IN THE GRIP
OF MINOS
IN THE GRIP OF MINOS

CONFESSIONAL DISCOURSE
IN DANTE, CORNEILLE,
AND RACINE

MATTHEW SENIOR

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TO

JENNIFER
Minos juge aux enfers tous les pâles humains.
Ah! combien frémira son ombre épouvantée,
Lorsqu’il verra sa fille à ses yeux présentée,
Contrainte d’avouer tant de forfaits divers,
Et des crimes peut-être inconnus aux enfers!

Racine, *Phèdre*

L’homme, en Occident, est devenu une bête d’aveu.
De là sans doute une métamorphose dans la littéra­ture: d’un plaisir de raconter et d’entendre, qui était centré sur le récit héroïque ou merveilleux des “épreuves” de bravoure ou de sainteté, on est passé à une littérature ordonnée à la tâche infinie de faire lever du fond de soi-même, entre les mots, une vérité que la forme même de l’aveu fait miroiter comme l’inaccessible.

Michel Foucault
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