NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. All citations of Freud are from the Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works and are referred to by volume and page number.
2. Lacan also insists on the difference between spiritual direction and psychoanalysis: "La direction de conscience, au sens du guide moral qu'un fidèle du catholicisme peut y trouver, est ici exclue radicalement. . . . La direction de la cure est autre chose" ("Direction" 586).
3. See chap. 1 for a further discussion of the techniques of spiritual direction in Eastern monasticism.
4. The full passage in Latin: "Ipse quidem voce de sepulcro suscitavit, ipse clamando animam reddidit, ipse terrenam molem sepulto impositam vicit, et processit ille vinctus: non ergo pedibus propriis, sed virtute producentis. Fit hoc in corde poenitentis: cum audis hominem poenitere peccatorum suorum, jam revixit; cum audis hominem confitendo proferre conscientiam, jam de sepulcro eductus est, sed nondum solutus est" (Migne, PL 37.1306).
5. See chap. 4 for further discussion of anagnorisis.
6. All text and translations of Dante throughout this study are taken from the John D. Sinclair edition.

CHAPTER 1

1. Compare with Duby:

Mais peut-on imaginer révolution plus radicale et d'un effet plus profond et prolongé sur les attitudes mentales que le passage d'une cérémonie aussi ostentatoire que l'avait été la pénitence publique—succédant à la reconnaissance publique de la faute, elle introduisait
dans un état social particulier ouvertement désigné par certaines manières de se conduire, un vêtement, des gestes, bref, tout un spectacle d’exclusion monté sur la scène publique—à ce simple dialogue, celui des *exempla*, entre le pécheur et le prêtre, c’est-a-dire entre l’âme et Dieu, confession auriculaire, de bouche à oreille, un secret inviolable, l’aveu ne comptant que s’il préludait à un travail de rectification, d’émondage livré par la personne en silence à l’intérieur d’elle-même? (“Situation” 525)

2. See Groupe de la Bussière.
3. See Jameson’s “Religion and Ideology.”
4. On the sociology of confession and the theme of inclusion and exclusion, see Hepworth and Turner.
6. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche discusses how ascetic ideals became “life-affirming” (“Ja-schaffende”): “This ascetic priest, this apparent enemy of life, this denier—precisely he is among the greatest conserving and yes-creating forces of life” (120). My work is an attempt to show specifically how the ascetic ideal involves a yes-creating on the level of discourse, a “yes-saying.”
7. According to Janet,

Les religions dans l’organisation des couvents ont toujours donné une place importante à la personne du supérieur; les anciennes morales comme celle du stoïcisme comprenaient fort bien le rôle du directeur de conscience; la religion catholique ne s’est pas bornée à instituer la confession, mais elle a recommandé au fidèle de conserver le même confesseur et a perfectionné la conception du directeur de conscience, Ignace de Loyola, Saint François de Sales, Bossuet, Fénélon savaient fort bien l’importance de la continuité dans le traitement des scrupuleux, beaucoup mieux dirigés quand ils étaient entre les mains d’un confesseur qui les connaissait depuis longtemps. (Qtd. in Schaller 91)

8. “La porta che chiude la fenditura nella roccia simboleggia la confessione sacramentale come accesso al sentiero della purificazione progressiva dell’uomo peccatore durante questa vita, prima di giungere all’unione perfetta con Dio” (Meersseman 141).
9. See “Dante as Confessor” in Paolini 82.
10. “Dante descrive minutamente questo sacramento (Pg IX 70–147), seguendo qualche *Ordo reconciliationis poenitentium* o *Ordo ad dandum poenitentiam*, cioè rituale o manuale usato dai penitenzieri romani incaricati di confessare i romei (letteratura non ancora studiata dai liturgisti per l’epoca di Dante)” (Meersseman 141).
11. Dante uses the term *contrapasso* in *Inferno* XXVIII 142, where Bertran de Born explains that his ghastly punishment—he is decapitated and carries his head in his hand—is ordained by divine justice: “Così s’osserva in me la contrapasso” (“Thus is observed in me the
retribution”). Dante’s primary source for the idea of the contrapasso came through St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa theologica* (III–II, q. 612, art. 4), where the saint conflates the Aristotelian idea of reciprocal justice with the *lex talionis* of the Old Testament, implicitly contrasting it with the “turning-the-other-cheek” exhortation of the New Law: “I answer that retaliation (contrapassum) denotes equal suffering in repayment for previous action; and the expression applies most properly to injurious sufferings and actions, whereby a man harms the person of his neighbor; for instance, if a man strike, that he be struck back. This kind of justice is laid down in the Law (Exodus 21: 23–4): He shall render life for life, eye for eye, etc. And since also to take away what belongs to another is to do something unjust, it follows that, secondly, retaliation (contrapassum) consists in this also that whoever causes loss to another, should suffer loss in his belongings. This just loss is also found in the Law (Exodus, 21: 1).”

(Cassell 3)

See also Singleton, *Commentary* 2:522–25.

12. The legend of Theseus will be discussed further in chap. 4 in relation to Racine’s *Phèdre*. See Eisler, Arthur Evans, Faure, Hawkes, Marinatos, Nichols, Nilsson, and Rohrlich-Leavitt for further information about Minoan civilization and the legends of Theseus and Minos.

13. For discussions of the Greek and Roman beliefs concerning life after death, see Cumont, Clark.

14. As R. G. Austin puts it,

The language is meant to suggest Roman court procedure: Heyne notes ps.-Asconius’ *argumentum* of Cic. *Verr.* ii. I (p. 61, Klotz): “ad hanc enim similitudinem poeta Vergilius Minoem iudicem apud inferos, tamquam si praetor sit rerum capi­talium, quaesitorem appellat; dat ibi sortitionem, ubi urnam nominat, dat electionem judicum, cum dicit *consilium vocat*, dat cognitionem facinorum, cum dicit *vitasque et crimina discit*.” Virgil plainly imagines a ghostly tribunal in formal session, to review the cases of those falsa damnati crimine mortis. Their condemnation by an earthly tribunal would presumably have destined them as sinners to Tartarus; now, instead, they are allocated to the “neutral” region. (156)

15. “La parola dénota in verità il possesso di un sapere ben approfondito in campo morale, di una vaste e saldita esperienza intorno alla casistica dei peccati, premessa di un giudizio rigoroso e infallibile (Minos, a cui fallar non lece, XXIX 120): tutto ciò va sottinteso al valore di ‘giudice,’ attribuito comunemente al vocabolo” (Consoli 154).

16. For further discussion of the fresco, see Marinatos, *Minoan Religion* 71–75.

17. I tratti grotteschi (ma—si badi—non comici) della rappresentazione dantesca di Minos culminano nel particolare della coda (un’innovazione dell’Alighieri di cui non è facile rendersi ragione, a fronte del virgiliano, e generalmente classico, ‘urnam movet’), che Minos at-
torce intorno a sé per tanti giri quanti cerchi il colpevole deve scendere nell'abisso: gesto forse di per sé inutile, se la sentenza è pronunciata anche a viva voce (come parrebbe, almeno per la precisazione del girone o della parte del cerchio cui l'anima è destinata: cfr. Inf. XXVII 127). (Padoan 963)

18. See Salsano for discussion of the many interpretations of Minos's tail.


20. Freccero discusses the eucharistic parody in the Ugolino episode in "Bettel Sign and Bread of Angels: Inferno XXXII and XXXIII" (Dante 152–66).

21. It is a law of the unconscious that words are often treated like things. In the case history of the Rat-Man, for example, the rats in the obsessional neurotic's story represent an array of words related to his case; the Ratten (rats) are also Raten (installment payments), Spielratten (gambling debts), and signify his fear of marriage, heiraten (Freud 10:213–14). Lacan also devotes considerable attention to this process in his writings: "Les mots peuvent eux-mêmes subir les lésions symboliques, accomplir les actes imaginaires dont le patient est le sujet. On se souvient de la Wespe (guêpe) castrée de son W initial pour devenir le S.P. des initiales de l'homme aux loups, au moment où il réalise la punition symbolique dont il a été l'objet de la part de Grousha, la guêpe" (Ecrits 1:183).

22. Piero's barren metamorphosis contrasts ironically with his surname, "della Vigna" or "de Vinea" ("vineyard" or "vine"). Although modern commentators have ignored this aspect as, perhaps, too primitive or naive, during Piero's life his family name offered a fertile field for puns of adulation; and after his death it became the source of many a frivolous tale in the chroniclers. . . . His friend Nicola della Rocca indulged himself and the Notary with "O blessed root which hath brought forth such a fruitful branch, O blessed vine ['felix vinea'] . . ." (Cassell 34)

23. Mitchell Greenberg has brought it to my attention that the term Thanatos never actually occurs in Freud's published works. It appears that he referred to it in conversation.

24. Les chrétiens de l'époque féodale, ceux du moins dont on peut connaître les attitudes, se tiennent devant la puissance divine dans les postures rituelles de qui fait dédition de soi: comme les chevaliers qui se confient au maître du château, ils sont à genoux, volontiers mains jointes, attendant récompense, espérant être entretenus dans l'autre monde paternellement, aspirant à s'introduire dans le privé de Dieu, dans sa familia, mais au degré convenant à l'ordre dont ils font partie, c'est-a-dire au bas d'une hiérarchie de soumission. . . . Le peuple dévot prit ainsi figure, irrésistiblement, d'une immense maisonnée démultipliée en diverses demeures, placées chacune sous la protection d'un saint ou de la Vierge, accueillantes, englobantes, elles aussi tentaculaires, et le rêve s'est déployé au long du Xle siècle
d’introduire l’humanité tout entière dans les multiples casiers de la domesticité céleste. (Duby, “Féodalité” 39–40)

CHAPTER 2

1. “Imaginary” and “Symbolic” are Jacques Lacan’s well-known, if elusive, concepts of psychical organization in which human relations are governed simultaneously by the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. These can be described schematically as (1) real historical circumstances; (2) imaginary, primarily visual relations of substitution; and finally, (3) symbolic relations that are governed by the impersonal code of signs. It should be stressed that, for Lacan, these aspects of reality always occur at once; there is no unmediated or originary experience of the Real, the Imaginary, or the Symbolic.

2. For Martha Noel Evans, Lacan’s commentary on the ecstasy of St. Teresa in Encore marks the inability of psychoanalysis to understand female desire and a last attempt by Lacan, at the end of his career, to let the female unconscious speak by colluding with the hysteric: “The discourse of psychoanalysis fused with the discourse of hysteria where knowledge melted into a swoon” (196). Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, although attacking Luce Irigaray and “feminists” (298), takes the same position: “Lacan located the hysteric’s discourse close to the analyst’s, that is, close to the search for being in terms of unconscious truth. Lacan claimed that his own discourse was grounded in the structures both of the hysteric and the analyst” (305).

3. For an interesting study of the telephone as a materialization and territorialization of modern philosophical discourse, see Ronell.

4. See “True Confessions by Telephone,” Time 3 Oct. 1988: 85. The article relates how a Los Angeles service receives “200 anonymous calls a day from people admitting everything from marital infidelity to murder. On another number, callers pay $2.00 for the first minute and $.45 a minute after that to listen to confessions. The second number receives up to 10,000 calls a day.”

5. This distinction should be respected in modern usage, according to the Littré: “Aveu est plus général que confession; il s’applique à tout ce que l’on avait dessein de cacher, bon ou mauvais. La confession ne s’applique qu’au mal, à un tort, à un méchef. Aussi la torture, la menace arrachent non une confession, mais des aveux.” Torture extracts an aveu because the person being tortured could perfectly well be hiding something that in itself is innocent but desired by an oppressive inquisitor. Confession, on the other hand, implies a transcendental evaluation of the hidden fact as being in itself sinful.

6. In How to Do Things with Words, J. L. Austin mentions confession under the category of “expositives,” a type of “highly developed explicit performative” (86). To be classified as such, an utterance must in itself accomplish a certain conventional act. Confession meets this criterion: by pronouncing
the words of confession in the correct setting one is formally entering into a contract with diverse consequences depending upon the context. The performative utterance can also function only in the first person, since only the speaker or subject of enunciation can verbally commit himself. Confession, for example, can only be performed by saying "I confess," and not "He confesses."

7. On this subject see Apostolidès, Bloch, and Kantorowicz.

8. See also Lebrun's article in the same volume, which discusses the importance of confession and the confessional in the religious reforms of the seventeenth century.

9. "Wenceslas, roi de Bohême, voulait savoir ce que la princesse Jeanne son épouse avait dit à confesse. Il employa les prières, les promesses, les menaces; toutes ses instances furent inutiles. Saint Jean Népomucène fut mis à mort, il devint martyr du secret de la confession" (Pontas 595).

CHAPTER 3

1. All citations of Corneille, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from Oeuvres complètes, ed. Stegmann.

2. All citations of Racine, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from Oeuvres complètes, ed. Picard.

3. "Le lieu le plus retiré dans le plus bel appartement des palais, des grandes maisons" (Furetière). According to the Petit Robert, the word "cabinet," as used here by Corneille, was first introduced in 1627.

4. "The exile is not simply excluded from a material area of contact; he is chased out of a human environment measured off by the law. Henceforth the exile will no longer haunt the human space of the fatherland; where the fatherland ends, there his defilement also ceases" (Ricoeur, Symbolism 40).

5. See Greenberg for a discussion of Jason as narcissistic type, although he does not treat Medea as a return to primitive narcissism (27).

6. For Gilles Deleuze, "Schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring-machines, universal primary production as 'the essential reality of man and nature'" (5).

7. In Le Prince sacrifié, Apostolidès traces the concept of the "roi-prêtre" from the Middle Ages down to the seventeenth century.

8. See Esmein for further discussion of "abolition" and royal justice (435).

9. English Protestants called the Jesuit casuists "king killers" because some of them defended the use of force against an unjust king. See Leites 106.

10. Apostolidès describes how confession itself was part of the royal sacré: "La vieille métaphore du mariage mystique unissant l'évêque à son siège est reprise pour définir les liens entre le roi et l'État, ce dernier étant lui-même interprété comme un corps mystique. D'où le strict rituel qui entoure le sacrement de l'onction: le monarque doit être en état de grâce pour le re-
cevoir; il jeûne et se confesse avant de revêtir les insignes de la royauté” (Prince 12, emphasis added).

11. In the Examen of 1660, Corneille mentions this scene and comments on the abuse of avowal scenes as a theatrical expedient to provide the spectator with background information:

Sa confidence [Pauline’s] avec Stratonice, touchant l’amour qu’elle avait eu pour ce cavalier, me fait faire une réflexion sur le temps qu’elle prend pour cela. Il s’en fait beaucoup sur nos théâtres, d’affectations qui ont déjà duré deux ou trois ans, dont on attend à révéler le secret justement au jour de l’action qui se présente, et non seulement sans aucune raison de choisir ce jour-là plutôt qu’un autre pour le déclarer, mais lors même que vraisemblablement on s’en est dû ouvrir beaucoup auparavant avec la personne à qui on en fait confiance. Ce sont choses dont il faut instruire le spectateur en les faisant apprendre par un des acteurs à l’autre, mais il faut prendre garde avec soin que celui à qui on les apprend ait eu lieu de les ignorer jusqu’là aussi bien que le spectateur et que quelque occasion tirée du sujet oblige celui qui les récite à rompre enfin un silence qu’il a gardé si longtemps. (292)

12. See Greenberg for an interesting discussion of Pauline’s dream. I concur that it contains erotic, rebellious elements, but I disagree with his idea that her “female pleasure” is fulfilled by the play’s ending: “This pleasure reveals (as it does for Emilie, for Camille) the destructive Medea that is hidden in all of Corneille’s heroines” (143). For me, Pauline is the antithesis of Medea in her passage through the discourse of confession, which, as I pointed out, Medea specifically rejects. I would agree that there are utopian, revolutionary aspects of Pauline and Polyeucte’s vision, but they must not be confused with the tragic, demonic force of Medea.

13. Rousseau explores the perverse possibilities of this model in the incident of the stolen comb in the Confessions. There, the shame of confession is enjoyed as masochistic pleasure, and the very enterprise of the Confessions becomes suspect. See de Man 278–301.

CHAPTER 4

1. “Comme Jésus-Christ nous apprend que le démon nous suit partout, [Messieurs ont] toujours quelque ange visible auprès d’eux, soit de jour, soit de nuit, soit à la chambre, soit à l’église, soit dans les divertissements, soit dans les visites et enfin jusque dans les nécessités les plus secrètes” (Lancelot, qtd. in Snyders 45). Marin comments: “A vrai dire, le maître n’est pas cet ange visible dont parle Lancelot à propos de ses élèves, mais cet invisible qui rend visible ce qui, dans les comportements, pourrait rester caché et, du coup, échapper à la clôture du modèle” (Critique 213).
2. On the meaning of dissection in Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson* and its importance to all forms of bodily representation in the seventeenth century, see Barker.

3. L'anatomie, au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècle, a perdu le rôle recteur qu'elle avait à la Renaissance et qu'elle retrouvera à l'époque de Cuvier... la disposition fondamentale du visible et de l'énonçable ne passe plus par l'épaisseur du corps. De là la préséance épistémologique de la botanique: c'est que l'espace commun aux mots et aux choses constituait pour les plantes une grille beaucoup plus accueillante, beaucoup moins "noire" que pour les animaux; dans la mesure où beaucoup d'organes constitutifs sont visibles sur la plante que ne le sont pas chez les animaux. (Foucault, *Mots* 149)

4. "Male psychic development and male fantasies, including those of his genitalia, are taken as the standard model of the human psyche. In Freud's theory, because the male's genitals are easily visible and those of the female are not, she seems not to possess any at all. Not only is the male valuation of *visibility* projected onto woman to her disadvantage, so also are his sexual fears" (M. N. Evans 211, emphasis added).

5. Timothy Reiss believes that the seraglio represents a state of nature without political structure: "The beginning of Racine's *Bajazet* corresponds rather closely to that moment in the Hobbesian monarchical state when the prince's protection of his individual subjects has been suspended and they find themselves as a consequence returned to the condition of permanent war in which natural law holds sway: the individual must defend and protect himself, must seek the imposition of his own power" (219). For me, the seraglio is, on the contrary, a sophisticated dispositif that governs its inhabitants most efficaciously by employing calculated amounts of physical restraint, fear, and surveillance. It manages to smother all opposition, even that plotted by its apparent master—Roxane.

6. Racine uses poetic licence here, dropping the g from *seing*, the correct spelling for the word, to produce the graphic similarity between the two kinds of *sein*.

7. The use of the letter as a model for the unconscious and the analytic skill involved in discovering it are reminiscent of Lacan's essay on Poe's "*Purloined Letter*":

Ce que Freud nous enseigne dans le texte que nous commentons, c'est que le sujet suit la filière du symbolique, mais ce dont vous avez ici l'illustration est plus saisissant encore: ce n'est pas seulement le sujet, mais les sujets, pris dans leur intersubjectivité, qui prennent la tête, autrement dit nos autruches, auxquelles nous voilà revenus, et qui, plus dociles que des moutons, modèlent leur être même sur le moment qui les parcourt de la chaîne signifiante.... Notre apologue est fait pour montrer que c'est la lettre et son détour qui régit leurs entrées et leurs rôles. Qu'elle soit en souffrance, c'est eux qui vont en pâtir. A passer sous son ombre, ils deviennent son reflet. A tomber
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

8. Freud describes the first metonymy "propping up against" (Anlehnung) of the sexual drives on the instinct of preservation: "At its origin it attaches itself to one of the vital somatic functions; and its sexual aim is dominated by an erotogenic zone" (7:182).

9. "Alexandre, Andromaque, Britannicus, Bérénice, Bajazet, Mithridate" sont des pièces formées, malgré l'empreinte d'un génie très personnel, sur un modèle tout moderne et français qui a presque oublié, sinon renié, ses lointains ascendants grecs. . . . Mais Iphigénie, mais Phèdre, se donnent, et en somme avec quelque justesse, comme bâties, pour le plan comme pour les données, sur des tragédies toutes faites, des tragédies d'Euripide" (Knight 325).

10. Girard's own discussion of the medieval scapegoating of Jews would suggest that the old mechanism survived in Christian cultures. See his discussion in "Guillaume de Machaut et les juifs" (Bouc 7–21).

11. Apostolidès aptly describes the marginalization of Eriphile:

   Avec Eriphile, c'est tout un monde trouble, alternatif, ambigu, qui est sacrifié. Amante d'Achille, Eriphile mêlait ensemble ses sentiments incompatibles, l'horreur et l'amour, la violence et la douceur, le sang et le sperme. . . . Chez Eriphile, amour et haine sont liés comme Eros et Thanatos. . . . En sacrifiant Eriphile, le pôle religieux prend en charge ce qui relève de l'inconscient, l'irrationnel, le trouble, l'excès, et le met au service de l'État. ("Belle" 152)

12. See Barbara Woshinsky's "Iphigénie Transcendent" for a discussion of this point: "Neither Aeschylus nor Euripides refers to Iphigenia's sacrifice in this way. It is a 'straight' human sacrifice, if one may use this expression, with no augury involved. Euripides' Electra, however, which Racine had reread and annotated prior to composing Iphigénie, does contain a graphic description of sacrificial augury" (90).

13. For an analysis of French classicism from the perspective of the Freudian family romance, see Greenberg, Subjectivity.

14. For example, Hardison:

   Recognition of persons takes us far from the kind of self-knowledge that figures like Oedipus or Lear are supposed to attain by their suffering. The concept should be understood in its narrow sense. It means just what it says. In Oedipus, which is atypical, the hero recognizes himself. He does not gain insight as a result of the information supplied by the messenger, he simply learns who he is. He learns that he is the son of Laius, whom he has slain, and the son of Jocasta, whom he has married. The typical Greek recognition is a recognition of one character by another, and what is more, the characters are usually blood relations. (171)

15. For example, Kaufman writes: "Aristotle, for all his preoccupation with 'recognition,' stayed at the surface. He discusses this phenomenon as a part of stagecraft, as a device used in many tragedies, and most effectively
in *Oedipus*. But he failed to see how recognition is in this tragedy not merely a matter of superb technique but, along with blindness, of the very substance of the play" (139).

16. Vinaver even argues that Racine's different conception of *anagnorisis* led him to mistranslate the passage on that subject in the *Poetics* (50–51).

17. Homer's Minos as described by Odysseus: "Here lived King Minos whom great Zeus received every ninth month in private council—Minos, the father of my father, Deucalion" (bk. 19). The hero of the *Odyssey* also meets him in the Underworld: "There then I saw Minos, the glorious son of Zeus, golden sceptre in hand, giving judgment to the dead from his seat, while they sat and stood about the king through the wide-gated house of Hades and asked of him judgment" (bk. 11).

18. See Denis Hollier's *Against Architecture* for a discussion of the association between architecture, sacrifice, and Western philosophy in the work of Georges Bataille. For further information about animal sacrifice in Crete see Marinatos, *Minoan Sacrificial Ritual*.

19. In addition to the tale of Pasiphaë and the bull, there are other stories associated with the king of Crete:

Minos had a large number of amorous adventures and is said to have been the originator of homosexuality. In one tradition Minos rather than Zeus abducted Ganymede. He is also said to have been the lover of Theseus and was supposedly reconciled with him after Ariadne's abduction and gave him his second daughter in marriage. His mistresses were so numerous that Pasiphaë became angry; she cast a spell on him which caused all the women whom he possessed to die, devoured by the scorpions and snakes which emerged from his body. (Grimal 291)

See also chapter 1, p. 63 for a discussion of Minoan Crete as a matriarchal state.

20. Even the term Minotaur may be more than linguistic fancy, for there are a few half-men, half-bull representations in Minoan art. In the opinion of commentators on the ritual content of myths, the Minotaur is the remembrance of a cult ceremony in which the Cretan priest-king donned the mask of a bull. Annually (or once every eight years?) the king defended his crown against new claimants by engaging in a symbolic combat, during which he wore an elaborate representation of the sacred animal. The memory of that solemn event, it is believed, was encapsulated in the Theseus myth. (Nichols 122)

21. It is my belief that the combination of Christian and pagan elements in *Phèdre* symbolizes the ambiguous appropriation of sacred forms by the monarchy. Jean Delumeau comments that "dans les structures d'Ancien Régime, Eglise et Etat se confondaient." He observes that one result of the confusion between Church and state was the production of cultural hybrids, in his words, "le syncrétisme religieux et le mélange, souvent déton-
nant, du sacré et du profane” (Christianisme 73). He sees these mixed productions as symptoms of the Church’s political ambitions and an overall attempt to subjugate society as a whole, which he likens to trying to “faire entrer des millions de gens dans un immense monastère” (71). The role of confession within court society does corroborate this image of an “immense monastère.”

Racine’s tragedies represent the union of the sacred and profane as an unholy alliance. Either the Church is too political and unworthy of the believer’s confidence (Mathan is such a figure of the political cleric) or the state is depicted as being invasive and abusive of the sacred conscience—the state as voyeur and spy. Vigny’s scene in which Cinq-Mars unknowingly confesses to Richelieu’s spy is in the same spirit as Racine’s plays.

22. Compare St. François de Sales: “Si vous pouvez découvrir votre inquiétude à celui qui conduit votre âme, ou au moins à quelque confient et dévot ami, ne doutez point que tout aussitôt vous ne soyez accoisée; car la communication des douleurs de cœur fait le même effet en l’âme que la saignée fait au corps de celui qui est en fièvre continué; c’est le remède des remèdes” (Introduction 315).

23. Again I cite Foucault at length on the uniqueness of the Christian obligation to confess:

As everybody knows, Christianity is a confession. This means that Christianity belongs to a very special type of religion—those which impose obligations of truth on those who practise them. Such obligations in Christianity are numerous. For instance, there is the obligation to hold as truth a set of propositions which constitute dogma, the obligation to hold certain books as a permanent source of truth and obligations to accept the decisions of certain authorities in matters of truth. But Christianity requires another form of truth obligation. Everyone in Christianity has the duty to explore who he is, what is happening within himself, the fault he has committed, the temptations to which he is exposed. Moreover everyone is obliged to tell these things to other people, and hence to bear witness against himself. . . . The more we discover the truth about ourselves, the more we have to renounce ourselves; and the more we want to renounce ourselves, the more we need to bring to light the reality of ourselves. (“Sexuality and Solitude” 5)

24. See May and, more recently, Dejean.

25. Stephen Greenblatt also sees a rapport between Loudun and Phèdre:

Theater and exorcism were nonetheless culturally juxtaposed, sharing specific techniques and forms, and this proximity has its dialectical consequences. What is excluded from theatrical representation in seventeenth-century France may make itself felt in what is actually represented; I refer, for example, to the pervasive presence of the pagan deities, who were, after all, most often identified in Christian theology as demons. . . . The greatest image of possession in French
drama of the period is that of “Venus tout entière à sa proie atta­chée,” and for this possession there is no exorcism. (“Loudun” 343–44)

26. “Adjuvant” and “opposant” designate two structural possibilities of the “actant” in A. J. Greimas’s morphological model of narratives.

27. “La place du roi” was the name given to the ideal position from which a perspectivist painting was to be observed. The idea that any field of rationality should be organized from the point of view of one sovereign subject was central to the ideology of representation during the classical age. See Foucault, Mots; Goux.

CONCLUSION

1. “This aim of undoing is the second underlying motive of obsessional ceremonials, the first being to take precautions in order to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of some particular event” (Freud 20:119).

2. See, for example, the recent erotic novel Vox, by Nicholson Baker (1992, Random House), consisting solely of telephone conversations.