General Introduction

THIS ESSAY IS part of a continuing investigation of the ways in which users—commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules—operate. The point is not so much to discuss this elusive yet fundamental subject as to make such a discussion possible; that is, by means of inquiries and hypotheses, to indicate pathways for further research. This goal will be achieved if everyday practices, "ways of operating" or doing things, no longer appear as merely the obscure background of social activity, and if a body of theoretical questions, methods, categories, and perspectives, by penetrating this obscurity, make it possible to articulate them.

The examination of such practices does not imply a return to individuality. The social atomism which over the past three centuries has served as the historical axiom of social analysis posits an elementary unit—the individual—on the basis of which groups are supposed to be formed and to which they are supposed to be always reducible. This axiom, which has been challenged by more than a century of sociological, economic, anthropological, and psychoanalytic research, (although in history that is perhaps no argument) plays no part in this study. Analysis shows that a relation (always social) determines its terms, and not the reverse, and that each individual is a locus in which an incoherent (and often contradictory) plurality of such relational determinations interact. Moreover, the question at hand concerns modes of operation or schemata of action, and not directly the subjects (or persons) who are their authors or vehicles. It concerns an operational logic whose models may go as far back as the age-old ruses of fishes and insects that disguise or transform themselves in order to survive, and which has in any case been concealed by the form of rationality currently dominant in Western culture. The purpose of this work is to make explicit the systems of operational combination (*les combinatoires d'opérations*) which also compose a "culture," and to bring to light the models of action characteristic of users whose status as the dominated

element in society (a status that does not mean that they are either passive or docile) is concealed by the euphemistic term "consumers." Everyday life invents itself by *poaching* in countless ways on the property of others.

1. Consumer production

Since this work grew out of studies of "popular culture" or marginal groups,[1] the investigation of everyday practices was first delimited negatively by the necessity of not locating cultural *difference* in groups associated with the "counter-culture"—groups that were already singled out, often privileged, and already partly absorbed into folklore—and that were no more than symptoms or indexes. Three further, positive determinations were particularly important in articulating our research.

Usage, or consumption

Many, often remarkable, works have sought to study the representations of a society, on the one hand, and its modes of behavior, on the other. Building on our knowledge of these social phenomena, it seems both possible and necessary to determine the *use* to which they are put by groups or individuals. For example, the analysis of the images broadcast by television (representation) and of the time spent watching television (behavior) should be complemented by a study of what the cultural consumer "makes" or "does" during this time and with these images. The same goes for the use of urban space, the products purchased in the supermarket, the stories and legends distributed by the newspapers, and so on.

The "making" in question is a production, a *poiēsis*[2]—but a hidden one, because it is scattered over areas defined and occupied by systems of "production" (television, urban development, commerce, etc.), and because the steadily increasing expansion of these systems no longer leaves "consumers" any *place* in which they can indicate what they *make* or *do* with the products of these systems. To a rationalized, expansionist and at the same time centralized, clamorous, and spectacular production corresponds *another* production, called "consumption." The latter is devious, it is dispersed, but it insinuates itself everywhere, silently and almost invisibly, because it does not manifest itself through its own

products, but rather through its *ways of using* the products imposed by a dominant economic order.

For instance, the ambiguity that subverted from within the Spanish colonizers' "success" in imposing their own culture on the indigenous Indians is well known. Submissive, and even consenting to their subjection, the Indians nevertheless often *made of* the rituals, representations, and laws imposed on them something quite different from what their conquerors had in mind; they subverted them not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept. They were *other* within the very colonization that outwardly assimilated them; their use of the dominant social order deflected its power, which they lacked the means to challenge; they escaped it without leaving it. The strength of their difference lay in procedures of "consumption." To a lesser degree, a similar ambiguity creeps into our societies through the use made by the "common people" of the culture disseminated and imposed by the "elites" producing the language.

The presence and circulation of a representation (taught by preachers, educators, and popularizers as the key to socioeconomic advancement) tells us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyze its manipulation by users who are not its makers. Only then can we gauge the difference or similarity between the production of the image and the secondary production hidden in the process of its utilization.

Our investigation is concerned with this difference. It can use as its theoretical model the *construction* of individual sentences with an *established* vocabulary and syntax. In linguistics, "performance" and "competence" are different: the act of speaking (with all the enunciative strategies that implies) is not reducible to a knowledge of the language. By adopting the point of view of enunciation—which is the subject of our study—we privilege the act of speaking; according to that point of view, speaking operates within the field of a linguistic system; it effects an appropriation, or reappropriation, of language by its speakers; it establishes a *present* relative to a time and place; and it posits a *contract with the other* (the interlocutor) in a network of places and relations. These four characteristics of the speech act[3] can be found in many other practices (walking, cooking, etc.). An objective is at least adumbrated by this parallel, which is, as we shall see, only partly valid. Such an objective assumes that (like the Indians mentioned above) users make (*bricolent*)

innumerable and infinitesimal transformations of and within the dominant cultural economy in order to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules. We must determine the procedures, bases, effects, and possibilities of this collective activity.

The procedures of everyday creativity

A second orientation of our investigation can be explained by reference to Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish.* In this work, instead of analyzing the apparatus exercising power (i.e., the localizable, expansionist, repressive, and legal institutions), Foucault analyzes the mechanisms (*dispositifs*) that have sapped the strength of these institutions and surreptitiously reorganized the functioning of power: "miniscule" technical procedures acting on and with details, redistributing a discursive space in order to make it the means of a generalized "discipline" (*surveillance*).[4] This approach raises a new and different set of problems to be investigated. Once again, however, this "microphysics of power" privileges the productive apparatus (which produces the "discipline"), even though it discerns in "education" a system of "repression" and shows how, from the wings as it were, silent technologies determine or short-circuit institutional stage directions. If it is true that the grid of "discipline" is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also "miniscule" and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what "ways of operating" form the counterpart, on the consumer's (or "dominee's"?) side, of the mute processes that organize the establishment of socioeconomic order.

These "ways of operating" constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production. They pose questions at once analogous and contrary to those dealt with in Foucault's book: analogous, in that the goal is to perceive and analyze the microbe-like operations proliferating within technocratic structures and deflecting their functioning by means of a multitude of "tactics" articulated in the details of everyday life; contrary, in that the goal is not to make clearer how the violence of order is transmuted into a disciplinary technology, but rather to bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of

"discipline." Pushed to their ideal limits, these procedures and ruses of consumers compose the network of an antidiscipline[5] which is the subject of this book.

The formal structure of practice

It may be supposed that these operations—multiform and fragmentary, relative to situations and details, insinuated into and concealed within devices whose mode of usage they constitute, and thus lacking their own ideologies or institutions—conform to certain rules. In other words, there must be a logic of these practices. We are thus confronted once again by the ancient problem: What is an *art* or "way of making"? From the Greeks to Durkheim, a long tradition has sought to describe with precision the complex (and not at all simple or "impoverished") rules that could account for these operations.[6] From this point of view, "popular culture," as well as a whole literature called "popular,"[7] take on a different aspect: they present themselves essentially as "arts of making" this or that, i.e., as combinatory or utilizing modes of consumption. These practices bring into play a "popular" *ratio*, a way of thinking invested in a way of acting, an art of combination which cannot be dissociated from an art of using.

In order to grasp the formal structure of these practices, I have carried out two sorts of investigations. The first, more descriptive in nature, has concerned certain ways of making that were selected according to their value for the strategy of the analysis, and with a view to obtaining fairly differentiated variants: readers' practices, practices related to urban spaces, utilizations of everyday rituals, re-uses and functions of the memory through the "authorities" that make possible (or permit) everyday practices, etc. In addition, two related investigations have tried to trace the intricate forms of the operations proper to the recompositon of a space (the Croix-Rousse quarter in Lyons) by familial practices, on the one hand, and on the other, to the tactics of the art of cooking, which simultaneously organizes a network of relations, poetic ways of "making do" (*bricolage*), and a re-use of marketing structures.[8]

The second series of investigations has concerned the scientific literature that might furnish hypotheses allowing the logic of unselfconscious thought to be taken seriously. Three areas are of special interest. First, sociologists, anthropologists, and indeed historians (from E. Goffman to P. Bourdieu, from Mauss to M. Détienne, from J. Boissevain to E. O.

Laumann) have elaborated a theory of such practices, mixtures of rituals and makeshifts (*bricolages*), manipulations of spaces, operators of networks.[9] Second, in the wake of J. Fishman's work, the ethnomethodological and sociolinguistic investigations of H. Garfinkel, W. Labov, H. Sachs, E. A. Schegloff, and others have described the procedures of everyday interactions relative to structures of expectation, negotiation, and improvisation proper to ordinary language.[10]

Finally, in addition to the semiotics and philosophies of "convention" (from O. Ducrot to D. Lewis),[11] we must look into the ponderous formal logics and their extension, in the field of analytical philosophy, into the domains of action (G. H. von Wright, A. C. Danto, R. J. Bernstein),[12] time (A. N. Prior, N. Rescher and J. Urquhart),[13] and modalisation (G. E. Hughes and M. J. Cresswell, A. R. White).[14] These extensions yield a weighty apparatus seeking to grasp the delicate layering and plasticity of ordinary language, with its almost orchestral combinations of logical elements (temporalization, modalization, injunctions, predicates of action, etc.) whose dominants are determined in turn by circumstances and conjunctural demands. An investigation analogous to Chomsky's study of the oral uses of language must seek to restore to everyday practices their logical and cultural legitimacy, at least in the sectors—still very limited—in which we have at our disposal the instruments necessary to account for them.[15] This kind of research is complicated by the fact that these practices themselves alternately exacerbate and disrupt our logics. Its regrets are like those of the poet, and like him, it struggles against oblivion: "And I forgot the element of chance introduced by circumstances, calm or haste, sun or cold, dawn or dusk, the taste of strawberries or abandonment, the half-understood message, the front page of newspapers, the voice on the telephone, the most anodyne conversation, the most anonymous man or woman, everything that speaks, makes noise, passes by, touches us lightly, meets us head on."[16]

The marginality of a majority

These three determinations make possible an exploration of the cultural field, an exploration defined by an investigative problematics and punctuated by more detailed inquiries located by reference to hypotheses that remain to be verified. Such an exploration will seek to situate the types of *operations* characterizing consumption in the framework of an economy, and to discern in these practices of appropriation indexes of the

creativity that flourishes at the very point where practice ceases to have its own language.

Marginality is today no longer limited to minority groups, but is rather massive and pervasive; this cultural activity of the non-producers of culture, an activity that is unsigned, unreadable, and unsymbolized, remains the only one possible for all those who nevertheless buy and pay for the showy products through which a productivist economy articulates itself. Marginality is becoming universal. A marginal group has now become a silent majority.

That does not mean the group is homogeneous. The procedures allowing the re-use of products are linked together in a kind of obligatory language, and their functioning is related to social situations and power relationships. Confronted by images on television, the immigrant worker does not have the same critical or creative elbow-room as the average citizen. On the same terrain, his inferior access to information, financial means, and compensations of all kinds elicits an increased deviousness, fantasy, or laughter. Similar strategic deployments, when acting on different relationships of force, do not produce identical effects. Hence the necessity of differentiating both the "actions" or "engagements" (in the military sense) that the system of products effects within the consumer grid, *and* the various kinds of room to maneuver left for consumers by the situations in which they exercise their "art."

The relation of procedures to the fields of force in which they act must therefore lead to a *polemological* analysis of culture. Like law (one of its models), culture articulates conflicts and alternately legitimizes, displaces, or controls the superior force. It develops in an atmosphere of tensions, and often of violence, for which it provides symbolic balances, contracts of compatibility and compromises, all more or less temporary. The tactics of consumption, the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, thus lend a political dimension to everyday practices.

2. *The tactics of practice*

In the course of our research, the scheme, rather too neatly dichotomized, of the relations between consumers and the mechanisms of production has been diversified in relation to three kinds of concerns: the search for a problematics that could articulate the material collected; the description of a limited number of practices (reading, talking, walking, dwelling, cooking, etc.) considered to be particularly significant; and the extension of the analysis of these everyday operations to scientific fields

apparently governed by another kind of logic. Through the presentation of our investigation along these three lines, the overly schematic character of the general statement can be somewhat nuanced.

Trajectories, tactics, and rhetorics

As unrecognized producers, poets of their own acts, silent discoverers of their own paths in the jungle of functionalist rationality, consumers produce through their signifying practices something that might be considered similar to the "wandering lines" ("*lignes d'erre*") drawn by the autistic children studied by F. Deligny (17): "indirect" or "errant" trajectories obeying their own logic. In the technocratically constructed, written, and functionalized space in which the consumers move about, their trajectories form unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across a space. Although they are composed with the vocabularies of established languages (those of television, newspapers, supermarkets, or museum sequences) and although they remain subordinated to the prescribed syntactical forms (temporal modes of schedules, paradigmatic orders of spaces, etc.), the trajectories trace out the ruses of other interests and desires that are neither determined nor captured by the systems in which they develop.[18]

Even statistical investigation remains virtually ignorant of these trajectories, since it is satisfied with classifying, calculating, and putting into tables the "lexical" units which compose them but to which they cannot be reduced, and with doing this in reference to its own categories and taxonomies. Statistical investigation grasps the material of these practices, but not their *form*; it determines the elements used, but not the "phrasing" produced by the *bricolage* (the artisan-like inventiveness) and the discursiveness that combine these elements, which are all in general circulation and rather drab. Statistical inquiry, in breaking down these "efficacious meanderings" into units that it defines itself, in reorganizing the results of its analyses according to its own codes, "finds" only the homogenous. The power of its calculations lies in its ability to divide, but it is precisely through this ana-lytic fragmentation that it loses sight of what it claims to seek and to represent.[19]

"Trajectory" suggests a movement, but it also involves a plane projection, a flattening out. It is a transcription. A graph (which the eye can master) is substituted for an operation; a line which can be reversed (i.e., read in both directions) does duty for an irreversible temporal series, a

tracing for acts. To avoid this reduction, I resort to a distinction between *tactics* and *strategies.*

I call a "strategy" the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an "environment." A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* (*propre*) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, "clientèles," "targets," or "objects" of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model.

I call a "tactic," on the other hand, a calculus which cannot count on a "proper" (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other.[20] A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances. The "proper" is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time—it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized "on the wing." Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into "opportunities." The weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them. This is achieved in the propitious moments when they are able to combine heterogeneous elements (thus, in the supermarket, the housewife confronts heterogeneous and mobile data—what she has in the refrigerator, the tastes, appetites, and moods of her guests, the best buys and their possible combinations with what she already has on hand at home, etc.); the intellectual synthesis of these given elements takes the form, however, not of a discourse, but of the decision itself, the act and manner in which the opportunity is "seized."

Many everyday practices (talking, reading, moving about, shopping, cooking, etc.) are tactical in character. And so are, more generally, many "ways of operating": victories of the "weak" over the "strong" (whether the strength be that of powerful people or the violence of things or of an imposed order, etc.), clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, "hunter's cunning," maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike. The Greeks called these "ways of operating" *mētis.*[21] But they go much further back, to the immemorial

intelligence displayed in the tricks and imitations of plants and fishes. From the depths of the ocean to the streets of modern megalopolises, there is a continuity and permanence in these tactics.

In our societies, as local stabilities break down, it is as if, no longer fixed by a circumscribed community, tactics wander out of orbit, making consumers into immigrants in a system too vast to be their own, too tightly woven for them to escape from it. But these tactics introduce a Brownian movement into the system. They also show the extent to which intelligence is inseparable from the everyday struggles and pleasures that it articulates. Strategies, in contrast, conceal beneath objective calculations their connection with the power that sustains them from within the stronghold of its own "proper" place or institution.

The discipline of rhetoric offers models for differentiating among the types of tactics. This is not surprising, since, on the one hand, it describes the "turns" or tropes of which language can be both the site and the object, and, on the other hand, these manipulations are related to the ways of changing (seducing, persuading, making use of) the will of another (the audience).[22] For these two reasons, rhetoric, the science of the "ways of speaking," offers an array of figure-types for the analysis of everyday ways of acting even though such analysis is in theory excluded from scientific discourse. Two logics of action (the one tactical, the other strategic) arise from these two facets of practicing language. In the space of a language (as in that of games), a society makes more explicit the formal rules of action and the operations that differentiate them.

In the enormous rhetorical corpus devoted to the art of speaking or operating, the Sophists have a privileged place, from the point of view of tactics. Their principle was, according to the Greek rhetorician Corax, to make the weaker position seem the stronger, and they claimed to have the power of turning the tables on the powerful by the way in which they made use of the opportunities offered by the particular situation.[23] Moreover, their theories inscribe tactics in a long tradition of reflection on the relationships between reason and particular actions and situations. Passing by way of *The Art of War* by the Chinese author Sun Tzu[24] or the Arabic anthology, *The Book of Tricks*,[25] this tradition of a logic articulated on situations and the will of others continues into contemporary sociolinguistics.

Reading, talking, dwelling, cooking, etc.

To describe these everyday practices that produce without capitalizing, that is, without taking control over time, one starting point seemed

inevitable because it is the "exorbitant" focus of contemporary culture and its consumption: *reading*. From TV to newspapers, from advertising to all sorts of mercantile epiphanies, our society is characterized by a cancerous growth of vision, measuring everything by its ability to show or be shown and transmuting communication into a visual journey. It is a sort of *epic* of the eye and of the impulse to read. The economy itself, transformed into a "semeiocracy" (26), encourages a hypertrophic development of reading. Thus, for the binary set production-consumption, one would substitute its more general equivalent: writing-reading. Reading (an image or a text), moreover, seems to constitute the maximal development of the passivity assumed to characterize the consumer, who is conceived of as a voyeur (whether troglodytic or itinerant) in a "show biz society."[27]

In reality, the activity of reading has on the contrary all the characteristics of a silent production: the drift across the page, the metamorphosis of the text effected by the wandering eyes of the reader, the improvisation and expectation of meanings inferred from a few words, leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance. But since he is incapable of stockpiling (unless he writes or records), the reader cannot protect himself against the erosion of time (while reading, he forgets himself and he forgets what he has read) unless he buys the object (book, image) which is no more than a substitute (the spoor or promise) of moments "lost" in reading. He insinuates into another person's text the ruses of pleasure and appropriation: he poaches on it, is transported into it, pluralizes himself in it like the internal rumblings of one's body. Ruse, metaphor, arrangement, this production is also an "invention" of the memory. Words become the outlet or product of silent histories. The readable transforms itself into the memorable: Barthes reads Proust in Stendhal's text;[28] the viewer reads the landscape of his childhood in the evening news. The thin film of writing becomes a movement of strata, a play of spaces. A different world (the reader's) slips into the author's place.

This mutation makes the text habitable, like a rented apartment. It transforms another person's property into a space borrowed for a moment by a transient. Renters make comparable changes in an apartment they furnish with their acts and memories; as do speakers, in the language into which they insert both the messages of their native tongue and, through their accent, through their own "turns of phrase," etc., their own history; as do pedestrians, in the streets they fill with the forests of their desires and goals. In the same way the users of social

codes turn them into metaphors and ellipses of their own quests. The ruling order serves as a support for innumerable productive activities, while at the same time blinding its proprietors to this creativity (like those "bosses" who simply *can't* see what is being created within their own enterprises).[29] Carried to its limit, this order would be the equivalent of the rules of meter and rhyme for poets of earlier times: a body of constraints stimulating new discoveries, a set of rules with which improvisation plays.

Reading thus introduces an "art" which is anything but passive. It resembles rather that art whose theory was developed by medieval poets and romancers: an innovation infiltrated into the text and even into the terms of a tradition. Imbricated within the strategies of modernity (which identify creation with the invention of a personal language, whether cultural or scientific), the procedures of contemporary consumption appear to constitute a subtle art of "renters" who know how to insinuate their countless differences into the dominant text. In the Middle Ages, the text was framed by the four, or seven, interpretations of which it was held to be susceptible. And it was a book. Today, this text no longer comes from a tradition. It is imposed by the generation of a productivist technocracy. It is no longer a referential book, but a whole society made into a book, into the writing of the anonymous law of production.

It is useful to compare other arts with this art of readers. For example, the art of conversationalists: the rhetoric of ordinary conversation consists of practices which transform "speech situations," verbal productions in which the interlacing of speaking positions weaves an oral fabric without individual owners, creations of a communication that belongs to no one. Conversation is a provisional and collective effect of competence in the art of manipulating "commonplaces" and the inevitability of events in such a way as to make them "habitable."[30]

But our research has concentrated above all on the uses of space,[31] on the ways of frequenting or dwelling in a place, on the complex processes of the art of cooking, and on the many ways of establishing a kind of reliability within the situations imposed on an individual, that is, of making it possible to live in them by reintroducing into them the plural mobility of goals and desires—an art of manipulating and enjoying.[32]

Extensions: prospects and politics

The analysis of these tactics was extended to two areas marked out for study, although our approach to them changed as the research

proceeded: the first concerns prospects, or futurology, and the second, the individual subject in political life.

The "scientific" character of futurology poses a problem from the very start. If the objective of such research is ultimately to establish the intelligibility of present reality, and its rules as they reflect a concern for coherence, we must recognize, on the one hand, the nonfunctional status of an increasing number of concepts, and on the other, the inadequacy of procedures for thinking about, in our case, space. Chosen here as an object of study, space is not really accessible through the usual political and economic determinations; besides, futurology provides no theory of space.[33] The metaphorization of the concepts employed, the gap between the atomization characteristic of research and the generalization required in reporting it, etc., suggest that we take as a definition of futurological discourse the "simulation" that characterizes its method.

Thus in futurology we must consider: (1) the relations between a certain kind of *rationality* and an imagination (which is in discourse the mark of the locus of its production); (2) the difference between, on the one hand, the tentative moves, pragmatic ruses, and successive *tactics* that mark the stages of practical investigation and, on the other hand, the *strategic* representations offered to the public as the product of these operations.[34]

In current discussions, one can discern the surreptitious return of a rhetoric that metaphorizes the fields "proper" to scientific analysis, while, in research laboratories, one finds an increasing distance between actual everyday practices (practices of the same order as the art of cooking) and the "scenarios" that punctuate with utopian images the hum of operations in every laboratory: on the one hand, mixtures of science and fiction; on the other, a disparity between the spectacle of overall strategies and the opaque reality of local tactics. We are thus led to inquire into the "underside" of scientific activity and to ask whether it does not function as a collage—juxtaposing, but linking less and less effectively, the theoretical ambitions of the discourse with the stubborn persistence of ancient tricks in the everyday work of agencies and laboratories. In any event, this split structure, observable in so many administrations and companies, requires us to rethink all the tactics which have so far been neglected by the epistemology of science.

The question bears on more than the procedures of production: in a different form, it concerns as well the *status of the individual* in technical systems, since the involvement of the subject diminishes in proportion to the technocratic expansion of these systems. Increasingly

constrained, yet less and less concerned with these vast frameworks, the individual detaches himself from them without being able to escape them and can henceforth only try to outwit them, to pull tricks on them, to rediscover, within an electronicized and computerized megalopolis, the "art" of the hunters and rural folk of earlier days. The fragmentation of the social fabric today lends a *political* dimension to the problem of the subject. In support of this claim can be adduced the symptoms represented by individual conflicts and local operations, and even by ecological organizations, though these are preoccupied primarily with the effort to control relations with the environment collectively. These ways of reappropriating the product-system, ways created by consumers, have as their goal a *therapeutics for deteriorating social relations* and make use of techniques of re-employment in which we can recognize the procedures of everyday practices. A politics of such ploys should be developed. In the perspective opened up by Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, such a politics should also inquire into the public ("democratic") image of the microscopic, multiform, and innumerable connections between *manipulating* and *enjoying*, the fleeting and massive reality of a social activity at play with the order that contains it.

Witold Gombrowicz, an acute visionary, gave this politics its hero—the anti-hero who haunts our research—when he gave a voice to the small-time official (Musil's "man without qualities" or that ordinary man to whom Freud dedicated *Civilization and Its Discontents*) whose refrain is "When one does not have what one wants, one must want what one has": "I have had, you see, to resort more and more to very small, almost invisible pleasures, little extras. . . . You've no idea how great one becomes with these little details, it's incredible how one grows."[35]

Chapter IX Spatial Stories

"Narration created humanity."
Pierre Janet, *L'Evolution de la mémoire et la notion de temps*, 1928, p. 261.

IN MODERN ATHENS, the vehicles of mass transportation are called *metaphorai*. To go to work or come home, one takes a "metaphor"—a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organize places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories.

In this respect, narrative structures have the status of spatial syntaxes. By means of a whole panoply of codes, ordered ways of proceeding and constraints, they regulate changes in space (or moves from one place to another) made by stories in the form of places put in linear or interlaced series: from here (Paris), one goes there (Montargis); this place (a room) includes another (a dream or a memory); etc. More than that, when they are represented in descriptions or acted out by actors (a foreigner, a city-dweller, a ghost), these places are linked together more or less tightly or easily by "modalities" that specify the kind of passage leading from the one to the other: the transition can be given an "epistemological" modality concerning knowledge (for example: "it's not certain that this is the Place de la République"), an "alethic" one concerning existence (for example, "the land of milk and honey is an improbable end-point"), or a deontic one concerning obligation (for example: "from this point, you have to go over to that one"). . . . These are only a few notations among many others, and serve only to indicate with what subtle complexity stories, whether everyday or literary, serve us as means of mass transportation, as *metaphorai*.

Every story is a travel story—a spatial practice. For this reason, spatial practices concern everyday tactics, are part of them, from the alphabet

of spatial indication ("It's to the right," "Take a left"), the beginning of a story the rest of which is written by footsteps, to the daily "news" ("Guess who I met at the bakery?"), television news reports ("Teheran: Khomeini is becoming increasingly isolated . . . "), legends (Cinderellas living in hovels), and stories that are told (memories and fiction of foreign lands or more or less distant times in the past). These narrated adventures, simultaneously producing geographies of actions and drifting into the commonplaces of an order, do not merely constitute a "supplement" to pedestrian enunciations and rhetorics. They are not satisfied with displacing the latter and transposing them into the field of language. In reality, they organize walks. They make the journey, before or during the time the feet perform it.

These proliferating metaphors—sayings and stories that organize places through the displacements they "describe" (as a mobile point "describes" a curve)—what kind of analysis can be applied to *them*? To mention only the studies concerning spatializing *operations* (and not spatial systems), there are numerous works that provide methods and categories for such an analysis. Among the most recent, particular attention can be drawn to those referring to a semantics of space (John Lyons on "Locative Subjects" and "Spatial Expressions"),[1] a psycholinguistics of perception (Miller and Johnson-Laird on "the hypothesis of localization"),[2] a sociolinguistics of descriptions of places (for example, William Labov's),[3] a phenomenology of the behavior that organizes "territories" (for example, the work of Albert E. Scheflen and Norman Ashcraft),[4] an "ethnomethodology" of the indices of localization in conversation (for example, by Emanuel A. Schegloff),[5] or a semiotics viewing culture as a spatial metalanguage (for example, the work of the Tartu School, especially Y. M. Lotman, B. A. Ouspenski),[6] etc. Just as signifying practices, which concern the ways of putting language into effect, were taken into consideration after linguistic systems had been investigated, today spatializing practices are attracting attention now that the codes and taxonomies of the spatial order have been examined. Our investigation belongs to this "second" moment of the analysis, which moves from structures to actions. But in this vast ensemble, I shall consider only *narrative actions*; this will allow us to specify a few elementary forms of practices organizing space: the bipolar distinction between "map" and "itinerary," the procedures of delimitation or "marking boundaries" ("*bornage*") and "enunciative focalizations" (that is, the indication of the body within discourse).

"Spaces" and "places"

At the outset, I shall make a distinction between space (*espace*) and place (*lieu*) that delimits a field. A place (*lieu*) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (*place*). The law of the "proper" rules in the place: the elements taken into consideration are *beside* one another, each situated in its own "proper" and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability.

A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. On this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts. In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity or stability of a "proper."

In short, *space is a practiced place.* Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers. In the same way, an act of reading is the space produced by the practice of a particular place: a written text, i.e., a place constituted by a system of signs.

Merleau-Ponty distinguished a "geometrical" space ("a homogeneous and isotropic spatiality," analogous to our "place") from another "spatiality" which he called an "anthropological space." This distinction depended on a distinct problematic, which sought to distinguish from "geometrical" univocity the experience of an "outside" given in the form of space, and for which "space is existential" and "existence is spatial." This experience is a relation to the world; in dreams and in perception, and because it probably precedes their differentiation, it expresses "the same essential structure of our being as a being situated in relationship to a milieu"—being situated by a desire, indissociable from a "direction of existence" and implanted in the space of a landscape. From this point

of view "there are as many spaces as there are distinct spatial experiences."[7] The perspective is determined by a "phenomenology" of existing in the world.

In our examination of the daily practices that articulate that experience, the opposition between "place" and "space" will rather refer to two sorts of determinations in stories: the first, a determination through objects that are ultimately reducible to the *being-there* of something dead, the law of a "place" (from the pebble to the cadaver, an inert body always seems, in the West, to found a place and give it the appearance of a tomb); the second, a determination through *operations* which, when they are attributed to a stone, tree, or human being, specify "spaces" by the actions of historical *subjects* (a movement always seems to condition the production of a space and to associate it with a history). Between these two determinations, there are passages back and forth, such as the putting to death (or putting into a landscape) of heroes who transgress frontiers and who, guilty of an offense against the law of the place, best provide its restoration with their tombs; or again, on the contrary, the awakening of inert objects (a table, a forest, a person that plays a certain role in the environment) which, emerging from their stability, transform the place where they lay motionless into the foreignness of their own space.

Stories thus carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces or spaces into places. They also organize the play of changing relationships between places and spaces. The forms of this play are numberless, fanning out in a spectrum reaching from the putting in place of an immobile and stone-like order (in it, nothing moves except discourse itself, which, like a camera panning over a scene, moves over the whole panorama), to the accelerated succession of actions that multiply spaces (as in the detective novel or certain folktales, though this spatializing frenzy nevertheless remains circumscribed by the textual place). It would be possible to construct a typology of all these stories in terms of identification of places and actualization of spaces. But in order to discern in them the modes in which these distinct operations are combined, we need criteria and analytical categories—a necessity that leads us back to travel stories of the most elementary kind.

Tours and maps

Oral descriptions of places, narrations concerning the home, stories about the streets, represent a first and enormous corpus. In a very

precise analysis of descriptions New York residents gave of their apartments, C. Linde and W. Labov recognize two distinct types, which they call the "map" and the "tour." The first is of the type: "The girls' room is next to the kitchen." The second: "You turn right and come into the living room." Now, in the New York corpus, only three percent of the descriptions are of the "map" type. All the rest, that is, virtually the whole corpus, are of the "tour" type: "You come in through a low door," etc. These descriptions are made for the most part in terms of *operations* and show "how to enter each room." Concerning this second type, the authors point out that a circuit or "tour" is a speech-act (an act of enunciation) that "furnishes a minimal series of paths by which to go into each room"; and that the "path" is a series of units that have the form of vectors that are either "static" ("to the right," "in front of you," etc.) or "mobile" ("if you turn to the left," etc.).[8]

In other words, description oscillates between the terms of an alternative: either *seeing* (the knowledge of an order of places) or *going* (spatializing actions). Either it presents a *tableau* ("there are . . . "), or it organizes *movements* ("you enter, you go across, you turn . . . "). Of these two hypotheses, the choices made by the New York narrators overwhelmingly favored the second.

Leaving Linde and Labov's study aside (it is primarily concerned with the rules of the social interactions and conventions that govern "natural language," a problem we will come back to later), I would like to make use of these New York stories—and other similar stories[9]—to try to specify the relationships between the indicators of "tours" and those of "maps," where they coexist in a single description. How are *acting* and *seeing* coordinated in this realm of ordinary language in which the former is so obviously dominant? The question ultimately concerns the basis of the everyday narrations, the relation between the itinerary (a discursive series of operations) and the map (a plane projection totalizing observations), that is, between two symbolic and anthropological languages of space. Two poles of experience. It seems that in passing from "ordinary" culture to scientific discourse, one passes from one pole to the other.

In narrations concerning apartments or streets, manipulations of space or "tours" are dominant. This form of description usually determines the whole style of the narration. When the other form intervenes, it has the characteristic of being *conditioned* or *presupposed* by the first. Examples of tours conditioning a map: "If you turn to the right, there is . . . ", or the closely related form, "If you go straight ahead, you'll see . . . " In

both cases, an action permits one to see something. But there are also cases in which a tour assumes a place indication: "There, there's a door, you take the next one"—an element of mapping is the presupposition of a certain itinerary. The narrative fabric in which describers (*descripteurs*) of itineraries predominate is thus punctuated by describers of the map type which have the function of indicating either an *effect* obtained by the tour ("you see . . . ") or a *given* that it postulates as its limit ("there is a wall"), its possibility ("there's a door"), or an obligation ("there's a one-way street"), etc. The chain of spatializing operations seems to be marked by references to what it produces (a representation of places) or to what it implies (a local order). We thus have the structure of the travel story: stories of journeys and actions are marked out by the "citation" of the places that result from them or authorize them.

From this angle, we can compare the combination of "tours" and "maps" in everyday stories with the manner in which, over the past five centuries, they have been interlaced and then slowly dissociated in literary and scientific representations of space. In particular, if one takes the "map" in its current geographical form, we can see that in the course of the period marked by the birth of modern scientific discourse (i.e., from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century) the map has slowly disengaged itself from the itineraries that were the condition of its possibility. The first medieval maps included only the rectilinear marking out of itineraries (performative indications chiefly concerning pilgrimages), along with the stops one was to make (cities which one was to pass through, spend the night in, pray at, etc.) and distances calculated in hours or in days, that is, in terms of the time it would take to cover them on foot.[10] Each of these maps is a memorandum prescribing actions. The tour to be made is predominant in them. It includes the map elements, just as today the description of a route to be taken accompanies a hasty sketch already on paper, in the form of citations of places, a sort of dance through the city: "20 paces straight ahead, then turn to the left, then another 40 paces. . . ." The drawing articulates spatializing practices, like the maps of urban routes, arts of actions and stories of paces, that serve the Japanese as "address books,"[11] or the wonderful fifteenth-century Aztec map describing the exodus of the Totomihuacas. This drawing outlines not the "route" (there wasn't one) but the "log" of their journey on foot—an outline marked out by footprints with regular gaps between them and by pictures of the successive events that took place in the course of the journey (meals, battles, crossings of rivers or mountains, etc.): not a "geographical map" but "history book."[12]

Between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the map became more autonomous. No doubt the proliferation of the "narrative" figures that have long been its stock-in-trade (ships, animals, and characters of all kinds) still had the function of indicating the operations—travelling, military, architectural, political or commercial—that make possible the fabrication of a geographical plan.[13] Far from being "illustrations," iconic glosses on the text, these figurations, like fragments of stories, mark on the map the historical operations from which it resulted. Thus the sailing ship painted on the sea indicates the maritime expedition that made it possible to represent the coastlines. It is equivalent to a describer of the "tour" type. But the map gradually wins out over these figures; it colonizes space; it eliminates little by little the pictural figurations of the practices that produce it. Transformed first by Euclidean geometry and then by descriptive geometry, constituted as a formal ensemble of abstract places, it is a "theater" (as one used to call atlases) in which the same system of projection nevertheless juxtaposes two very different elements: the data furnished by a tradition (Ptolemy's *Geography*, for instance) and those that came from navigators (portulans, for example). The map thus collates on the same plane heterogeneous places, some *received* from a tradition and others *produced* by observation. But the important thing here is the erasure of the itineraries which, presupposing the first category of places and conditioning the second, makes it possible to move from one to the other. The map, a totalizing stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form the tableau of a "state" of geographical knowledge, pushes away into its prehistory or into its posterity, as if into the wings, the operations of which it is the result or the necessary condition. It remains alone on the stage. The tour describers have disappeared.

The organization that can be discerned in stories about space in everyday culture is inverted by the process that has isolated a system of geographical places. The difference between the two modes of description obviously does not consist in the presence or absence of practices (they are at work everywhere), but in the fact that maps, constituted as proper places in which to *exhibit the products* of knowledge, form tables of *legible* results. Stories about space exhibit on the contrary the operations that allow it, within a constraining and non-"proper" place, to mingle its elements anyway, as one apartment-dweller put it concerning the rooms in his flat: "One can mix them up" ("*On peut les triturer*").[14] From the folktale to descriptions of residences, an exacerbation of "practice" ("*faire*") (and thus of enunciation), actuates the stories

narrating tours in places that, from the ancient cosmos to contemporary public housing developments, are all forms of an imposed order.

In a pre-established geography, which extends (if we limit ourselves to the home) from bedrooms so small that "one can't do anything in them" to the legendary, long-lost attic that "could be used for everything,"[15] everyday stories tell us what one can do in it and make out of it. They are treatments of space.

Marking out boundaries

As operations on places, stories also play the everyday role of a mobile and magisterial tribunal in cases concerning their delimitation. As always, this role appears more clearly at the second degree, when it is made explicit and duplicated by juridical discourse. In the traditional language of court proceedings, magistrates formerly "visited the scene of the case at issue" ("*se transportaient sur les lieux*") (transports and juridical metaphors), in order to "hear" the contradictory *statements* (*dits*) made by the parties to a dispute concerning debatable boundaries. Their "interlocutory judgment," as it was called, was an "operation of marking out boundaries" (*bornage*). Written in a beautiful hand by the court clerk on parchments where the writing sometimes flowed into (or was inaugurated by?) drawings outlining the boundaries, these interlocutory judgments were in sum nothing other than meta-stories. They combined together (the work of a scribe collating variants) the opposing stories of the parties involved: "Mr. Mulatier declares that his grandfather planted this apple tree on the edge of his field. . . . Jeanpierre reminds us that Mr. Bouvet maintains a dungheap on a piece of land of which he is supposed to be the joint owner with his brother André. . . ." Genealogies of places, legends about territories. Like a critical edition, the judge's narration reconciles these versions. The narration is "established" on the basis of "primary" stories (those of Mr. Mulatier, Jeanpierre, and so many others), stories that already have the function of *spatial legislation* since they determine rights and divide up lands by "acts" or discourses about actions (planting a tree, maintaining a dungheap, etc.).

These "operations of marking out boundaries," consisting in narrative contracts and compilations of stories, are composed of fragments drawn from earlier stories and fitted together in makeshift fashion (*bricolés*). In this sense, they shed light on the formation of myths, since they also

have the function of founding and articulating spaces. Preserved in the court records, they constitute an immense travel literature, that is, a literature concerned with actions organizing more or less extensive social cultural areas. But this literature itself represents only a tiny part (the part that is written about disputed points) of the oral narration that interminably labors to compose spaces, to verify, collate, and displace their frontiers.

The ways of "conducting" a story offer, as Pierre Janet pointed out,[16] a very rich field for the analysis of spatiality. Among the questions that depend on it, we should distinguish those that concern dimensions (extensionality), orientation (vectorality), affinity (homographies), etc. I shall stress only a few of its aspects that have to do with delimitation itself, the primary and literally "fundamental" question: it is the partition of space that structures it. Everything refers in fact to this differentiation which makes possible the isolation and interplay of distinct spaces. From the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority to the distinctions that localize objects, from the home (constituted on the basis of the wall) to the journey (constituted on the basis of a geographical "elsewhere" or a cosmological "beyond"), from the functioning of the urban network to that of the rural landscape, there is no spatiality that is not organized by the determination of frontiers.

In this organization, the story plays a decisive role. It "describes," to be sure. But "every description is more than a fixation," it is "a culturally creative act."[17] It even has distributive power and performative force (it does what it says) when an ensemble of circumstances is brought together. Then it founds spaces. Reciprocally, where stories are disappearing (or else are being reduced to museographical objects), there is a loss of space: deprived of narrations (as one sees it happen in both the city and the countryside), the group or the individual regresses toward the disquieting, fatalistic experience of a formless, indistinct, and nocturnal totality. By considering the role of stories in delimitation, one can see that the primary function is to *authorize* the establishment, displacement or transcendence of limits, and as a consequence, to set in opposition, within the closed field of discourse, two movements that intersect (setting and transgressing limits) in such a way as to make the story a sort of "crossword" decoding stencil (a dynamic partitioning of space) whose essential narrative figures seem to be the *frontier* and the *bridge.*

1. *Creating a theater of actions.* The story's first function is to authorize, or more exactly, to *found.* Strictly speaking, this function is

ize, or more exactly, to *found.* Strictly speaking, this function is not juridical, that is, related to laws or judgments. It depends rather on what Georges Dumézil analyzes in connection with the Indo-European root *dhē*, "to set in place," and its derivatives in Sanskrit (*dhātu*) and Latin (*fās*). The Latin noun "*fās*," he writes, "is properly speaking the mystical foundation, which is in the invisible world, and without which all forms of conduct that are enjoined or authorized by *ius* (human law) and, more generally speaking, all human conduct, are doubtful, perilous, and even fatal. *Fās* cannot be subjected to analysis or casuistry, as *ius* can: *fās* can no more be broken up into parts than its name can be declined." A *foundation* either exists or it doesn't: *fās est* or *fās non est.* "A time or a place are said to be *fasti* or *nefasti* [auspacious or inauspacious] depending on whether they provide or fail to provide human action with this necessary foundation."[18]

In the Western parts of the Indo-European world, this function has been divided in a particular way among different institutions—in contrast to what happened in ancient India, where different roles were played in turn by the same characters. Occidental culture created its own ritual concerning *fās*, which was carried out in Rome by specialized priests called *fētiāles.* It was practiced "before Rome undertook any action with regard to a foreign nation," such as a declaration of war, a military expedition, or an alliance. The ritual was a procession with three centrifugal stages, the first within Roman territory but near the frontier, the second on the frontier, the third in foreign territory. The ritual action was carried out before every civil or military action because it is designed to *create the field* necessary for political or military activities. It is thus also a *repetitio rerum*: both a renewal and a repetition of the originary founding acts, a *recitation* and a citation of the genealogies that could legitimate the new enterprise, and a *prediction* and a promise of success at the beginning of battles, contracts, or conquests. As a general repetition before the actual representation, the rite, a narration in acts, precedes the historical realization. The tour or procession of the *fētiāles* opens a space and provides a foundation for the operations of the military men, diplomats, or merchants who dare to cross the frontiers. Similarly in the *Vedas*, Viṣṇu, "by his footsteps, opens the zone of space in which Indra's military action must take place." The *fās* ritual is a foundation. It "provides space" for the actions that will be undertaken; it "creates a field" which serves as their "base" and their "theater."[19]

This founding is precisely the primary role of the story. It opens a legitimate *theater* for practical *actions*. It creates a field that authorizes dangerous and contingent social actions. But it differs in three ways from the function the Roman ritual so carefully isolated: the story founds *fās* in a form that is fragmented (not unique and whole), miniaturized (not on a national scale), and polyvalent (not specialized). It is *fragmented*, not only because of the diversification of social milieus, but especially because of the increasing heterogeneity (or because of a heterogeneity that is increasingly obvious) of the authorizing "references": the excommunication of territorial "divinities," the deconsecration of places haunted by the story-spirit, and the extension of neutral areas deprived of legitimacy have marked the disappearance and fragmentation of the narrations that organized frontiers and appropriations. (Official historiography—history books, television news reports, etc.—nevertheless tries to make everyone believe in the existence of a national space.) It is *miniaturized*, because socioeconomic technocratization confines the significance of *fās* and *nefas* to the level of the family unit or the individual, and leads to the multiplication of "family stories," "life stories," and psychoanalytical narrations. (Gradually cut loose from these particular stories, public justifications nevertheless continue to exist in the form of blind rumors, or resurface savagely in class or race conflicts). It is finally *polyvalent*, because the mixing together of so many micro-stories gives them functions that change according to the groups in which they circulate. This polyvalence does not affect the relational origins of narrativity, however: the ancient ritual that creates fields of action is recognizable in the "fragments" of narration planted around the obscure thresholds of our existence; these buried fragments articulate without its knowing it the "biographical" story whose space they found.

A narrative activity, even if it is multiform and no longer unitary, thus continues to develop where frontiers and relations with space abroad are concerned. Fragmented and disseminated, it is continually concerned with marking out boundaries. What it puts in action is once more the *fās* that "authorizes" enterprises and precedes them. Like the Roman *fētiāles*, stories "go in a procession" ahead of social practices in order to open a field for them. Decisions and juridical combinations themselves come only afterwards, like the statements and acts of Roman law (*iūs*), arbitrating the areas of action granted to each party,[20] participating themselves in the activities for which *fās* provided a "foundation."

According to the rules that are proper to them, the magistrates' "interlocutory judgments" operate within the aggregate of heterogeneous spaces that have already been created and established by the innumerable forms of an oral narrativity composed of family or local stories, customary or professional "poems" and "recitations" of paths taken or countrysides traversed. The magistrates' judgments do not create these theaters of action, they articulate and manipulate them. They presuppose the narrative authorities that the magistrates "hear" compare, and put into hierarchies. Preceding the judgment that regulates and settles, there is a founding narration.

2. *Frontiers and bridges.* Stories are actuated by a contradiction that is represented in them by the relationship between the frontier and the bridge, that is, between a (legitimate) space and its (alien) exteriority. In order to account for contradiction, it is helpful to go back to the elementary units. Leaving aside morphology (which is not our concern here) and situating ourselves in the perspective of a pragmatics and, more precisely, a syntax aimed at determining "programs" or series of practices through which space is appropriated, we can take as our point of departure the "region," which Miller and Johnson-Laird define as a basic unit: the place where programs and actions interact. A "region" is thus the space created by an interaction.[21] It follows that in the same place there are as many "regions" as there are interactions or intersections of programs. And also that the determination of space is dual and operational, and, in a problematics of enunciation, related to an "interlocutory" process.

In this way a dynamic contradiction between each delimitation and its mobility is introduced. On the one hand, the story tirelessly marks out frontiers. It multiplies them, but in terms of interactions among the characters—things, animals, human beings; the acting subjects (*actants*) divide up among themselves places as well as predicates (simple, crafty, ambitious, silly, etc.) and movements (advancing, withdrawing, going into exile, returning, etc.). Limits are drawn by the points at which the progressive appropriations (the acquisition of predicates in the course of the story) and the successive displacements (internal or external movements) of the acting subjects meet. Both appropriations and displacements depend on a dynamic distribution of possible goods and functions in order to constitute an increasingly complex network of differentiations, a combinative system of spaces. They result from the operation of

distinctions resulting from encounters. Thus, in the obscurity of their unlimitedness, bodies can be distinguished only where the "contacts" ("*touches*") of amorous or hostile struggles are inscribed on them. This is a paradox of the frontier: created by contacts, the points of differentiation between two bodies are also their common points. Conjunction and disjunction are inseparable in them. Of two bodies in contact, which one possesses the frontier that distinguishes them? Neither. Does that amount to saying: no one?

The theoretical and practical problem of the frontier: to whom does it belong? The river, wall or tree *makes* a frontier. It does not have the character of a nowhere that cartographical representation ultimately presupposes. It has a mediating role. So does the story that gives it voice: "Stop," says the forest the wolf comes out of. "Stop!" says the river, revealing its crocodile. But this actor, by virtue of the very fact that he is the mouthpiece of the limit, creates communication as well as separation; more than that, he establishes a border only by saying what crosses it, having come from the other side. He articulates it. He is *also* a passing through or over. In the story, the frontier functions as a third element. It is an "in-between"—a "space between," *Zwischenraum*, as Morgenstern puts it in a marvelous and ironic poem on "closure" (*Zaun*), which rhymes with "space" (*Raum*) and "to see through" (*hindurchzuschaun*).[22] It is the story of a picket fence (*Lattenzaun*):

Es war einmal ein Lattenzaun
mit Zwischenraum, hindurchzuschaun.

One time there was a picket fence
with space to gaze from hence to thence.

A middle place, composed of interactions and inter-views, the frontier is a sort of void, a narrative sym-bol of exchanges and encounters. Passing by, an architect suddenly appropriates this "in-between space" and builds a great edifice on it:

Ein Architekt, der dieses sah,
stand eines Abends plötzlich da—

und nahm den Zwischenraum heraus
und baute draus ein grosses Haus.

An architect who saw this sight
approached it suddenly one night,

removed the spaces from the fence
and built of them a residence.

Transformation of the void into a plenitude, of the in-between into an established place. The rest goes without saying. The Senate "takes on"

the monument—the Law establishes itself in it—and the architect escapes to Afri-or-America:

Drum zog ihn der Senat auch ein.	the senate had to intervene.
Der Architekt jedoch entfloh nach Afri-od-Ameriko	The architect, however, flew to Afri- or Americoo. (Max Knight, trans.)

The Architect's drive to cement up the picket fence, to fill in and build up "the space in-between," is also his illusion, for without knowing it he is working toward the political freezing of the place and there is nothing left for him to do, when he sees his work finished, but to flee far away from the blocs of the law.

In contrast, the story privileges a "logic of ambiguity" through its accounts of interaction. It "turns" the frontier into a crossing, and the river into a bridge. It recounts inversions and displacements: the door that closes is precisely what may be opened; the river is what makes passage possible; the tree is what marks the stages of advance; the picket fence is an ensemble of interstices through which one's glances pass.

The *bridge* is ambiguous everywhere: it alternately welds together and opposes insularities. It distinguishes them and threatens them. It liberates from enclosure and destroys autonomy. Thus, for example, it occurs as a central and ambivalent character in the stories of the Noirmoutrins, before, during, and after the construction of a bridge between La Fosse and Fromentine in Vendée in 1972.[23] It carries on a double life in innumerable memories of places and everyday legends, often summed up in proper names, hidden paradoxes, ellipses in stories, riddles to be solved: Bridgehead, Bridgenorth, Bridgetown, Bridgewater, Bridgman, Cambridge, Trowbridge, etc.

Justifiably, the bridge is the index of the diabolic in the paintings where Bosch invents his modifications of spaces.[24] As a transgression of the limit, a disobedience of the law of the place, it represents a departure, an attack on a state, the ambition of a conquering power, or the flight of an exile; in any case, the "betrayal" of an order. But at the same time as it offers the possibility of a bewildering exteriority, it allows or causes the re-emergence beyond the frontiers of the alien element that was controlled in the interior, and gives ob-jectivity (that is, expression and re-presentation) to the alterity which was hidden inside the limits, so that in recrossing the bridge and coming back within the enclosure the traveler henceforth finds there the exteriority that he had first sought by

going outside and then fled by returning. Within the frontiers, the alien is already there, an exoticism or sabbath of the memory, a disquieting familiarity. It is as though delimitation itself were the bridge that opens the inside to its other.

Delinquencies?

What the map cuts up, the story cuts across. In Greek, narration is called "diegesis": it establishes an itinerary (it "guides") and it passes through (it "transgresses"). The space of operations it travels in is made of movements: it is *topological*, concerning the deformations of figures, rather than *topical*, defining places. It is only ambivalently that the limit circumscribes in this space. It plays a double game. It does the opposite of what it says. It hands the place over to the foreigner that it gives the impression of throwing out. Or rather, when it marks a stopping place, the latter is not stable but follows the variations of encounters between programs. Boundaries are transportable limits and transportations of limits; they are also *metaphorai*.

In the narrations that organize spaces, boundaries seem to play the role of the Greek *xoana*, statuettes whose invention is attributed to the clever Daedalus: they are crafty like Daedalus and mark out limits only by moving themselves (and the limits). These straight-line indicators put emphasis on the curves and movements of space. Their distributive work is thus completely different from that of the divisions established by poles, pickets or stable columns which, planted in the earth, cut up and compose an order of places.[25] They are also transportable limits.

Today, narrative operations of boundary-setting take the place of these enigmatic describers of earlier times when they bring movement in through the very act of fixing, in the name of delimitation. Michelet already said it: when the aristocracy of the great Olympian gods collapsed at the end of Antiquity, it did not take down with it "the mass of indigenous gods, the populace of gods that still possessed the immensity of fields, forests, woods, mountains, springs, intimately associated with the life of the country. These gods lived in the hearts of oaks, in the swift, deep waters, and could not be driven out of them. . . . Where are they? In the desert, on the heath, in the forest? Yes, but also and especially in the home. They live on in the most intimate of domestic habits."[26] But they also live on in our streets and in our apartments. They were perhaps after all only the agile representatives of narrativity,

and of narrativity in its most *delinquent* form. The fact that they have changed their names (every power is toponymical and initiates its order of places by naming them) takes nothing away from the multiple, insidious, moving force. It survives the avatars of the great history that debaptises and rebaptises them.

If the delinquent exists only by displacing itself, if its specific mark is to live not on the margins but in the interstices of the codes that it undoes and displaces, if it is characterized by the privilege of the *tour* over the *state*, then the story is delinquent. Social delinquency consists in taking the story literally, in making it the principle of physical existence where a society no longer offers to subjects or groups symbolic outlets and expectations of spaces, where there is no longer any alternative to disciplinary falling-into-line or illegal drifting away, that is, one form or another of prison and wandering outside the pale. Inversely, the story is a sort of delinquency in reserve, maintained, but itself displaced and consistent, in traditional societies (ancient, medieval, etc.), with an order that is firmly established but flexible enough to allow the proliferation of this challenging mobility that does not respect places, is alternately playful and threatening, and extends from the microbe-like forms of everyday narration to the carnivalesque celebrations of earlier days.[27]

It remains to be discovered, of course, what actual changes produce this delinquent narrativity in a society. In any event, one can already say that in matters concerning space, this delinquency begins with the inscription of the body in the order's text. The opacity of the body in movement, gesticulating, walking, taking its pleasure, is what indefinitely organizes a *here* in relation to an *abroad*, a "familiarity" in relation to a "foreignness." A spatial story is in its minimal degree a *spoken* language, that is, a linguistic system that distributes places insofar as it is *articulated* by an "enunciatory focalization," by an act of practicing it. It is the object of "proxemics."[28] Before we return to its manifestations in the organization of memory, it will suffice here to recall that, in this focalizing enunciation, space appears once more as a *practiced* place.