

3. Andrew Baird, *Etica e luogo della storia*

It is already well-known that the ethical implications of claims to «know the other» are a major concern of Michel de Certeau's work on history and other «heterologies». For Certeau, the problem of the «ethical» concerns not simply the «power» that a discourse exerts over its object, but also the question of the relation of this discourse and the activity that produces it to a wider sociopolitical order. In the work associated with history's «ethical turn,» there has been a tendency to restrict the terrain of the ethical to a concern for the object and its fate in historical representation; the preeminent ethical question in this context is the «obligation» or «duty» of historians to the past «others» that their work addresses. Certeau's work reminds us of the necessity of looking beyond the subject-object relationship, and including within the scope of the «ethical» a critical reflection on the present «place» in which this relationship unfolds. In what follows, I want to examine Certeau's framing of history's ethical potential in his late essay entitled *History: Science and Fiction*. In this essay, Certeau argues that history's ethics must be understood in relation to the abiding, but ultimately irreducible, threat of dogmatism. I will argue that if we understand the «ethical» as a struggle against «dogmatism» we must be prepared to consider history's ethics as an endlessly renewed, never resolved struggle against the «place» of its production.