructive. According to Hutcheon, "discursive communities come first and that, in fact, enables [author's emphasis] the irony to happen" (Hutcheon 1995, 89). In a similar manner, the operations of tactics are made possible within discursive communities (a place). The definition of community, as Hutcheon herself acknowledges, is problematic (Ibid., 91-2). However, she suggests an understanding of community as being a dynamic and a subtly differentiated organization where something does manage to be shared (Ibid., 92). A rephrasing of Burke's description of Rhetoric's concern may offer a good definition for discursive communities as well. So, rephrasing Burke, communities are composed of individuals that are at odds with one another or become identified with groups more or less at odds with one another. And to bring de Certeau into the picture, this identification, which will form a discursive community, is, and must be if one believes otherwise, founded in what the author phrases as being a "l'union dans la différence;" it is founded in the uncertainty of what is admitted as believable, a belief grounded in ordinary language.

But again, how are such communities are formed? As discussed earlier, tactical operations, or enunciation, their correlative, are addressed just as irony is. Therefore, such communities must be thought of as processes of identification as discussed above. Regarding tactics, at least two potential audiences can be imagined: (1) The tactician, in a reflexive mode, and (2) an other, either as individual or as a group whose members are both identified and more or less at odds with one another. This second audience can yet be divided into the tactician's adversaries, and those facing the same opposition as the tactician. In other words, the tactician's goal may be to persuade an adversary to act in a different way or to persuade a potential ally to act in particular way. When tactics are addressed, they aim towards the recognition of their action (their utterance); they aim at a contract or agreement;

they seek, in rhetorical terms, the identification of their act".

What is the function of the interlocutor in this process of identification? Beyond the reflexive mode, where the speaker and audience coincide, the possibility of sharing or recognizing of the tactical moment is full of "pitfalls". Again, an inquiry into the function of irony will offer insight. Hutcheon defines irony as a "risky business" because it is "transideological" (Hutcheon 1995, 9). In other words, irony can operate in a variety of political positions and may occur intentionally or not. For an ironic situation to exist, two sides are at stake: the ironist and the interpreter. The ironist may or may not address the interpreter; an ironic situation may occur without the intention of the ironist. The interpreter is the "player" that attributes the irony, which is an interpretative and intentional act of the interpreter (Ibid., 11). If the analogy presented here is correct, the tactical moment will also depend on the interpreter, but de Certeau does not pay enough attention to the function of the addressee. The intention of the tactician may or may not contribute to the tactical moment. An inversion of meaning may occur without the acknowledgement of the tactician. In this sense, tactics are a possibility intrinsic to the use of language and an operation that cannot be anticipated.

To some extent, tactics could be said to be transideological as far as language is concerned. However, it is important to note that in de Certeau the distinction between tactics and strategies seems to be pointing to differences in their relation to language and not in their use. In their use of language, both tactics and strategies imply manipulations of language and many of their tools, such as metonymies and metaphors, are similar. This is not hard to imagine if, once again, the common basis of ordinary language is kept in mind. Therefore, both

¹⁷ Audiences are being treated separately in order to facilitate the analysis. However, many audiences may be being addressed simultaneously.

tactics and strategic procedures imply manipulations of language and, yet, both aim at the organization or re-organization of space. The distinction de Certeau makes between tactics and strategies has an operational character that attempts to understand relations of power. For instance, a main difference is their status and capacity to keep what they conquer or use. Strategies aim at the organization of a space that is stable, where time is controlled; they point to the fiction of controlling the object of history or the practices of everyday life. Strategies rely on power to sustain such situations. Tactics open possibilities by also using language. However, their relationship with time is radically different. Tactics do not suppose a control of time and they imply a continuous movement. Nevertheless, the use of language is common to both tactics and strategies, which, as de Certeau observes in his early writings on culture, points to a fissure between power and language (de Certeau 1968, 62).

Returning to the issue of interpreters and audiences, if tactics are to be considered as resistance to power, as many times irony is, the intention of the tactician is not sufficient to make tactical operations happen. The individual use of language does point to an undermining of power but as a general way to think about resistance, tactics should lead to an identification by the interlocutor at stake. In rhetorical terms, as a trope, as means of persuasion or inducement to action, tactics affect people that may become identified with such tactical operations (different meanings as use) or not. Such uses of language become part of memory and can be invested, moved, transmitted or lost, much in the way de Certeau writes about history (de Certeau 1993a, 22) – or, as he discusses in *La Culture au Pluriel*, their cultural value will depend on their usage (1993b, 219). Once more, such identification will not imply consensus but an accord among people that are separated, that are more or less at odds with one another. This movement may or may not become a local and classable organization against power in a traditional

sense. However, de Certeau wants to stress tactics' character as being collective, but not organized, movements that are spread throughout a place (a practiced place). As he writes, "Bien loin d'être une révolte locale, s'est une subversion commune et silencieuse" (de Certeau 1990, 293).

Being always addressed, as discussed earlier, irony may have as its audience the institution of power *per se* and offer a contestatory use of the available referents. Still, nothing can guarantee that the audience will get the irony and, yet, the audience may identify an irony without any ironist intending to make an ironic use of language. Tactical operations, which also obey ethical positions, may also intend a contestatory use of language against, for instance, institutions of power. However, the success of such uses, that may be conscious or not, also depends on its audience.

Why is it that irony, or tactics, can or cannot be conscious? Earlier, irony was identified as being intrinsic to the process of communication. In this sense, it may be unconscious. Then, irony was discussed in terms of intention, the intention of the ironist or the intention of the interpreter in determining the irony. The second case, however, implies the first. As for tactics, de Certeau also seems to be constantly moving between these two poles. As an example of intended tactics one can think of the case of Brazilian peasants. Resistance, for that matter, is defined as playing (*jouer/dejouer*) the game of the other; to use references derived from an external power (de Certeau 1990, 35). In the Brazilian case, de Certeau describes a situation where the peasants in the *sertão*¹² are oppressed by economic and physical means and subjected to the discourses of a richer strata of that society (Ibid., 32). There, de Certeau writes, "toujours, les fort gagnent et

¹² Extremely arid area in the Northeast of Brazil.

les mots trompent" (Ibid., 32). Such situation could not avoid the existence of a polemological (*polémologique*) space, wherein religion plays an important role. Of course, one could argue that this kind of resistance does not challenge established power. However, what is perhaps more important to bear in mind is the fact that there happened to be a fissure between the hegemonic discourse and the Brazilian peasants, i.e., between the discourse of the *coronéis do sertão* (the sertão's colonels) and the mystic discourse circulating among the peasants, which in fact is also the discourse given by religion (another authoritative power)³⁹. In short, making use of the languages they received from religion, from the *coronéis do sertão* and others, the peasants were able to open new possibilities, which did not mean that a better situation would arrive any sooner or later. The fact is that there is a dynamic movement in an apparent controlled space. Following Hutcheon, what is at stake are "dynamic discursive communities" that allow the re-use of a received language, the play with the said and the unsaid, that is, the ironic use of language. A play that de Certeau's summarizes by the sentence: "Agora a gente sabe, mas não pode dizer alto!" (de Certeau 1990, 32). Therefore, the possibility of a new organization of power is created, but it is under a material threat. Hutcheon also expressed this concern in her analysis of irony:

They (the receivers) are interpreting agents, with emphasis on agency and, thus, on action. Because of this there were [she is writing about the effects of irony during an exposition in Toronto that originated a series of protests] real, material consequences for the intending ironist (Hutcheon 1995, 204)

Finally, to conclude this chapter, the stress given to the operations involved in the use of irony may be very instructive to

³⁹ It is important to remember that tactics have not proper place.

⁴⁰ Free translation: "Now we know, but we cannot say it aloud."

understand tactics as the concept appears in de Certeau's work. Instructive because tactics, as irony does, depend on discursive communities, or places that are prior to them, to exist. The creation of such discursive communities can be understood as a process of identification where different uses of language produce different communities. Such a process is marked by the tension between what was received as admissible and the contingent uses of language.

CHAPTER 5
THINGS TO DO WITH MICHEL DE CERTEAU
CONCLUSION

What, then, is the status of tactics in Michel de Certeau's work? If tactics are to be understood as being resistance or as being a departing point to think about agency, it is important to bear in mind that their limits and possibilities exist at the level of language. Even if the issues at stake are walking on the street, cooking or living, the poetic of everyday life profits from the dissociation between the terms of a language and their referents and from a performative use of it in order to create new meanings (uses). To this must be added the fact that, following Burke's analysis, language is a medium to talk about non-verbal things in terms of verbal things, that its use implies some sort of "forgetting" or "unconsciousness". In de Certeau's terms, the use of a language is founded on a death, the death of the Other, that will always haunt its use.

Language's potential to influence practices such as walking or cooking is a result of the role it plays in people's understanding of reality, as is found in Burke's linguistic realism (Burke 1966, 362) and de Certeau's work (de Certeau 1990, 151). As the use of language is a performative act, there is no reason to imagine that the use of a term, its meaning, is mechanically repeated. In fact, the use of term suggests a productive and creative operation. Nevertheless, it is also important to be aware that the uses of the terms of a language are also a social product. Although particular individuals also mark the use of a term, it is necessary not to forget that every new articulation depends upon what

was received previously as admissible. In other words, the discourse of the Other allows the individual to produce his or her own discourse, as observed by de Certeau (de Certeau 1985, 256).

The tactical operation results from an articulation of what is received and a performative operation, even if it is to turn what is received "upside down" to a point where it becomes irrerecognizable¹¹. For this reason, one cannot think of de Certeau's divisions, places and spaces, *énoncé* and *énonciation*, and *langue* and *parole*, as separate categories. Society, according to this view, implies the articulation of both. The differentiation between place (controlled space, where time is stable, positions are fixed) from space (poetic space, operations that profit time, movement) points, as a general formula, to a differentiation between what is received and what is done with it, which will reconstitute what is received as admissible. Thus, there is neither a beginning nor an end to the chain. Rather, this is a dynamic, a circularity that suggests a tension between what is produced and how what is produced is used. Therefore, every social organization must be understood and questioned with the notion of fiction in mind (de Certeau 1997, 202). The truth and the answers achieved by each social group are only apparent equilibria.

Although the basic configuration of this dynamic is described in *L'invention du quotidien 1. Arts de Faire* (1990), especially when de Certeau writes about the circularity of stories that always aim at a spatial organization (de Certeau 1990, 128), de Certeau offers a clearer rendering of this general process of determination of what is held as admissible in "Croyances, ou L'institution du croire" (1985). In *L'invention du quotidien*, he focuses on the gap created by a

¹¹ Burke, for instance, writes about an ironic formula. What comes as A may return as non-A (Burke 1969a: 517). De Certeau, in a religious context, writes about a similar problem as when he argues that God appears under the figure of the *Etranger*, *l'Inconnu*, that cannot be

dissociation between the institutions defining what is held as admissible and the operations that organize society. Because of the focus of his book, the fracture between the institutions of knowledge (meaning the discourses produced by the academy, church, government, media, etc.) and everyday practices, de Certeau may seem to be opposing places to spaces. However, in the account offered here, de Certeau can be understood as identifying the status of places and spaces on the common ground of ordinary language. He does not aim at getting rid of places. Indeed, neither he nor anyone else can. As observed earlier, even a revolution will not change the function of places (de Certeau 1993b, 71). What de Certeau is criticizing are those configurations which seek to have total control of space; places that do not take into account the variation of time and the limits of language to account for what is being defined.

Tactics profit from fissures in the organization of places. They take advantage of a fracture within discourse in order to use its terms. Such operations depend upon memory (de Certeau 1990, 320; Burke 1966, 69), which guides the determination of the right moment to intervene (*kairos*). The tactic, in its enunciation, is not akin to a "sovereign utterance" (Butler 1997b, 359). Rather, it is an act performed from the fragility of a social place and marked by the incertitude of one's place (de Certeau 1997, 90). In addition, tactical operations as discussed by de Certeau appear on at least two levels: one unconscious, when intrinsic to the process of signification and the other conscious, as indicated in the example of the Brazilian peasants when they say that "Agora a gente sabe, mas não pode dizer alto!" (de Certeau 1990, 32).

Although de Certeau helps to understand the tensions and conflicts involved in all social organizations by theorizing about the different

recognized (de Certeau 1969: 9-16).

¹² Free translation: "Now we know, but we cannot say it aloud."

uses of language, he is not entirely clear about how these different uses become terms of different language-games, that is, how they become meaningful within a social group. He does recognize that uses are objects of investments and lead to variety of solidarities, but this insight is fragmented throughout the texts consulted in this thesis. In fact, his clearest attempt to organize his ideas concerning such a process appears in "Le croyable, ou l'institution du croire" (1985). De Certeau gestures towards such issues especially when he points to the contracts that are established by enunciative processes. However, the function of the addressee, the interlocutor or the audience is more complex than de Certeau makes them appear to be, including in the aforementioned article.

A more careful analysis of the addressee is needed in order to develop de Certeau's contribution to Cultural Studies, particularly with respect to issues of identity, marginalities, resistance, and the use of new media. Necessary because to focus on the function of the addressee helps one perceive how tactical operations may backfire or may occur without a conscious acknowledgment from the part the tactician. One way to make this step is to follow de Certeau's hints concerning the correlation between tactics and tropes or tactics and enunciation to account for the contract established with the addressee, whether real or imaginary. Therefore, our suggestion is to take the next step in the development of de Certeau's theories through the categories of rhetorical theory.

While persuasion is rhetoric's traditional key term, "identification", as described by Burke (Burke 1969b, XIV) would be a more accurate term as it clearly suggests the interdependence of both sides which are apart. That is, there is division but there may also be some sort of agreement and this is not only dependent on power relations. In fact, as far as language is concerned, there is a fissure between power and language. Our suggestion, then, is to consider tactics

in terms of means of identifying the audience's ways with one's own. The tactician seeks the validation of the tactical moment, a validation that is dependent on the addressee. However, an inversion of meaning, a new use, may occur without the tactician's intention. An audience may become identified with a speaker for a variety of reasons. Indeed, the identification may occur with an unintended audience. To think of tactics in terms of rhetoric does not imply that at some point one of the sides at stake will be defeated. Rather, we have an infinite and necessary process. "C'est une 'tâche infinie'," writes de Certeau, following his reading of Husserl dealing with the organization of society. There is no final argument, or as Lyotard puts it in his discussion of phrases in dispute, "phraser est sans fin" (Lyotard 1983, 27, § 17).

Can one say that a theorization of resistance based on language solves the problem of resistance? In what concerns Rhetoric, Charland observes that the development of rhetoric in North America is marked by a lack of a materialist foundation, by an over-empowering of words and by a lack of theory for the conditions of production of discourse (Charland 1999, 471). Can the same problems raised by Charland concerning Rhetoric be attributed to de Certeau? At some points, when the focus of the research is uses of language, it is easy to overlook such aspects. This is probably why de Certeau, after making a great effort to call attention to the productive character of reading, suddenly warns us that he may be giving too much power to his notion of "reader" and how such a reader opens new spaces (de Certeau 1990, 254). Nonetheless, de Certeau seems to be very aware of the organization of power in his attempts to describe the strategies organizing a place. In addition, to theorize resistance or agency with a focus on language and its possibilities is not equivalent to "prendre les affaires en main" (de Certeau 1968, 21). Even so, a focus on the uses of language does point to an activity that implies a silent subversion (de Certeau 1990,

Resistance based on uses of language does not offer a model for revolution and this is neither our nor de Certeau's goal. The use of language may cause results contrary to those intended by the user, and even intended meanings may come from elsewhere and may be harmful to the one using it. The task, then, becomes how to recognize successful interventions through the use of language. But, would not the identification of those moments, when language is used otherwise, be a reconstruction performed by the institutions of power? This is a risk. However, as Foucault writes, if the structures of power silence what the author calls subjugated knowledges or, in de Certeau's terms, the everyday practices, this silence may also be a sign of a failure in their own discourse. In Foucault's words:

But in the long run, it is probably over-optimistic, if we are thinking in terms of contest - that of knowledge against the effects of the power of scientific discourse - to regard the silence of one's adversary as indicative of a fear we have inspired in them. For perhaps the silence of the enemy . . . can also be the index of our failure to produce any such fear at all (Foucault 1980, 84)

Such a silence concerning everyday practices within theoretical discourse does not imply that these practices are not in a continuous, creative and productive movement. As Lyotard reminds us, "pouvoir ne pas parler n'est pas identique à ne pas pouvoir parler" (Lyotard 1983, 26, \$14). The fact that everyday practices are not heard within theoretical discourse does not imply that they are incapable of organizing different forms of knowledges.

In conclusion, de Certeau's conceptualization of tactics is a

¹³ Concerning the materiality of language, which is not the same material issue Charland is addressing, it is also important to realize that language has a material character as its uses (meanings) become terms of cultural exchange. In addition, and this is yet another different use of the word material, the use of language has material consequences as was the case of the use of irony during a history

useful tool to think of matters that involve processes of signification. However, his notion of tactics must be thought of with attention to the role played by the addressee and the contracts established by enunciative processes. Such a problematization reveals a complexity that goes beyond de Certeau's analysis. We believe that in the function of the addressee lies an essential aspect of how tactics, departing from given organizations of space, develop into new solidarities that will serve as the basis for other tactical operations. Tactical operations in order to be successful depend not only on the tactician but also on the addressee. The development of new solidarities reflects some sort of agreement, but not consensus, between the tactician and the addressee established in the enunciative contract. Such an agreement is achieved by a process of identification. Consciously or not, such identification is not simply a matter of desire, although it may be a factor, but also a response of specific knowledges (memory) to given situations.

exposition (Hutcheon, 1995: 204).

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