

- 24 *Ibid.*, VI [361].
- 25 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Razing the Bastions: On the Church in This Age*, Brian McNeil, C.R.V., trans (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 80–81.
- 26 Athanasius, *The Life of Anthony* xiv [ET: *Athanasius: The Life of Anthony and the Letter to Marcellinus*, Robert Gregg, trans. (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 42–43].
- 27 Florovsky, "Empire and Desert," 150. Emphasis in the original.
- 28 Johann-Baptist Metz, "Christians and Jews After Auschwitz: Being a Meditation also on the End of Bourgeois Religion," in *The Emergent Church*, Peter Mann, trans. (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 26. Cf. the comment of Boyarin: "The insistence on the value of bodily connection and embodied practice emblematic of Judaism since Paul thus has significant critical force over against the isolating and disembodied direction of western idealist philosophies" (*A Radical Jew*, 232).
- 29 For a brief account of the reductions, along with a record of their artistic achievements, see C. J. McNaspy, S.J., *Lost Cities of Paraguay: Art and Architecture of the Jesuit Reductions, 1607–1767* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1982).
- 30 Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, S.J., *The Spiritual Conquest Accomplished by the Religious of the Society of Jesus in the Provinces of Paraguay, Paraná, Uruguay, and Tape*, C.J. McNaspy, S.J., et. al., trans. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1993), 30.
- 31 Henri de Lubac, *The Splendour of the Church*, Michael Mason, trans. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 125.
- 32 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 21–29.

*My thanks to Greg Jones and John Bauerschmidt  
for their comments on this essay.*

## The voice of the Other

### Graham Ward

"Christian epistemology links mystic knowledge to language. God has spoken," Michel de Certeau writes (M.F., p. 114) Two extended metaphors for the economy of this speech act are common in the tradition. In the first, God is Speaker, Christ is the Spoken Word, the Verb grafted upon this world (M.F., p. 150) and the Spirit is the breath (*pneuma*) which makes this communication possible. In the second, the Spirit is explicitly linked to the writing of the Spoken Word. God is Writer and creation is His book. Certeau, as we will see, examines both these metaphors (with the economies of revelation and redemption that they imply). The speech act is fundamental to his understanding of history, creation, subjectivity and the practices of daily living. And yet, as a thinker who draws upon and develops the poststructuralism of Lacan, Foucault, Bourdieu and Derrida

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(to name only a few), this privileging of the voice is somewhat at odds with poststructural denunciations of the author and critiques of the metaphysics of presence subtly organised around the hierarchy of speech over writing.

Certeau's emphasis seems to me a highly important one, ethically, sociopolitically and theologically. Derrida's criticism of the spoken is lodged against a false sense of the immediate that attention to the voice appears to offer. Dialogue can take on a sacramental, onto-theological, character. Buber's rhapsodies on the I and Thou offer an example of the spiritualising of friendship that takes place when dialogue appears to make possible a reciprocal transparency one to the other, even when that other is the wholly other. The voice as such—a medium which seems to disappear in its very production—facilitates the metaphysics of Being and God as He who most is. It is significant that Karl Barth rejected a model of Trinitarian revelation founded upon *Deus dixit* for similar reasons: it seemed that "here is a grammatical and rationalistic proof of the Trinity." Dialogicalism, as such, is implicated in a natural theology. Derrida's critique of the privileged voice focusses on the forgotten written, the materiality of the phoneme, the marks on the paper, the sign: the mediation. While acknowledging the ineradicable nature of the logocentric, or the effect of presence, nevertheless he attends to its contamination by the inscribed body. The economy of *différance*, his accounts of supplementarity, dissemination, the pharmakon, serierasure, are all accounts of a scriptural economy, the event of writing. There is only mediation. Nothing can be realised unless it has first been textualized. But the hypostasis of the written depersonalises language. The words, dislodged from any prelinguistic intentionality or agent, belong to no one and come from no where. The economy of *différance* is anonymous. Speakers are simply an effect of language. Language, so conceived, is not a social activity, an everyday practice of persons.

Several important consequences follow, not the least of which (one I will not develop here) is that, *pace* Critchley, there can be no ethics of deconstruction.<sup>2</sup> When Derrida turns his attention to ethics, in his later work, subjects with histories and who announce things emerge—Kierkegaard, Marx and Levinas, for example. For the discussion here, what is important is that the activity of language so conceived by Derrida—an anonymous activity, eclipsing agents, yet open to an exteriority it can never present—seems both to pose and to forestall an investigation into the theological question of the Other, the God who is absolute Person and wholly Other. Derrida finds himself (one senses with reluctance and yet drawn by what his project cannot evade) returning again and again to the questions of negative theology and messianic

eschatology. These are questions which the economy of *différance* raises. But, viewed from the position of the written (the economy of the sign), these questions are always tactically handled and caught up in the play of erasure. If there is nothing outside of mediation, how does revelation become possible? The questions raised by *différance* are not answered and yet they promote a certain promise, a never-to-be-realised possibility. The theological question becomes the effect of the sign, for Derrida—a teasing, erotic absence forever dancing with the veils of rhetoric. Significantly, for Certeau's privileging of the voice, Derrida's game between the written and the oral is always being played at home, on the grounds of the sign.

Certeau's appeal to the importance of the speech act, the enunciation, enables us to position Derrida's critique of logocentrism. A return to the voice is not, as we shall see, a return either to personalism (the subject as autonomous agent, as centred upon a stable identity) or unmediated access to the truth and presence of the other. It is, in fact, a supplement to Derrida's critique of egocentrism—a supplement which conceives the *voice* as the site of an exteriority always pullulated with the written. In fact, the voice is the site which makes possible the economy of *différance* as it operates within the written. This, of course, gives primacy to the voice. But it is a primacy never available for our inspection. It is never available at all except after the event of writing. It is a primacy, then, never unmediated, a primacy which remains both utopic and aphasic. Furthermore, within the two distinctive places of the voice Certeau examines—the diabolic voice of the possessed and the spiritual voice of the mystic—the person who speaks, the act of enunciation, speaks in the name of the Other who speaks through and with the I. "[T]he speaking *I* (or writer) takes up the illocutory function [substituting his *I* for the inaccessible *I*], but in the name of the Other" (M.F., p. 188). There is, then, here a bearing witness, a testimony, a confession (all illocutory acts). And, of course, there is a hermeneutics of such speech acts, as Ricoeur has taught us. But my interest is not in the hermeneutics, for I am not contesting the mediated nature of all testimony. Rather my interest is in the metaphysics of the written and the trace of the unassimilable other voice which remains exterior to such a metaphysics. I wish to examine, theologically, a keynote in the work of Michel de Certeau as it announces a heterology on the far side of Derrida's analysis of secondariness. In brief, what I am attempting to do, following and developing Certeau's work, is adjust a necessary balance between the spoken and the written. It will enable us, I suggest, to view those theological questions again—the deferral and mystery of the one who speaks us into being, who calls us to write, who calls us who "are made in the image of" to follow after.<sup>3</sup>

## The Possessed

Certeau's construal of the voice of the Other is his abiding concern in two major works—one, *La Possession de Loudun*, published in 1970 and being translated at the moment, the other *The Mystic Fable*, published in 1982. Both are accounts of 'cries', of 'possession'. The first is an analysis of the infamous case of Satanic possessions that occurred within the Ursuline convent in Loudun in the 1630s. The second is an analysis of the mystic discourses about spiritual possession that was becoming a 'science' around the same time in the seventeenth century. The two books, therefore, constitute an analysis of the voice of the Other which Certeau hears most particularly at the dawn of modernity when the technologies of secularism were organising the world in order to greater facilitate its exploitation.

Certeau views modernity in terms of the dominance of writing or the scriptural economy. As a consequence of various movements in the C16th and C17th the world is no longer perceived as *spoken* by God, "it has become opacified, objectified, and detached from its supposed speaker" (M.F., p. 188). This is the age of the printing press. Writing makes possible the rise of science and the scientific world view which he associates with the colonisation of knowledge and spread of the capitalist production.<sup>4</sup> Trained as an historian in sympathy with the work and historiographical method of the Annales School, he is more than aware that he is searching for the traces of the past event in the welter of mediating discourse which constitutes the present archive, his primary resource. The primary resource is therefore already secondary. These discourses give access to what Certeau calls "the complex network of daily living" (P., p.39). Context becomes categorical. The particularity of a voice lies in the silent interstices of any socio-historical network. The voice of the devil is heard in France, as the voice of God is heard by the mystics, as one age gives way to another. In *La Possession de Loudun*, the voice expresses social inquietude following the religious wars, plague and the emergence of the modern State (which usurped the ceremonies and trappings of the ecclesial and liturgical orders of being). In *The Mystic Fable* the new orderings of space in terms of cities, states and Republics parallels "the task of founding places in which to hear the spoken Word that had become inaudible within corrupt institutions" (M.F., p. 154). The voice of the possessed Ursuline sisters "witnesses to a hole" (P., p.8) that no writing, no one discourse, can broach. The voice of the mystic expounds "the Silence of the ineffable One" (M.F., p. 150). In both, an operation, a speech act, substitutes for a Name which cannot be named. These cries, these voices, announce the very brokenness of history—and therefore the instability of historiography—itsself. In this fragmentation

"we can hear what happens on the other side", the other (*autre*) speaks (P., p. 16).

In *La Possession de Loudun*, Certeau carefully draws out the complex network within which the town of Loudun, the Ursuline convent, the Church (Catholic and Protestant) and its relations to the King, the practitioners of medicine, discourses on sorcery and its affective treatment, seventeenth century spirituality and the emergence of modernity's emphases are all enmeshed. He plots the positions in terms of the town's own geography, spatializing what Foucault was to call the 'grids of intelligibility'—the various discourses which contain and constrain the interpretation of the events. Owing something to Foucault's archeological strategies, Certeau too is concerned with the operations and movement of power. But his concern is much more with the secularization of power, the architecture of control, and the tactical, deviant responses voicing a subversion of such control. He criticizes Foucault for concentrating his work on the production and development of power, on dominant and dominating ideologies. Certeau's work examines the way there are, within any dominating ideology, elements of subversion, choice, or what he terms tactics—"as in stories of miracle" (P.E.L., p.27). His attention is not on production and power but the wily resourcefulness of the peasant, the consumer. He is not attempting then to explain what happened at Loudun among those Ursuline sisters, which led to the execution of the so-called sorcerer Urbain Grandier by the hands of those very sisters, but he is attempting to point up the birth of a new language, a language which subverts all the other discourses attempting to explain and manipulate what is going on. In this respect "the mystical and possession often are drawn from the same areas of society in which language grows dense, losing its spiritual porosity itself and becoming impermeable to the divine" (P., p. 13) The possessed one's speech act is like the mystic's speech act or the language of negative theology: it testifies to a performance, a tactic in which the dominating discourse is undermined, confused, or played against itself so that another voice is heard. It is the voice of "social inquietude", it is the voice of the forgotten Other, the inaudible voice of God. "It is one of the definitions of possession that one is in this moment unstable and one symbolizes that in a language which furnishes an expression for it which is simultaneously archaic and innovative" (P., p.43). Similarly, mystic discourses "effect displacements, they attract words and change them" (M.F.,p. 119). In fact, the very adjective 'mystic' when used before a substantive makes the thing signified disappear in favour of the signifier (M.F., p. 145). This is why the voice is not the self-presence, the immediateness and directness of Derridean 'speech'. This voice speaks in and through and beyond

discourse. It is heard in the abrasions and excess of the written. Speech is a use of language, a performative, not outside and the binary opposite of the written.

The historical scenes Certeau chose to uncover, then, become metaphors of alterity (*les figures de l'autre*) which reveal more about the historian's craft than their supernatural origins. In showing how the scattered and fragmentary language of the devil develops into a 17th century discourse on possession—in which various states are labelled, various positions outlined, various devils (and their dispositions) named and delineated—Certeau shows how the Other is exorcised through forcing it to name itself, to be colonized by that which is already available. Speech that began in broken Latin and confused Hebrew, is, through the intervention of "*la justice royale*" delivered from a "linguistic esotericism" when the devil is told that "he will speak in French, like everyone else" (P., p. 68). In the same way the historian too is an exorcist concerned with "eliminating the danger of the other" (P., p. 327). Certeau's work is a deliberate fracturing of the historian's narrative. In suggesting the various power-grids within which the events at the Ursuline convent are enmeshed—suggesting, therefore, certain ideological positions for the interpretation of the events—he draws attention to the deceptions and illusions (the practices of the devil) of any historian not aware of "this internal strangeness" to the historical. A space is opened by this fracturing, a space whose boundaries cannot be fixed. Certeau pictures this space in terms of smell, a fragrance coming from elsewhere—like the fragrances smelt by some of the possessed sisters of the convent.

Opening up the possibility for this permeable space is one aspect of Certeau's heterological project. It is a project which issues from a certain deconstruction, a stripping away, a peeling back, to find in the plethora of discourses the trace of the Other, an elusive difference. To confound any intellectual grasp of this spatiality—and obfuscate any epistemology—ocular metaphors blend into other metaphorical descriptions drawn from smell and hearing. The heterological space cannot become an object of knowledge, its shape and identity is far too Protean. Certeau's is not a project attempting to develop a theory, his is a project which is attempting to perform a certain practice on the textuality of history. This practice will result in retellings, new fables. These retellings give a certain priority of significance to the voice of the teller.

Speaking is an operation, a practice. "[T]he speech act will allow us to go further and not limit ourselves to the critique of graphic representations alone, looking from the shore of legibility toward an inaccessible beyond." (P.E.L., p. 97). Certeau's 'voice' is couched in terms of the structuralist distinction between the singular and specific speech act

(*la parole*) and the language as a system of signs with a history and syntaxes (*la langue*). This distinction was announced in terms of the synchronic and diachronic axes of language by Saussure, whose own emphasis was more on the synchronic and universal structures of language rather than its temporality. Certeau's emphasis is upon the contingent, the historically singular, temporal embeddedness. His 'voice' owes much to Beneviste's distinctions between the act of enunciation (*énonciation*), what is said in the act (*énoncé*), and discourse as the language available for any subject to employ intersubjectively. His analysis of speech acts is also indebted to J.L. Austin's distinction between a performative—a statement which puts into effect what it says—and a constative—a statement affirming a certain content, emphasizing that to which it refers. But for Certeau, as for Derrida (who critiqued the latent immediacy and self-presence in speech-act philosophies), the voice is never present except through what it leaves behind—the statement (*énoncé*), the writing, the text, the *art* or *manner* of speaking. In *The Mystic Fable*, where Certeau explores more profoundly the nature of the speech act, the act has its 'origin' (which is never pure and singular) in volition, *volo*: I desire, I wish. The operation of language is explicitly related to subjects of desire, economies of desire. "The *volo* provides the opening for every spoken word" (M.F., p. 166). But even this *volo* lies not outside language, in some moment of self-presence, but is itself a speech act, a performative in the Austin sense of the word (M.F., p. 173). Certeau employs the terms used by Heidegger and Levinas: the saying haunts the body of the said. And always, for Certeau, this voice is embodied in a speaking subject implicated in a social network, in an act of what Beneviste termed 'allocation', which opens lines of contact between interlocutors. Enunciation as a practice makes possible a world of human text. It is a text that is endlessly motile, forever being read and reread, fabulated and refabulated. The speech act makes possible another city working within, affirming, blurring and transgressing "the planned and readable city" (P.E.L., p.93). But in this textual world the author is not dead (Roland Barthes), the subject is not disseminated endlessly across the surface of an anonymous writing (early Derrida). In this textual world individuals make themselves, speaking becomes "constitutive of existence" (M.F., p. 164). Speaking subjects perform a subjectivity-in-process as, in the same way, a writer develops a style through the act of writing. They fabulate a singular journey through the planned and readable city, always establishing contact, creating networks of association with other *Wandersmänner*. As such, living is a form of writing and involves a certain rhetoric.

The cry of the possessed within the city of Loudun, within the walls

of the Ursuline convent—"The city is a huge monastery,' said Erasmus" (M.F., p. 164)—announces these two cities, two spatialities: the heterological and the planned, the proper (*propre*), the one which self-consciously possesses itself, patrolling its boundaries. Living within these cities figures such as Urbain Grandier and the Prioress Jeanne des Anges, the Catholic governor Jean d'Armagnac, the exorcists and the tourists, all write out a certain way of being. A shifting map of relations is in operation. Certeau employs the tropes of synecdoche and asyndeton to characterize the art of such a living. The synecdochic forges analogical connections: the physical body is mapped onto other bodies (social, discursive, ecclesial, sacramental, eschatological), to which it owes and pays its allegiances. The asyndetic creates aporias, differences, foreignness, enemies: there are differences between Catholic and Huguenot, the governor and the King, the devil and God. Later, in *The Mystic Fable*, Certeau points out how these figures textualize the life of St Teresa—the women who were drawn to her, the confessors who distanced themselves—St John of the Cross, Jean de Labadie. The individual walks of these people through their cities set up what Certeau, after Derrida, calls a "wandering of the semantic" (P.E.L., p. 102). The economy of *différance* is situated, by Certeau, within the city, within certain practices of living performed by specific individuals. Writing is given an agency, an ethics and a politics. But above and beyond the fact that Certeau takes as the field for his inquiry religious texts, religious events, religious histories, can we proceed to develop theologically his analysis of the spoken word? Derrida's trace of the absent Other becomes Certeau's trace of the absent voice of the Other, but what difference does that make ?

### **The Voice of the Other**

Whatever Certeau's relationship towards orthodox Christianity (and its institutions) at the end of his life, there nevertheless remains the imprint of the Jesuit charism upon his writing. And nowhere is this more explicit than in his commitment to exploring the spoken voice. The Jesuit emphasis upon hearing the call of God (vocation) and the relationship between that calling, learning to listen, and being sent out under obedience, the emphasis upon the ingesting of Scripture as Word of God in order to weave its words into the tissue of one's life, the concern with social justice, an incarnate spirituality, and a gritty pragmatism which can operate within urban cultures: these marks remain on the body of Certeau's texts. With his ambiguous description of the incarnation as a unique and founding break in history, of the "great Silence" of a God beyond being (M.F., pp. 114–5); with his repeated use of 'miracle' to describe the tearing which provides a space for the Other: with his



attestation that this unnameable and impregnable origin or end of the Other has been called God even though contemporary culture is unable to ground itself in belief in God any longer<sup>5</sup> (M.F., p.299): Christian theology haunts Certeau's heterological project. He continues to move within Christianity's disseminated effects, its stories, its language. Christianity's voice, the speech of God, can be traced through his metropolitan wanderings. And the wanderer remains a mystic, he insists (M.F., p.299)—creating where he or she goes metaphorical and mobile cities of significance, like Abraham. Being always Other, the wanderer moves toward the Other (P.E.L., p. 110). And this is not Derrida's anonymous other. The voice of the Other registers some notion of transcendental personhood.

Can we develop this hidden (repressed ?) theology ? Would this not be in line with Certeau's project, since theology is *par excellence* a heterological project ? Certainly to walk with him and (inevitably) beyond him—in the way he charts the spiritual and physical pilgrimage of Labadie the Nomad, who passes through "Jesuit, Jansenist, Calvinist, Pietist, Chiliast or Millenarian, and finally 'Labadist'" (M.F.,p.271)—would only be to continue his project. What if, in contemporary culture, belief in God could still ground this walk, this spirituality ? What kind of a theological and heterological space might we create within our planned, readable, all too material cities? What, for instance, if we fabulated or retold the work of this Jesuit in the style of another Jesuit, Balthasar? The concern with style as the performance of one's life and calling, is not the least of the things which relate these two thinkers. The kenotic journey into silence and exile and a critique of modernity's subject-object positivism, would also relate them. If, for Balthasar, this style is explicitly theological, it is because it issues from a theology of calling and mission inseparable from a theology of personhood and creation, and from an economy of salvation and an eschatology which is ultimately trinitarian.

What we have in Certeau is a socio-political and historical analysis which examines the practices of individual people and the processes of time. This is something absent from the theological abstraction and Biblical exegesis of Balthasar. There is also, implied in Certeau's work, a view of the ongoing nature of creation: human beings, communities and governments write, rewrite and disseminate their worlds, creating a vast and complex human text haunted by the voice of what is Other. A world in which the "wandering of the semantic" rules, is a world caught up in an endless allegorisation, an endless displacement of names and renaming of names; a rhetoric of temporality. It is, as Certeau calls it, a "theatre of operations", a "theatre of representations"—each speech act imitating (or blasphemously mimicking) the Word which opened creation itself. This

supplements Balthasar's neo-Patristic Trinity with a social and historical perspective alert to the ineradicable work of ideologies. But Balthasar's Trinity would offer Certeau's incarnate spirituality a theology of the voice. Balthasar rewrites the kenotic fable in which the rupture of the Christ event is fundamental. He describes the descent of the Voice of God into the textuality of this world and on into the silent hiatus of Holy Saturday. The Holy Spirit as the writer of God's spoken Word, as *creator Spiritus*, opens an alternative space, a mobile excessive space empowered by a double desire: a co-operation of divine and human eros. Paths (vocations, missions) are laid down by and in this operation.<sup>6</sup> The Spirit as interlocutor ceaselessly rereads the Logos of Christ, wandering where it will, endlessly becoming. Through this operation the world becomes reorganised, rewritten. Balthasar's theology of desire, spacing and personhood<sup>7</sup>, God as Speaker and Writer, might supplement then the work of Certeau.

What would this supplementation effect in a project by a man who is, in the main, negative about theology as a science (whatever he might understand by that)? Certeau, when explicitly tackling Christian theology in a contemporary context, describes "[t]he death of Jesus and his resurrection within a multiplicity of Christian languages."<sup>8</sup> An Hegelian note appears to ring here—the death of God as the dissolving of the transcendent into the immanent processes of communities. Absent however is Hegel's teleology. Certeau's view of history as always fractured would militate against such a teleology, such a determinism. Hence, for Certeau, any theory of history is simply written on the surface of water (M.F., p. 155). And yet cut off from Hegel's telos this endless immanent process, without aim or direction, would ascribe to the condition of Hegel's Unhappy Consciousness: a consciousness of futility, of nihilism. Certeau avoids this nihilism. Through his meditation on the voice of the Other in the language of the possessed—diabolic or saintly—he announces an exteriority, an excess, an unnameable. A transcendent not only haunts Certeau's work, it is the condition for the possibility of the immanent order of daily practices. This Other is demanded by his work and propels his heterological project towards an unknown future (M.F., p. 146). Balthasar's trinitarianism would give Certeau's description of the death of Christ and his resurrection within a multiplicity of Christian languages a theo-logic, a hetero-logic that would open a new space for the operation of faith.

Without this other logic does Certeau's work not leave itself open to a nihilism: an endless dissemination, a multiplicity of Christian languages minus the living God, a wandering without direction or promise into ever deepening exile? Without the theological horizon his project simply

continues modernity's secularization of reason. A modernity he criticizes for such action. Without a theological horizon Certeau could not develop his "mystic poetics [which] passes from place to place and age to age" creating what he (quoting Hadewijch of Anvers) calls "'an eternity without shores'...expanded 'by the unity that absorbs it'" (M.F., p.299). A *spirituality* of departure, of homelessness and journeying requires a theological underpinning—to go out, to be sent, to proceed in the name of God. For there is nothing otherwise spiritual about social destitution.

#### Abbreviations

M.F. *The Mystic Fable*, tr. Michael B. Smith, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

P. *La Possession de Loudun*, Paris: Gallimard/Juliard, 1980.

P.E.L. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, tr. Stephen Rendell, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

- 1 *Church Dogmatics*, 1. 1, tr. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T.&T Clark, 1975), p.296. There is a difference between saying that discourse is haunted by an alterity, exteriority and excess which raises theological questions and saying that discourse is by its nature sacred, an echo of the divine. I take the first to accept seriously the creator-creature divide, the God beyond 'God' as Gregory of Nyssa would say. I take the second to intend an onto-theological project, a metaphysical project according to modernity's understanding of metaphysics. My own project in this essay belongs to the first distinction.
- 2 See Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
- 3 See my essay 'Kenosis and Language: Allegoria Amoris' in *Religion in Modernity and Postmodernity*, ed. Paul Morris, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- 4 Seen as such Derrida's early work is the apotheosis of modernity's project. I wish to acknowledge here the value of discussions on Derrida's work I have had with Catherine Pickstock of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.
- 5 See Certeau's essay 'Believing and Making People Believe' in P.E.L., pp.177-89. In this essay, having defined belief not in terms of object or content but a modality of assertion (p.178), Certeau goes on to outline the politics of believing—what makes something believable. Again he announces, albeit rather wistfully, the demise of religious believing or belief in "an invisible alterity behind the signs" (p.188). And whilst demonstrating how the Church is implicated in the demise of belief, he emphasizes how secularity has co-opted so many of the strategies and practices of religious believing to create its virtual realities "by making people believe that others believe it, but without providing any believable object" (p.189). Certeau speaks from within the secularism to the secularists. This is a space he has created for himself from which he speaks and which is constituted by what he speaks. But the credibility of religious beliefs does remain. The Church as a series of institutions practising these beliefs remains also. There as an alternative space within the cities of secularity. Certeau often seems to forget this while providing us with analyses of heterological spatiality. What politics of the believable is he engaging in?
- 6 *Explorations in Theology III: (Creator Spiritus)*, tr. Brian McNeil, C.R.V. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), p. 166.
- 7 For his theology of spacing and desire as they relate to his anthropology and doctrine of creation (all heavily indebted to Gregory of Nyssa), see Balthasar's *Presence and Thought* tr. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995.
- 8 How is Christianity Thinkable Today? *Theology Digest* vol.17 (1971), p.345.