

Recalling Michel de Certeau¹

DOI

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11606/2179-0892.ra.2018.149659>

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ABSTRACT

Arguing for the recognition of Michel de Certeau's contribution to contemporary Anthropology, this article suggests affinities between Certeau's theory of practice and some thoughts by Michael Herzfeld and Tim Ingold. Connected to that, also proposing a personal account of the importance of Certeau's ideas to the author's own research work.

KEYWORDS

Michel de Certeau and Contemporary Anthropology, Theory of Culture, Everyday Practices, Culture Creation and Consume, *Métis*.

“What is known as academia (the apparatus that both defines and gives legitimacy and prestige to knowledge) is competent in the technology of reproduction: it generalises everything it touches.” With this direct and incisive statement, Beatriz Sarlo opens one of her essays on Walter Benjamin, in which she discusses the trivialisation of the philosopher’s formulations, a victim of university trends, which tend to erode the originality of ideas by converting them into *prêt-à-porter* formulas. In view of this phenomenon, which has overtaken others, like Foucault and Bakhtin, it is better to “forget Benjamin,” denounces the Argentine essayist, so that we can return to him with a fresh perspective (Sarlo, 2000: 77)².

It does not seem unreasonable to replace Benjamin’s name in Beatriz Sarlo’s essay with that of Michel de Certeau, whose ideas were diffused and somewhat trivialised, throughout the 1980s and onwards, especially in light of the publication of *The Practice of Everyday Life* (edited in 1980 and translated into English in 1984), a central framework for cultural studies worldwide. Differences aside - the Benjaminian vogue seems longer and more robust - it is possible to say that certain formulations by Certeau, especially those presented in the first volume of the work, tended to be made into formulas, stripped of the theoretical density that gave rise to them. “Tactics” and “strategies”; “practices” and “accounts of spaces”, “delinquent narratives”, among others, became common terms that inhabit university theses in the human sciences, functioning either as models to be applied (the “strategy”/“tactic” opposition, for example), or as metaphors.

In addition, there is a certain tendency to undo the threads that connect the arguments of the 1980 volumes with the author’s reflections on the writing of history, mystical experience, psychoanalysis and possession, which resonate in interpretations of everyday practices, affected by previously outlined problems. Moreover, this disconnection is found in the body of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, whose first volume (“*Arts de faire*”), read and reread, ended up overshadowing the second (“*Habiter, cuisiner*”), dedicated to presenting the results of a research commission carried out between 1974 and 1979, by Certeau, Luce Giard and Pierre Mayol.

Paradoxically, the author’s transit through varied domains - history, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, literature, linguistics, psychoanalysis, among others - functioned as an additional factor to feed fragmentation, where each area takes advantage of the portion that appeals to it and neglects the others³. It is not a question of resenting simplified interpretations or bemoaning trends - although their perverse effects are to be recognized. After all, if generalisation of Certeau’s ideas led to reductions along the erratic routes they travelled, they have also given rise to reflective paths.

These initial considerations should not lead one to suppose that this article will present an exegesis or an integrated reading of the various aspects of the au-

1 English version by Roberta Jereissati and Natalie Caracciolo Kelsey

2 I thank Adrián Gorelik for recalling this essay by Beatriz Sarlo. The translation of the passage is my own.

3 In this direction, Peter Burke (2002) points out how Certeau’s esteem as one of the most creative and important theorists of the twentieth century was accompanied by the relative neglect of part of his production in some contexts (for example, his writings on the Church in Latin America).

thor's production - efforts to which other interpreters have been committed to⁴. On the contrary, they are intended to clarify the risks involved in this partial exercise, guided by a precise objective: to reclaim some of Certeau's formulations, approaching their affinities with current anthropological reflections. In addition to suggesting approximations of his theses to contemporary anthropology and to authors with whom he is not always associated, this essay also shows, above all, an attempt to recognize the author's presence in my own studies, highlighting the route adjustments that it produced in my work. It is a personal exercise, but one that hopes to expand the frontiers of self-analysis and contribute to the reexamining of Certeau, reinserting him into the contemporary anthropological landscape.

The text's background motivation is to draw attention to the achievements of the author's propositions, summoning him at a time during which, it seems, we have escaped the excitement produced by the vogue that surrounded part of his writings - be it either post French May 1968, in which he was involved, or after the beginning of the 1980s, with the boom of Cultural Studies and reflections on Postcolonialism. This way, being relatively overlooked nowadays - at least by anthropologists - perhaps it is time to recall Michel de Certeau.

FROM GROUND LEVEL

On invitation by the American Anthropological Association in 1984, to conduct a state of the art of the field, Sherry Ortner detects, in those years, a theoretical inclination propelled by a "new key symbol". Specifically, the author highlights the notion of practice, to which a series of theories, methods and directions are associated, as well as a plethora of related terms: praxes, action, interaction, experience, performance, among others (Ortner, 2011: 420). Anthropology's interest in the practices, as we know all too well, accompanies the movement of part of the language studies, that withdraw their focus from the language structure, the object of linguistics according to the tradition instated by Saussure, directing it to the enunciated and to linguistic performances. The analytical inclination of the speech acts - whose central reference can be found in Austin (1962) and that has a spinoff effect on the ethnography of communication (formerly known as the ethnography of speaking) and the analyses of the verbal arts (Bauman and Sherzer, 1974, and Bauman, 1977, respectively) - pertains to social analysis in general and to anthropology in particular, branching into a variety of directions.

But if Ortner's evaluation gives special attention to Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (translated to English in 1978), a text that according to her coincides with the period during which the "requests for a practice-based approach drew more interest" (id: 440). Foucault's name, essential to the new pragmatic

⁴ Giard, among others (1987, 1988 and 2017).

direction of studies, appears in a footnote of the text in which the author recognizes her “inability” to incorporate him into the discussion raised. Michel de Certeau, in turn, is completely absent, omitted when Ortner discusses the interest of anthropological analyses in daily practices and when mentioning the connections between anthropology with history, two domains that Certeau was eloquently vocal in, opening up new interpretative avenues⁵.

Michel de Certeau's reflection on anonymous practices, created and recreated in everyday life, systematised in the first volume of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, is fully situated in the realm of enunciation, as he never fails to repeat, recognizing the inspiration drawn from Austin, Greimes and the Prague School. The key framework through which he views the world is, without a doubt, language. It is not the tongue, the matter of primary interest in structural linguistics and Lévi-Strauss' anthropology, but the plane of speech, which refers to the updating of the linguistic system. In other words, the author focuses on the spoken word in public spaces, intentional and achieved⁶, and also the glossolalia, witnessed both in altered speech upon possession, and in sounds of ordinary conversation: noises of bodies and things, “delinquent sounds”, fragments of other voices, true “vocal vegetation” in the authors own words (Certeau, 1990: 236-238)⁷. Read within the realm of verbal performances, the current practices are proving to be operations on the available systems of rules (the tongue or social order), that they manipulate and subvert, due to displacements, ellipses and slight cunning. Indisciplined by definition, the daily “tactics” are, at the same time, acts and rhetorics, he writes, fuelled by a certain type of know-how (*savoir-faire*) - a sense of opportunity and capacity for improvisation - that are at the heart of new creations.

In order to analytically tackle this kind of opportunistic knowledge, the source of cunning devices for which are unknown, Certeau takes inspiration drawn from Austin's speech acts, as mentioned, from Wittgenstein on ordinary language, from Freud's interpretations of linguistic lapses and the reflections of Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant (1974) on the greek *mêtis*, decisive to his theory of the practice of everyday life. The goddess Metis, Zeus' first wife who is swallowed by her husband after the birth of Athena and confined to the depths of his stomach, she joins the greek pantheon associated to a series of know-hows of practical efficacy. A proper name that is included into common vocabulary to designate a particular form of intelligence and smart prudence, the *mêtis* was left to obscurity, forgotten by the treaties on logic and philosophical systems, despite taking centre stage in the greek psyche, as pointed out by the Detienne and Vernant. By unearthing this practical knowledge, that refers to the history of techniques and a type of applied know-how, the hellenists shed light on the modes of thinking that operate on touch and smell. As knowledge

5 It is worth remembering that in the 1980's, Certeau finds himself close to the North american academic circles due to his residency as a professor at the University of San Diego, California, between 1978 and 1984 and the translation to English of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 1984.

6 See “La Prise de parole (mai 1968)”, Certeau (1994).

7 It would be interesting to carry out an approximation of Certeau's reflections on orality and those employed by Paul Zumthor on the voice (1987), reflections that project themselves, in both authors, on the gesture and the body, about reading and writing. Specifically regarding the word in possession, see chapter VI of *The Writing of history* (1975).

of the conjectural kind that challenges central antinomies of greek philosophy (like the one and the multiple, man and animal, the sensitive and intelligible), the *métis* is directed at unstable and ambiguous realities, that are difficult to capture by accurate calculation, relying instead upon trial and error - a method dear to the medical and military arts - and on its capacity for camouflage and deceit, which is very familiar to animals⁸.

With the greek *métis*, the everyday life tactical-practices that interest Certeau are “arts of doing” (ars from the latin, technique, ability), endowed with style and implied in strategic spaces and speeches in order to serve a certain economy (the “gift” economy), particular aesthetic (that of “takeovers” or coups) and an ethic of tenacity, conveyed in the infinite ways of violating the law or system (Certeau, 1990: 46). In this sense, the core of Certeau’s practice theory drives him to move away from analyses by Foucault and Bourdieu, despite the solid dialogue he establishes with both⁹. He differs from the former due to the attention given by part of the Foucauldian analysis dedicated to the microphysics of power, the mechanisms of control and panopticon devices (while Certeau aims at a multiplicity of tactical and anonymous powers that escape controls). In terms of the latter, the differences lie within the notion of the force fields and the rule-driven actions by agents, central to Bourdieu, while Certeau proves fond of that which escapes rules and durable arrangements. If Foucault is geared toward the effects of practices and Bourdieu is committed to their genesis (produced by the encounter of *habitus* and field), Certeau places the bulk of his attention on indisciplined tactics, that cheat and undermine, mechanisms that the *perruque* practice perfectly illustrate; which refers to “making do” or *bricolage* for personal gain, through time avoidance and material reuse¹⁰.

Besides focussing on practices of the tactical kind, Certeau’s interpretation emphasises the inseparability of “ways of doing” and “ways of saying” (action and discourse acting as homologous operations), an assumption that drives him to highlight the centrality of the gesture: whether by the activist that wields the spoken word in the public sphere; the reader that builds a “secret scene” and a “theatre of movements”, of eyes, hands and bodily rhythms; the theorist, that selects, isolates and rebuilds; or by the historian, whose work begins with the acts of separating, unifying and consolidating objects into documents¹¹.

Bodily by excellence, the tactical arts are also memory arts in that they carry with them a set of skills and a plurality of accumulated times, actioned at the opportune moment. Reading is exemplary in this sense, since it proves to be a creation that operates through the recycling of past and present experiences, revealing itself, in this sense, an invention of memory: “Barthes reads Proust in Stendhal’s text; the spectator reads his or her childhood’s landscape in the news report” (id: xix)

8 The summary of Detienne’s and Vernant’s (1974) theories presented here rest principally on the formulations made in the introduction, first chapter and conclusion of the book.

9 Luce Giard calls the close yet distant relationship between the authors “elective anti-affinity” (1990:12).

10 Expression referred to in the working world, “*faire la perruque*” describes practices of redirection of time and materials, with the intention of making products other to those intended by the factory or company. However, they are not entirely clandestine practices, since often this occurs with the boss’ knowledge. Certeau dedicates a section of chapter II of *The Practice of Everyday Life* to this type of practice (see.1990: 43-48). For reading on Foucault and Bourdieu, see. Chapters 4 and 5 of *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

11 Regarding the spoken word as a political act, see *La Prise de parole et autres*; about reading, chapter 12 of *The Practice of Everyday Life* (“Read: A Hunting Operation”); about “arts of theory”, chapter 5 of *The Practice of Everyday Life* and about the “historiographic operation”, chapter 2 of *The History of Writing*.

Michel de Certeau's theory of practices, conscious of the style they take on, invites us to think of a "social poetic" in similar terms to that which it proposes, based on other references, Michael Herzfeld (1997), also inclined, since the first ethnographic studies carried out in Greece, towards the cultural forms of everyday behaviour and the drafting of a pragmatic perspective on the examination of social life. Poetics not to be confused, for any of them, with poetry, but that recovers the etymological sense of the term (from the greek *poiein*, to create, invent, generate) to think of social rhetorics. Related horizons, those of Herzfeld and Certeau, it is true, but with diverse variables: Herzfeld directing his analysis at the intersectional zones of everyday experiences and the power structures that affect them, leading to the examination of the State and bureaucracy in the concrete plains of experience and to the examination of stereotypes and "essentializations". Michel de Certeau, inclined to the interpretation of the ordinary practices (reading, cooking, the art of conversation, walks, scriptural practices and economies), which are not restrained to governmental, economic and scientific spaces and mechanisms, even if these are the plains in which the tactics operate, he says, since they meddle with "designated places" by the institutions and strategic rationalisations. This is the reason why Certeau considers the act of acting, in its tactical mobility, as eminently transgressive and political.

It doesn't seem hard to note that the daily tactics use *bricolage* as a method, making use of leftovers and residues without obeying a previous project. However, contrary to the myths analysed by Lévi-Strauss, the ordinary production that germinates in everyday soil doesn't create sets or series, repeating and dispersing without pause¹². How, then, to capture these ephemeral and perishable forms that refuse to stay still? How to register primarily non-discursive practices in writing? To this end, Certeau points, one must test a new vocabulary and a new form of writing that can capture these shifting practices; text that mimics the tactical form of the practices, which flourish in unpredictable spaces and question places, frontiers and conventions in its innate movement. In this sense the theoretical-narrative experiment put forward by the author is also a political summoning: let us try to make scientific-academic writing, subjected to the rules and spaces of scientific institutions, an art analogue to the *perruque* (id: 48-49).

As he places emphasis, not on the established conventions and rhetorics (the "essentializations" and stereotypes expertly analysed by Herzfeld) but on the form of the practices, Michel de Certeau's procedures end up presenting affinities with Tim Ingold's anthropology, especially his reflections on the "lines" and "doings". The authors are also similar in the importance attributed to walking, leading them to suspend oppositions usually made, such as thought and action, between practical and theoretical skills¹³, with the aid of phenomenological and pragmatic analysis. The reflexive programme they establish takes its meaning

12 There are many mentions to the Lévi-straussian bricoleur in Certeau's writings. Pay particular attention to chapter 12 of *The Practice of Everyday Life*, vol. 1.

13 I refer the reader to *The Perception of The Environment* (2000), *Lines* (2007), *Being Alive* (2011), *Making* (2015), by Ingold, in which Certeau is considerably cited.

from a fundamental analytical slide: objects, products and works are replaced by procedures of making and composition (and in Ingold's case, the treatment of materials). Places, in their turn, are replaced by itineraries and nomadic reflections, that are carried out through the act of walking. Travelling, and the journey are thus converted into paradigms, guiding the analyses that, far from revolving around the actors and their roles, the norm in interactionism, aim for action schemes, operating logics and "lines of errancy", in Fernand Deligny's terms, a reference for both. In Michel de Certeau's case, however, reading is the exemplary tactical activity, an operation thought out analogue to the art of illegal hunting¹⁴. Besides this, Certeauian analysis broaches ghosts and desires, inspired in the writing of Freud and Lacan, dimensions relatively absent in Ingold's anthropology, which is more interested in the cognitive dimensions and perception than in the manifestations of the subconscious¹⁵.

Regarding attention to a "social poetic" (which echoes Herzfeld's formulations) and the exercise of a "moving or travelling reflection" (to which Ingold's anthropology displays a sensitivity), Certeau associates the point of view of the "uses" he proposes as a privileged perspective for the analysis of cultural production. On studying a dispersive and almost invisible production, derogatorily labelled as "consumption", he questions the purpose of making by those that are users - whether the reader while reading a text, or the city-dweller going around town -, with that, leaning towards the operations of the users that cross spaces, explore gaps and defy places' rules. By associating consumption and creation, the author reiterates the discussions about the cultural production in the field of representations, emphasising the creative processes that exist due to the appropriations and uses of spaces, materials, repertoires, symbols, etc.

Michel de Certeau's Theory of Practices (tactics) opens itself up in the direction of a theory of culture of the order of cannibalism. The use, with its re-employment and reuse operations, is a cannibal practice by excellence, defining itself by "devouring" the other, from which new creations are possible. A cannibal theory of culture rooted in the author's reflections on "heterology", a discourse about the other and in which the "other speaks" (despite ultimately, always absent), that is the foundation of the history of writing, and the ethnographic operation. The written report, he indicates - that of the traveller, the historian or the ethnographer - speaks the others' words, taking the others' place and whose destiny is to be understood *autrement*¹⁶.

By favouring the use (and the devouring, I add), Certeau suggests a change in the analysis of cultural production, through the consideration of a new angle: literally, the prism of pedestrian creations, perceptible from ground level, the terrain in which the interpreter must be situated in order to witness and be surprised by the creative and originative germinations. In this way, his inter-

14 See Chartier and Hébrard (1998). The practice of reading is contemplated by Ingold without however being predominant in the analysis.

15 The identification of conversations between certain propositions by Ingold and Certeau does not mean disregarding the absence of critical repairs. See chapters 1 and 2 of *Lines*, when Ingold discusses the concept of writing used by Certeau; the text would not be an artefact, "but a thing that speaks", says Ingold, just as writing would be distant to walking, which are practices approximated by Certeau. See Ingold (2007: 22 and 122, respectively).

16 In the words of the author: "Je m'interroge sur la portée de cette parole institutée en lieu de l'autre et destinée à être entendue *autrement* qu'elle ne parle" (1975: 247). See the third part of *The History of Writing*, "Ethno-graphy. Orality or the Space of the Other: Léry".

pretation prioritises the act - of doing, of consuming - drawing our attention to the place in the middle where things are effectively created, and not to the final form they take, that tend to erase turbulence, ambivalence and inadequacies present in the making process.

To all these dimensions, however, Certeau adds another. Removing the daily practices of the “nocturnal backdrop of social activity” and appreciating them as the foundation upon which social life is truly conceived¹⁷, his analysis defends that the ordinary practices invested with memories, desires and dreams are touched and transformed by subjectivity. Withdrawing its purpose from the absence of a personal place of registration, the tactic reedits a pleasurable first experience, discussed by psychoanalysis: the desire to be another and become another, like in the well known child’s game when, sat in front of a mirror, they recognize themselves as “one” that is “another”.

It doesn’t seem difficult to note how everyday tactics translate, in themselves, the erratic and incessant movement of desire, that is driven by absence.

17 It doesn’t seem unreasonable to perceive affinities between Certeau’s reflexions and Piaget’s philosophy, with the help of Joanna Overing (1999). The Piaget who also do not dissociate thought and action, that put practice and performative dimensions first, and who place everyday life at the core of the creation of social life.

KNOW-HOW (SAVOIR-FAIRE)

Having presented a few of the main principles of Michel de Certeau’s tactical practices theory, I would like to consider his contributions for a certain modality of self-reflexive anthropological exercise, to which I have been devoting myself for some years.

Ten years ago I began to occupy myself with a more systematic account of Certeau while also in touch with his personal and professional records, which altered the character of the research I had been conducting on anthropologists and anthropologies. This forced me to review problematic and analytical frameworks, and also to expand the senses of *œuvres* with which we tend to endeavour - despite Foucault’s well-known warnings on how to escape works considered as untouchable, established by the author alone (Foucault, 1969). Certeau endorses such warnings when he states that “an ideology of property” isolates the author, the creator, the work, when, in fact, “creation is a disseminated proliferation” (1993: 214).

I would say that both dealing with personal and professional records and Certeau’s formulations help us to perceive ideas as gestures that engender ideas, constitute social places and “establish a topography of interests” (Certeau 1975: 79). In pointing out the inextricable relation between practices and statements, leading us to confront ideas as ways of doing, the author points us to the indispensable tools for creation, which reflects on the arts and cunning of thought considered in its artisanal dimension, to which the considerations of Detienne and Vernant (1974) already drew attention.

Roger Bastide's professional papers, deposited at the Institut Mémoires de l'Édition Contemporaine, IMEC¹⁸, for example, placed me before notes on loose papers, travel notebooks, drawings, book markings, correspondences and written drafts, which revealed the chorus of voices, hesitations and deviations that form the creative knowledge production processes, usually left out of pieces prepared for dissemination. The accounts found in the archive thus led me to the lines, gestures and meanderings at the origin of published books and articles, and opened the doors to the creator's atelier, this noisy space of mixed experimentations that tend to order and silence at the time of the work's public presentation.

By accessing the backstage of scientific production through the accounts, it was possible to observe, for example, how the most diverse literary readings are frequent partners of anthropologists in the field. They function less as simple hobbies associated to work breaks, but rather as fundamental tools for producing the analyses, along with field diaries, photographic cameras and other artefacts of knowledge¹⁹. These provisional papers have also made me see how the observations and records, written and imaged, made by colleagues and friends are systematically used, migrating from the work of one to that of the other, and research material itself is also permanently exchanged - which led me to inquire into the role of partnerships and friendship as fundamental for the construction of knowledge. Such personal and professional exchanges were apparent in field diaries written by Roger Bastide during his journey to Dahomey and Nigeria from July to September 1958, and in his extensive correspondence with Pierre Verger. These records enable one to perceive not only the preparations for this African journey, but also the close exchange of information, ideas and research problems²⁰. Documentation also demonstrated that writing and drawing are often associated activities, even for those more strictly classified as "writers". To look, read and write; to observe, draw and photograph; to describe and narrate are all practices engaged by the subjects in the making of their interpretations; interpretations that are inseparable from affective exchanges, conversations and collaborations between friends.

It should be noted that contact with what I refer to as the backstage of intellectual work and the retrieving of records considered minor are not intended to reveal truths deliberately camouflaged in the final text prepared for dissemination. On the contrary, the purpose of bringing them to surface is to broaden the understanding of knowledge and of its authors. Such effort allows us to investigate the processes of conceiving the reflections and points of view that, in the case of the authors that I have chosen for examination in *A Viagem como Vocaç o* (Peixoto, 2015) - Roger Bastide, Pierre Verger, Michel Leiris and Gilberto Freyre - systematically use the arts for the construction of analyses. Arts that they engage in a variety of ways. For example, in the fields of interpretive perspecti-

18 Archives consulted in 2006 and 2007 (see <http://www.imec-archives.com>).

19 Point developed in the article "Literatura e imagin  o etnogr  fica" (Peixoto, 2016)

20 See chapter 4 of *A viagem como voca  o*, "Bastide e Verger, entre   frica e Bras  ".

ve, the “baroque perspective” that helps Bastide to interpret the cities and the *candomblé*, subjects of his first investigations in Brazilian soil²¹; also in the form of vocabulary, since the arts help to construct more plastic and “liquid” notions capable of capturing moving phenomena (Bastide, 1957); and additionally arts that point expressive forms that inspire the ways to describe experiences, as can be seen in Pierre Verger’s photographic portraits and those composed by Gilberto Freyre, both in his drawings and his essays, where he exposes a gallery of types and profiles with a remarkable plastic inclination.

The archives and productions, that are, in a certain way, on the sidelines of the main *oeuvre* (part of which as yet unpublished), constitute the main body of *A viagem como vocação*, and they have allowed factual discoveries; further than that, and fundamentally, they produced an analytical decentralisation. Such process is related to the expansion of the idea of an *oeuvre*, as I have previously indicated, and also to the widening of the notion of thinkers, since the category has broadened through the inclusion of other subjects (designers, photographers, artists). The authors and the *oeuvres*, in this broadened sense, helped to unveil heterogeneous landscapes and rough topographies, which Certeau inspired to compose and explore.

Geographical metaphors are not accidental. The analysis appears to be sensitive to the geography of ideas and, not by chance, the journey was made into a reflexive and narrative operator, so much to the liking of Certeau. For the author, the account and the thought establish a march (“they guide”), besides passing “through”: they “cross”, “transgress” (Certeau, 1990: 189). In making the journey the backbone of the book’s reflection, the sense of displacement gained new meanings: instead of a connection between a starting point and an arrival point, the journey took the form of a way of existing and being in the world, transforming ideas into know-how, developed along the paths that were traced. From this perspective, new understandings came to light. It was possible to discover, for example, how Bastide’s reflections on Africa in Brazil were produced alongside his learnings of Brazil’s presence in Africa - which Verger’s eyes and records helped him to grasp through the long and frequent letters that were sent by this friend since 1946. Similarly, I was able to note how Bastide’s sociological approach to Brazilian baroque, expressed in articles and scholarly works, coexists with another Baroque idea, closer to Catalan critic Eugenio D’Ors’ classic theses on the subject, which introduces the concept beyond the limits of the realm of art and of a particular historical period. It was also possible to re-read Gilberto Freyre’s *Aventura e rotina* (1953) as a memoir, further grasping the contaminations between text and image in his reflections, as well as revisiting Leiris’ short essay, “L’œil de l’ethnographe” (1930), reawakening its aspect of anthropological reflection, overlooked by its readers in spite of its title²².

21 See Peixoto (2015), chapters 1 and 2, “Roger Bastide e as cidades”, “O candomblé (barroco) de Roger Bastide”.

22 In *A viagem como vocação* (Peixoto, 2015), the analyses on Gilberto Freyre can be found in chapters 3 and 5, and on Leiris in chapter 6.

The articulation between manners of displacement and the conception of knowledge regarding the world, which defines the central drive of interpretation in *A viagem como vocação* (Peixoto, 2015), did not have the ambition to launch a more general theory on the journey and its models. In fact, when I reviewed certain thinkers considering their specific travels, I found myself confronted with the difficulty of distinguishing between travel modalities (the formative, the ethnographic, those for tourism, the scholarly, or those “around the room”), since one form of displacement always ended overlapping the other, reverberating in the hybrid productions conceived along these routes and experiences. It is hard to dissociate the internal and external journeys, as we can learn from Bastide’s wanderings between Brazilian cities, or Gilberto Freyre’s through Portugal and overseas territories, or even the African crossings of Michel Leiris. The rhythm of all these journeys are influenced by childhood and family memories and *revêries*, hence presenting the topic of memory and journey, such as perceived in François Hartog’s enlightening analyses of Ulysses’s journey (2004), Lévi-Strauss’ *A World on the Wane* (*Tristes tropiques*) and the interpretations of Certeau... All these authors who demonstrate how the geographical, mythical and oneiric itineraries are not dissociated.

These brief considerations seem sufficient to indicate the inspirations that Michel de Certeau provided to my work, helping to redefine it. I hope they will also help us to include him in the list of authors fundamental to anthropology, in the most diverse aspects, even though he does not appear in the canonical accounts of the discipline that still tend, despite today’s prompted interdisciplinary vogue, to imprint exclusive belongings, discarding the undisciplined.

Certeau performs a reflexive torsion in cultural interpretations, forcing us to rid ourselves once and for all of a certain positivist rancour that still haunts social analyses, and which appears in the repeated separations between objectivities (of actions, of social life) and subjectivities (of motives and imaginations), between practices and representations, between material and oneiric figurations. Additionally, as if it were not enough, in converting thought into action it calls us to eliminate the distances between ideas and the bodily gesture that engenders them. And not to separate word, thought and politics.

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Received on 7th December 2017. Accepted on 16th June 2018.