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Mankind Justified by Faith: Tragicomedy

by Henri de Barran

Translated, with Introduction and Notes,
by Richard Hillman

Référence électronique

Introduction to *Mankind Justified by Faith: Tragicomedy*
by Henri de Barran

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Responsable scientifique
Richard Hillman

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Contact : alice.loffredonue@univ-tours.fr

Introduction

Richard Hillman

CESR - Université François-Rabelais, Tours

It is the obvious premise of the accompanying translation that the dramatic allegory composed by the French Protestant pastor, Henri de Barran, and published in Geneva in 1554 under the title of *Tragique comedie francoise de l'homme iustificé par Foy*, deserves to be better known among English-speaking theatre historians. My reasons for this opinion may seem recklessly far-ranging. They begin, however, with the simple and fundamental point, to be developed below, that Barran, who seems to have written nothing else – and about whose life we have little information, apart from his evident connection with the court of Navarre¹ – was a highly accomplished dramatist. While eschewing the cruder sort of anti-Catholic satire exemplified by many Reform polemicists, he produced an impressively theatrical demonstration of his resolutely Protestant doctrinal message – namely, that sinners are justified by faith alone, rather than by simply obeying the dictates of the (Roman Catholic) church and performing good works. Key to this demonstration is his vivid portrayal of a representative of humanity (“*L’Homme*”, hereafter “Mankind”), who undergoes an arduous spiritual journey of a particularly profound

1 See Eugène Haag and Émile Haag, *La France protestante ou Vies des Protestants français qui se sont fait un nom dans l'histoire, etc.*, 10 vols (1846-59; fac. rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1966), I: 263-66, where Barran is said to have suffered periods of imprisonment by Catholic authorities in 1557 and 1558, and to have been protected by Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret. Most of the notice is devoted to an admiring summary of Barran's play. It seems to the point, given the prominent role of preaching in the piece, that, according to Pierre Olhagaray (one of the principal sources of *La France Protestante* for information on the author), Barran had formerly belonged to the Dominicans – a preaching order known for combatting heresies; see Pierre Olhagaray, *Histoire des comtés de Foix, Béarn et Navarre. Diligemment recueillie, tant des précédens historiens, que des Archiues desdites maisons* (1629; fac. rpt. Nîmes: Lacour-Ollé, 2013), p. 518.

kind from sin to despair to redemption. All in all, it may be argued, no other surviving post-Reformation morality in either French or English is at once so comprehensive, so coherent, and so well-balanced.

I

Few historians of the English theatre would dispute the affirmation of Murray Roston, writing specifically of the mid-sixteenth century, that “the continental drama was well known in England at this time, and there was a fruitful interchange of ideas”.² Exploration of this interchange has been sporadic and limited, however, despite a recent resurgence of interest in productions of the post-Reformation Tudor stage (or, more precisely, stages). This is partly due, no doubt, to a scarcity of documentation, although Hardin Craig, writing in 1955, set out a number of authors and titles that might fruitfully be brought to bear, while, coincidentally in the same year, Marvin T. Herrick expounded the range and breadth of the “Christian Terence” in the context of the development of tragicomedy across Europe.³

Of the relatively few cases of such “interchange” that have been pursued in detail, the most prominent is certainly that of the Latin anti-papal satire *Pammachius*, composed by the German Protestant polemicist Thomas Kirchmeyer (who published under the pseudonym of Thomas Naogeorgus). This trenchant polemic was performed at Christ’s College, Cambridge, in 1545 and received an English translation (now lost) by John Bale; it also influenced John Foxe’s similarly militant *Christus Triumphans* (1556). This case is, in fact, the chief basis for Roston’s statement (“As Foxe’s play shows . . .”⁴), and it has been widely discussed.⁵ Yet criticism has not advanced much beyond it, and the most

² Murray Roston, *Biblical Drama in England: From the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 57.

³ Hardin Craig, *English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 363-68; Marvin T. Herrick, *Tragicomedy: Its Origin and Development in Italy, France, and England*, Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, 39 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), pp. 16-62.

⁴ Roston, p. 57.

⁵ See Paul Whitfield White, “The Pammachius Affair at Christ’s College, Cambridge, in 1545”, *Interludes and Early Modern Society: Studies in Gender, Power and Theatricality*, ed. Peter Happé and Wim Hüskén (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp. 261-90; Charles H. Herford, *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), pp. 119-48; Craig, pp. 370-71; and, still useful for the rich context it provides, E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, 2 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1903), II: 217-18. See also Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 106-7 and 194, n. 17, and Alexandra F. Johnston, “William Cecil and the Drama of Persuasion”, *Shakespeare and Religious Change*, ed. Kenneth J. E. Graham and Philip D. Collington (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 63-87, who documents a second, early Elizabethan wave of Protestant dramatic propaganda, although without developing further Continental connections.

recent book-length study of Reformation drama in England leaves the circulation of Continental texts completely out of account.⁶

I have recently ventured a small way into this largely uncharted territory with evidence that the two variant texts of Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* ("A" and "B") draw on another polemical drama by Kirchmeyer, *Mercator seu Judicium* (The Merchant, or, The Judgement) (1540), both in its Latin original and in its 1558 French translation by the martyrologist Jean Crespin (as *Le Marchant converti* [The Merchant Converted]).⁷ This work, showing a sinful worldling confronted by his conscience, also left pretty clear traces elsewhere in the Elizabethan field of what might be termed neo-morality drama: in *The Three Ladies of London* (pub. 1584), by Robert Wilson, which features the roles of Mercadorus, Conscience, Usury and Lucar (cf. *Lucrum* in Kirchmeyer's Latin);⁸ in *A Looking Glass for London and England* (c. 1590), by Thomas Greene and Thomas Lodge, in which a Usurer is prominent.⁹ *The Conflict of Conscience*, a still more aggres-

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- 6 Tamara Atkin, *The Drama of Reform: Theatre and Theatricality 1461-1553*, Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 23 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). Similarly limited are Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), and the essays in *Tudor Drama before Shakespeare, 1485-1590: New Directions for Research, Criticism, and Pedagogy*, ed. Lloyd Edward Kermode, Jason Scott-Warren and Martine van Elk (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Almost certainly, some of the lost Latin plays, evidently controversial, which Chambers (II: 224) enumerated were of Continental origin; pertinent, too, is his documentation (II: 219) of a fascinating case of cultural transfer in the Catholic cause: in 1527, a play portraying persecution of the Pope by a heretical Luther (whose wife was also satirically represented) was staged, seemingly in both Latin and French, by the boys of St Paul's, with ambassadors from France in attendance.
- 7 Richard Hillman, "Faustus Face to Face with Damnation: Another Morality Model", *Notes and Queries* 24.2 (June 2017): 256-64. For *Mercator*, see Thomas Kirchmeyer [pseud. Thomas Naogorg], *Tragædia alia nova Mercator: mit einer zeitgenössischen Übersetzung, Sämtliche Werke*, 6 vols, ed. Hans-Gert Roloff, vol. II, Dramen 2 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1982); a facsimile of the original may be found at <<http://www.uni-mannheim.de/mateo/camena/naogeorg6/te01.html>> (accessed 15 september 2017). The French translation is accessible through the Swiss Electronic Library: *Le Marchant converti, tragedie excellente, en laquelle la vraye et fausse religion, au paragon l'une de l'autre, sont au vif représentées, etc.*, trans. Jean Crespin, 2nd ed. ([Geneva], 1561); <<http://dx.doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-9625>> (accessed 15 September 2017).
- 8 Robert Wilson, *The Three Ladies of London, Three Renaissance Usury Plays*, ed. Lloyd Edward Kermode (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009). Here, quite exceptionally, even Lady Conscience is finally corrupted, so strong and pervasive is the influence of Lady Lucre in the London that Wilson is concerned to evoke. On the historical, economic and cultural issues, see Kermode, ed., pp. 1-78, esp. 28-30, and Claire Jowitt, "Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* and Its Theatrical and Cultural Contexts", *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*, ed. Thomas Betteridge and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 308-22.
- 9 Thomas Greene and Thomas Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London and England, Drama of the English Renaissance I: The Tudor Period*, ed. Russell A. Fraser and Norman Rabkin (New York: Macmillan, 1976). On the influence of *Mercator* here, see Hillman, "Faustus", pp. 262-64.

sively anti-Catholic interlude by Nathaniel Woodes (1581), likewise contains similarities to *Mercator*, most prominently the representation and function of Conscience itself, but also the special condemnation of worldly prosperity.¹⁰ (Remarkably, Woodes's play seems to show acquaintance with Barran's as well, to judge from several parallels, which will be duly noted, that extend beyond the commonplace; Lewis Wager's *The Life and Repentaunce of Mary Magdalene* also presents suggestive parallels.¹¹)

The present publication aims at adding a further element to the same broad picture, though to a different sector of it. For it was in exploring the tragic counter-currents of conscientious suffering in two middle-to-late Shakespearean comedies, *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1596) and *Measure for Measure* (1604), that Barran's play surprisingly emerged, in my view, as an illuminating intertext. The roots of this relation, moreover, arguably run deep, and its ramifications spread wide. Not only does *Mankind Justified by Faith* present significant points of contact with at least these two works of Shakespeare through its management of the Justice *versus* Mercy dynamic,¹² but, more generally, it appears to me to constitute a virtually unique mid-century dramatic model for techniques of character portrayal extensively deployed in the late Elizabethan theatre.

Barran's play traces a trajectory, explicitly designated as tragicomic, whereby a mankind figure falls into knowledge of his sinful state, is condemned to suffer eternal death according to the Old Testament Law of Justice, then is finally redeemed by the New Testament Law of Mercy through Christ, Grace and Faith. The underlying spiritual schema, which underpins much medieval and early modern literature – and,

¹⁰ Nathaniel Woodes, *An excellent new commedie intituled, The conflict of conscience contayninge a most lamentable example of the dolefull desperation of a miserable worldlinge, termed by the name of Philologus, etc.* [London: Richard Braddock, 1581, Ii]; online, Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership (<<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A68918.0001.001/1:1?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>>; accessed 19 April 2017).

¹¹ An intriguing problem of dating is raised by the specific similarities found in Wager's play, whose dramaturgy is generally close to John Bale's practice, notably in *A Comedy concernynge thre lawes of nature, Moses and Christ*, *The Complete Plays of John Bale*, ed. Peter Happé, 2 vols, vol. II (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986). (Henceforth cited as *Thre Lawes*.) For while *Mary Magdalene* was first printed in 1566, its editor has conjectured an origin within the reign of Edward, who died in 1553. See Lewis Wager, *The Life and Repentaunce of Mary Magdalene. Reformation Biblical Drama in England: An Old-spelling Critical Edition*, ed. Paul Whitfield White (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), pp. xxii-xxiii. The specific points that appear to connect the play with Barran's might be due to an unknown common source (presumably French or Latin) or to additions, conceivably by Wager himself, who lived until 1562. The diverse mixture of elements, modes and styles in the text as it survives is more consistent with the latter explanation.

¹² For a detailed argument with respect to *The Merchant of Venice*, see Richard Hillman, "Mercy Unjustified: A Reformation Intertext for *The Merchant of Venice*", *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* 154 (2018): 91-105.

of course, thinking – is universally Christian, hence fundamental to both the pre- and post-Reformation morality drama. Naturally, the doctrinal inflection it receives here – the play’s declared *raison d’être* – is distinctively Protestant, while the Law, as interpreted by Rabbi and hypocritically followed by Mankind, is assimilated to Catholic practices. But Barran’s Reform orientation arguably carries beyond theology into dramaturgical innovation. Suspended less between good and evil than between contradictory claims to spiritual truth, Mankind is theatrically exploited as a site of erring blindness not merely subjected to, but subjectified by, tormenting self-discovery, according to a quintessentially Protestant conception of the individual’s personal relation with God. The effect, paradoxically, is to transcend the doctrinal framework, while mimetically lending Mankind “human” qualities akin to those of more fully “developed” tragic and tragicomic figures on the early modern English stage.

It is a critical commonplace to evoke the morality-play affinities – in effect, the claims to the representational range of *Everyman* – of such dramatic emblems of secular erring and suffering as Shakespeare’s *Richard II*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Leontes*. Non-Shakespearean analogues and variants also abound – from Hieronimo (in Thomas Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy* [1587?]) to John Webster’s *Duchess of Malfi* (1614) and John Ford’s tormented hero-villains in *The Broken Heart* (1629) and *’Tis Pity She’s a Whore* (1632). But actual precedents within the post-medieval morality play theatre in England are scarce and, in comparison with Barran’s work, incomplete. Indeed, the latter’s very comprehensiveness as a model functions intertextually to show up the truncated spiritual journeys of some later self-tormented wrong-doers who are, usually for generic reasons, prevented from completing them: from this perspective, for instance, the mercy dispensed to Angelo in *Measure for Measure* appears notably undeserved (as it certainly does to himself), while the rough justice meted out to Claudius in *Hamlet* short-circuits a potential process of penitence in the cause of locating tragic experience elsewhere.

In addressing the relation of the late English morality plays to the universalising (“*Everyman*”) tendencies of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, particularly that of Shakespeare, Craig discerned a formal gap in literary influence, which he attempted to fill by appealing to national temperament – “the moral earnestness of the Elizabethans”.¹³ Such recourse was necessary for him because “[m]ost moral plays of the later Tudor period dealt, even when they proceeded according to the pattern of the morality play, with some special human situation already recorded in story or chronicle”.¹⁴ The Elizabethan temperament must therefore be responding to a still-palpable residue of universality in such

¹³ Craig, p. 389.

¹⁴ Craig, p. 386.

works and is thus effectively harking back to late medieval practice, in particular the “universally representative character, the fundamental feature of English moralities”.¹⁵ The argument supposes that building a morality play around a mankind figure is an English innovation, since there is “no evidence that the broadest and finest kind of moral play had been imported from abroad”.¹⁶

Value judgements aside, and allowing for the limited evidence available, Craig may have been technically correct in maintaining that, contrary to a general impression that “almost everything artistic or literary in the English Middle Ages comes from France”, a French origin cannot be identified for “the particular universal type of morality play that is dominant in England”.¹⁷ Still, there are closer French precedents than he seems to have been aware of: one of these dates back to the late fifteenth-century;¹⁸ another, *Le Gouvert d’humanité* (The Governance of Humanity), has a special claim to be juxtaposed with Barran’s *Mankind* and will be considered in some detail below.¹⁹ Craig’s reading of subsequent dramatic history (perhaps even of national character) might have been substantially different if he had been aware of such pieces, and of Barran’s work in particular.

II

If its universal protagonist may finally be aligned, at least roughly, with French morality tradition, *Mankind Justified by Faith* obviously makes a radical departure with respect to doctrine. It is therefore remarkable to find a contrast, as well, with the common forms of early modern French Reformation theatre. The latter, again according to the surviving texts, tends to be either biblical in less abstract (if highly symbolic) ways – as in the *Abraham sacrificiant* of Théodore de Bèze (1550) or the *Nabuchodonosor* of Antoine de La Croix (1561) – or more aggressively polemical. Historians of the early modern French theatre, when they mention Barran’s play at all, have tended simply to assimilate it to the latter model: thus J. S. Street treats this complex and evocative text as virtually identical

¹⁵ Craig, p. 383.

¹⁶ Craig, p. 389.

¹⁷ Craig, p. 352.

¹⁸ The anonymous *Moralité à six personnages: BnF ms. fr. 25467*, ed. Joël Banchard (Droz: Geneva, 2008), centres on *Aulcune* (“someone”, “anyone”) as a typical young man on the make. Only slightly later (1511-22) is the *Moralité nouvelle des iiii elemens, a xv personnaiges, cest assauoir Raison, l’Homme, L’air, Le Feu, Leau, La terre, etc.*, Recueil Trepperel, 22 (Paris: Vve de Jehan Trepperel et Jehan Jannot, 1512-22 [1515]), doubtfully attributed to “Jehan d’Abundance” (name regularised according to the BnF standard but likely a pseudonym in any case). This is a succinct (not to say rudimentary) piece tracing a trajectory parallel to that of *Everyman* with “*L’homme*” at the centre.

¹⁹ Jean d’Abundance [Jehan d’Abundance], *Le Gouvert d’humanité*, ed. Xavier Leroux (Paris: H. Champion, 2011); henceforth cited as *Le Gouvert*, given the uncertainty about authorship.

to Kirchmeyer's caustic *Mercator* (French by adoption in Crespin's adaptation, which postdated Barran's work by four years).²⁰ The only modern editor of *L'homme iustifié par Foy*, Régine Reynolds-Cornell, echoes this reading in reducing the discredited Rabbi, the advocate of salvation by means of the Law and good works, to a mere personification "du clergé catholique [of the Catholic clergy]".²¹ As will appear further, this is surely an oversimplification.

Reynolds-Cornell also, more convincingly, points up a continuity with the spiritual theatre of Marguerite de Navarre, in both its dramaturgy and its theology.²² Yet this association, too, finally appears askew, given Marguerite's more fragmented – and more elusive – dramatic productions. The common ground constituted by what Reynold-Cornell terms the sixteenth century's rediscovery of "l'intériorisation de la vertu [the interiorization of virtue]"²³ also makes for a tenuous link, given its abstract generality. The formulation does, however, effectively point to the inward-turning of allegorical signification that appears to me distinctive, indeed innovative, in Barran's work.

Before attempting to describe this effect more fully, however, I wish to evoke another contemporary French context – one that is obvious enough, given the author's theological *parti pris* and didactic thrust, yet has been relatively neglected. Our sense of mid-sixteenth century Protestant polemic as attacking Catholic doctrine and institutions has perhaps obscured its defensive aspect, particularly its concern to rebut the initiatives (themselves defensive) of the Counter-Reformation, as promoted by the Council of Trent from 1545 onwards. The extent to which these initiatives took dramatic form remains uncertain, but one surviving text to the immediate point is *Le Gouvert d'humanité*, assigned to the prolific (if pseudonymous) Jehan d'Abundance and published in Lyons sometime between 1540 and 1548.²⁴ Xavier Leroux stresses the impetus given to Counter-Reformation theatrical polemic in the Rhône-Alpes region by the proliferation of Reformation drama emanating from Geneva.²⁵ Given several key points of contact and

20 See J. S. Street, *French Sacred Drama from Bèze to Corneille: Dramatic Forms and Their Purposes in the Early Modern Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 41-42.

21 Régine Reynolds-Cornell, ed., *Tragique comédie française de l'homme justifié par Foi*, by Henri de Barran, *La comédie à l'époque d'Henri II et de Charles IX: Series 1, vol. VI, 1541-1554*, ed. Luigia Zilli, Mariangela Miotti, Anna Bettoni and Régine Reynolds-Cornell (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1994), p. 441.

22 Reynolds-Cornell, ed., pp. 441-49, esp. 441-42 and 447.

23 Reynolds-Cornell, ed., p. 442.

24 Leroux, ed., p. 16. On "Jehan d'Abundance", identified with the societies of legal students and professionals known as the *basoches*, see Leroux, ed., pp. 17-21. On the institution of the *basoche* (at least in Paris) and its theatrical activities, see Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès, *Les clercs de la Basoche et le théâtre comique (Paris, 1420-1550)*, Bibliothèque du XV^e siècle (Paris: H. Champion, 2007).

25 Leroux, ed., pp. 21-22 and, on the play's strict adherence to Tridentine doctrine, notably on the

contention between Barran's Geneva-published piece and the work of "Jehan d'Abundance", it is reasonable to conjecture that the Protestant playwright may have been not only encouraged by the example of Bèze but impelled to action by the circulation of *Le Gouvert* and its ilk.

I will be indicating, in the notes to the translation, some specific intersections with *Le Gouvert*, which may well, of course, show a generic rather than a particular link, since stock gambits and situations doubtless appeared in many texts now lost or never printed. In sum, *Le Gouvert* traces a typical pattern of temptation and fall into sin, as *Humanité* undergoes a seduction by vices – especially the young man's vice of *Luxure* – managed by *Temptation* itself. *Remort de Conscience* (Remorse of Conscience), applying a death's-head mirror, converts *Humanité* to *Penitence*, with a suitable change of garment, and is seconded by *Caresme* (Lent), but *Humanité* relapses. It takes *Justice Divine*, threatening death like Barran's Law, to bring him back to a virtuous resolution, after *Misericorde* has interceded on his behalf.

There is nothing intrinsically remarkable about this scheme, although it is set out with some lively staging, moving from a tavern – a traditional site of moral corruption²⁶ – to the Garden of Penitence. What stands out from the present perspective is the prominent role assigned to *Erreur*, as the ally of *Temptation* and *Luxure*, in effecting the downfall of *Humanité*. *Erreur* boasts of having spread Luther's heresy throughout Germany, teaching even women and youngsters to interpret sacred scripture, and in particular Saint Paul.²⁷ Subsequently, he assures *Humanité* that *Penitence* is unnecessary, since Christ has redeemed the sins of all men, and that Lent, fasting and confession are mere fictions, never instituted by God or mandated by the bible.²⁸ Such assurance proves an incitement to epicureanism, as Catholics claimed, and it builds to an ironic attack on the precise doctrine that Barran writes to defend: "*Paradis t'est tout assuré / Par foy/ainsi Dieu l'a juré!* [You are assured of Paradise by faith: so God has sworn]."²⁹ Barran's hypocritical Mankind-as-Pharisee displays an identical assurance, though mistakenly relying on the Law instead of faith, and the symmetrical contrast extends to his scrupulous observance

question of penitence, p. 63.

26 Featured, for instance, in the *Moralité nouvelle des iiii elemens* and in the English Mary Magdalene plays of the Digby manuscript (*The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS Digby 133 and e Museo 160*, ed. Donald C. Baker, John L. Murphy and Louis B. Hall, Jr., Early English Text Society, 283 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the EETS, 1982) and of Wager.

27 *Le Gouvert*, ll. 760 ff. Cf. Mankind's prayer to be instructed in correct interpretation of scripture (V.v.1786).

28 *Le Gouvert*, ll. 976-86.

29 *Le Gouvert*, ll. 1457-58.

of Lent and other rules for fasting (III.viii.1149-31). To some extent, then, *L'homme iustificé par Foy* apparently constitutes an intervention in a theatre of doctrinal controversy, perhaps on a local level, even if its carrying power beyond that context seems to have been considerably greater than that of the principal surviving example of the opposition. There are, after all, at least five copies extant internationally (according to the Universal Short-Title Catalogue³⁰), whereas *Le Gouvert* subsists in a single Swiss regional library, where it was discovered in the 1960s.³¹

III

A further contrast with *Le Gouvert* may serve to return the discussion to Barran's innovative dramaturgy. As has been mentioned, the Counter-Reformation morality stresses the role of conscience (personified as *Remort de Conscience*) in converting *Humanité*. In this, it conforms to a traditional allegorical dynamic, which was widely adapted also by Protestant authors of moralities, both Continental and English. Barran's play stands out as featuring no such personification, and yet the function of conscience, as the interior mechanism that effects awareness of sin, is pervasive, beginning with the Prologue's address to the audience: "in his conscience / Each one of you will be interpellated [*dans sa conscience / Chacun lira qu'il est de la partie*]" (Prologue, 66-67).³² A link is thereby established between the awakening of conscience and preaching, which, obvious though it may seem, enters profoundly into the play's dramatic method.

Especially given the scarcity of independent information concerning either the play or the dramatist, Barran's prefatory address to the reader ("*Au Lecteur*", running title "*Epistre*") takes on particular importance. It is hardly surprising that it should announce the priority, for Barran, of the communication of doctrine over mimetic process – not to mention entertainment. Even in so doing, however, the preface proves revealing, not least because it indirectly acknowledges the subversive potential of theatricality in the dramatist's view. We learn, first, that he held back publication for two years after composing his work because of scruples over the abuses rampant in the acting and reception

³⁰ <<http://ustc.ac.uk/index.php/record/20709>>; accessed 16 September 2017.

³¹ Leroux, ed., p. 10.

³² The French text cited, and used as a basis for translation, is Henry de Barran, *Tragique comedie francoise de l'homme iustificé par Foy* ([Geneva]: [Zacharie Durant], 1554), in the copy available on Gallica (<<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k702797>>; accessed 16 September 2017). Contractions have been expanded; long "s" has been modernised. The original text is divided into acts and scenes, with a Prologue and Conclusion; I have supplied line numbers coordinated with those in Reynolds-Cornell, ed., and referenced the ancillary matter omitted there by signature marks.

even of religiously edifying (therefore presumably Protestant) theatre.³³ (This is valuable inferential evidence of the extent of such theatre at the time: one would dearly like to be offered more precision, especially as to the circumstances and conditions of performance.³⁴) It is clear that, whether or not the piece was ever actually staged, Barran envisaged the possibility of representation: the division into acts and scenes is less an imitation of classical practice, he explains, than a means of allowing for pauses, “if by chance one were to have it read or set forth in public performance [*si d’aventure on la faisoit lire ou proposer par dialogues publiques*]”; in such a case, he insists, holy scripture “should not be turned to derision and mockery, and consequently be made an occasion for our perdition [*ne soit changée en ieu de derrision & moquerie & consequemment en occasion de notre perdition*]” (“To the Reader”, p. 6; sig. a3^r). Hence, too, his plan – a virtual containment project – to reinforce the doctrinal truths expounded in the play by composing a supplementary exposition (unknown today if it was ever written). The issue is explicitly form, not content; he intends, he explains,

after this to write a little treatise in prose on the subject, not as containing other matter, but to declare in greater perfection what has been briefly touched upon – showing manifestly what are justification, faith, law, good works, and what their true use is according to the holy Scriptures. (“To the Reader”, pp. 5-6)

[*cy-apres d’en faire vn petit traité en prose, non comme contenant autre matiere, mais pour declairer en plus grande perfection, ce que en bref auoit*

33 It is all the more noteworthy, therefore, that neither the preface nor the play itself shows any uneasiness – far from it – about the depiction of female roles; nor did a female Conscientia, in keeping with grammatical gender, pose any problem for Kirchmeyer or his translator, Crespin. The issue would, of course, increasingly attract anti-theatrical arguments. On Woodes’s avoidance of female roles, in keeping with Calvinist critique, see Erin E. Kelly, “Conflict of Conscience and Sixteenth-Century Religious Drama”, *English Literary Renaissance* 44.3 (2014): 395-96.

34 Francis Higman, *La diffusion de la Réforme en France 1529-1565* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1992), pays no attention to dramatic performances, with the exception of *Abraham sacrificant* (pp. 107-202). The latter work, incidentally, which antedated Barran’s composition by two years, may well have encouraged his project, not least by its precedent of a tormented search for faith and a comic Satan. (Cf. Richard Hillman, “Dieu et les dieux dans l’*Abraham sacrificant* de Théodore de Bèze et sa traduction anglaise par Arthur Golding”, *Dieu et les dieux dans le théâtre de la Renaissance. Actes du XLV^e Colloque International d’Études Humanistes, 01-06 juillet 2002*, ed. Jean-Pierre Bordier and André Lascombes [Turnhout: Brepols, 2006], pp. 225-34.)

A good sense of the dynamic function of theatre with Reform tendencies in northern regions is conveyed by Katell Lavéant, “Le théâtre de la Réforme dans les villes francophones des Pays-Bas méridionaux”, *Le théâtre polémique français, 1450-1550. Actes d’un colloque organisé à Amsterdam les 24-25 février 2005*, ed. Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès, Jelle Koopmans and Katell Lavéant (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), pp. 161-77.

*esté touché: monstrant euidentement que c'est iustification, foy, loy, bonnes
œuvres, & quel est le vray usage selon les saintes Escritures.] (sig. a3^r)*

Anxiety that the heteroglossia of dramatic dialogue may destabilise or occlude the unitary Word of God is evident even within the text as printed, which features frequent marginal references to those biblical passages that it is the play's simple purpose, as Barran affirms, to set forth in action for better understanding and instruction. Even in these terms, however, the end is inevitably complicated by the means. The essence of the didactic exercise for Mankind is learning to distinguish true from false preachers, and this requires giving superficially convincing arguments to Rabbi, who at first prevails. The same is true even of "Satan transformed [*Satan transfiguré*]" (in accordance with Paul's warning in 2 Corinthians 11:14), when the latter briefly intervenes, pseudo-angelically, to support Rabbi's position. Indeed, as a marginal reference to Paul's letter to the Romans confirms, Satan is heard and seen to do exactly what Shakespeare's Antonio lays to the charge of Shylock: "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose."³⁵ In turning Paul's own words against his stage representative, Satan, of course, cites selectively,³⁶ but while Rabbi is flattered and fooled ("[t]his gracious spirit [*le bon Esprit*]" [II.vi.820]), Paul at once recovers the advantage:

Satan has taken this disguise –
And yet the Scripture he applies
Confirms my case.

*[C'est Satan qui se transfigure
En bon Esprit. Or l'Escriture
Qu'il a produite, fait pour moy.] (II.vi.824-26)*

Whether Satan's costume at this point is more angelic or rabbinical, it must be transparently false, and a comic effect would be hard to avoid. In any case, this is far from a straightforward illustration of doctrine in action such as Barran claims his entire work to be: it is a complex moment that ironically calls attention to its multi-layered theatricality.

Arguably, then, it is out of a fundamental distrust of his own attraction to his medium and its potency, rather than from modesty (false or otherwise), that Barran disclaims, or at least substantially downplays, literary considerations:

³⁵ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice, The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M. Tobin, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), I.iii.98.

³⁶ See the translation, n. 63.

I have not taken such great care of the suitability and perfection of that rhythm (as the low style of my writing shows well enough) as of the truth of the doctrine, which is Christian and not poetic, since, moreover, I am far from being a poet. (“To the Reader”, p. 5)

[*ie n'ay eu si grand soucy de la propriété & perfection de ceste Rithme (ce que assez monstre le bas stile de mon escriture) que de la verité de la doctrine laquelle est Chrestienne & non poetique, comme aussi ie ne suis point Poete.*] (sig. a2^v)

Rather, the role to which he aspires is that of the “Preacher of the Gospel [*predicateur de l'Euangile*]” (“Characters [*Les personnages*]”), which is assigned in the list of *dramatis personae* to Paul, whose epistles are the chief biblical authority for the key doctrine, and who opposes “Rabbi, preacher of the Law [*Rabby predicateur de la Loy*]”. It is Paul whose persuasions are endowed with a quasi-miraculous power, derived from the transcendent truth of the divine word he transmits, to bring the sinner out of his damnable state and the despair that goes with it. But behind the scenes, that power is necessarily wielded, not by a passive instrument of the Word but by the dramatist who chooses to deploy it, and how to do so.

IV

Dramatic choice conspicuously extends to – indeed, begins with – genre, and that Barran was fully conscious of the fact is confirmed in the first sentences of his prefatory address, where he refers to “comedies, tragedies and other similar histories [*Comedies, Tragedies, & autres semblables histoires*]” (“To the Reader”, p. 5; sig. a2^r) and reiterates the distinctive generic label announced in the title (and apparently here used for the first time for a French literary composition).³⁷ It is obviously the archetypal Christian pattern that he understands as “tragicomic”, and he follows majority morality-play practice in showing Mankind redeemed. (Kirchmeyer’s *Mercator*, by contrast, which identifies itself as tragedy, consigns some characters to damnation, while Woodes’s *The Conflict of Conscience* was published in two states with alternative endings of damnation or salvation for its protagonist, thereby illustrating both the real menace of spiritual tragedy for individuals and the contrary bias built into the morality genre.³⁸) What remains remarkable

37 See Madeleine Lazard, *Le Théâtre en France au XVI^e siècle*, Littératures Modernes (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980), pp. 222–23. Generic labels were often casually, even arbitrarily, applied in the early and mid-sixteenth century, in both French and English, but the choice of “tragicomedy”, however variously the term was interpreted, seems more likely to be a considered one.

38 On the implications of this doubleness for Marlowe’s unequivocally tragic variation on the morality-play model, see David Bevington, “Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* and Nathaniel Woodes’s

is that Barran's label is not just eschatologically indicative but dramatically functional. Indeed, his management of the form anticipates, *mutatis mutandis*, the essential pattern that John Fletcher would sketch out a half-century later under the influence of Giovanni Battista Guarini, the author of *Il Pastor Fido* (1580-83) and an important defence of tragicomedy as a genre, *Compendio della poesia tragicomica* (1601). For Fletcher, writing for a very different theatre, albeit one obviously still synchronised with Barran's spiritual view of the world, a tragicomedy "wants deaths, which is inough to make it no tragedie, yet brings some near it, which is inough to make it no comedie".³⁹ Barran's treatment of this trajectory is, of course, no mere matter of effective dramatic fiction, or, from his point of view, of fiction at all. Not only is his Mankind brought "near" to death indeed, but death in Barran's conception, like redemption from it, is eternal, and integral to a universal plan in which each element lends significance to the other.

On the technical level, Barran's adroit manipulation of varied line-lengths and rhyme schemes, including his dexterous use of linking rhyme within and between speeches, displays, willy-nilly, a gifted poet's ear and verbal ingenuity. Likewise, his sense of dramatic action is everywhere apparent. The scenes are numerous, brief and varied. The outright preaching in the Prologue and Conclusion, as well as by Paul and the positive allegorical figures, while inevitably repetitive, maintains a fine balance with more lively dialogue, often involving the same characters. The rhythm of the whole is punctuated by physically dynamic moments: Mankind's conspicuously ineffectual breaking of the Law, the Law's removal of his blindfold, the later unveiling of the Law's terrifying countenance, the opening of the protagonist's breast to expose his sinfulness, his rescue by Paul at the point of suicide – these are all spectacular stage effects which, far from gratuitous, lend concrete impact to the specific doctrinal points at stake.⁴⁰ The very potential for

The Conflict of Conscience, *The Oxford Handbook to Tudor Literature, 1485-1603*, ed. Michael Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 704-17. Cf. Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to His Major Villains* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 239-43. On Woodes's play more broadly in the context of the decline of Protestant religious drama, see Kelly, pp. 388-419.

39 John Fletcher, "To the Reader", *The Faithful Shepherdess*, ed. Cyrus Hoy, *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, gen. ed. Fredson Bowers, 6 vols., vol. III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 497.

40 The terrifying aspect of the Law, deploying Sin and Death and backed by the Spirit of Fear, corresponds roughly to the appearance and function of the Lawe in awakening Mary Magdalene's conscience – a much more straightforward matter – in Wager's play (ll. 1109-1288); Wager's character Knowledge of Sinne recalls the Spirit of Fear, while his Lawe likewise leaves the sinner a way out through faith in Christ's mercy (ll. 1281-88). Cf. also the plea of *Humanité*, confronted by Justice Divine, in *Le Gouverneur*: "Dame d'efficace, / Changés vostre face / Rude, rigoureuse! [Powerful dame, change your face, rude, rigorous!]" (ll. 1639-41), which leads to the pleading of *Misericorde*

tension between theatrical appeal and pedagogy, of which Barran shows himself warily conscious, is turned to dramatic advantage.

A recognisable holdover from the medieval mysteries and moralities, as in other Reformation drama, is the comic quality attached to the diabolic. Sin and Death, the devil's offspring and hench-persons, are capable only of sarcastic taunting and decidedly grim jokes: they consistently make their mark – in words, actions and no doubt appearance – as sinister agents and presences. Satan himself, however, has considerable comic range. His first entry virtually announces his theatrical heritage with a classic line echoing a multitude of diabolic forbears: “With rage for evil I'm infected [*I'enrage desirant mal faire*]” (I.ii.95).⁴¹ Almost immediately, however, he begins to display a variety of subtler, if nonetheless familiar, colours. To his outright imposture, which has already been noted, may be added several more-or-less comic facets: the *pater familias* presiding, revered like God the Father, over an unholy family of evil (“Belovéd father of our band [. . . *vous, qui estes nostre pere*]” [180]);⁴² the witty, confident, almost suave, and certainly subtle enemy of Mankind (“I think today I've done quite well [*I'ay bien gagné pour ce iour-d'huy*]” [III.vi.1063]); a ridiculous blusterer when he is physically restrained by Grace (“O Beelzebub, come help, for I am raging! [*O Belzebub, vien à moy, car i'enrage*]” [V.iii.1740]). And even though he is finally banished by prayer from Mankind's sight (V.ix.1947 SD), his ironic determination never to give up – “For all your days, I will assail you [*Tant que viuras te fascheray*]” (V.viii.1894); “And yet another time we'll get you [*Si t'aurons nous vn'autre fois*]” (V.viii.1908) – remains hanging in the air as a stark warning to spectators against their ever-present invisible enemy. For, dramatically engaging as all these attitudes are, they are also highly functional within the didactic framework. In contrast with various theatrical ancestors and contemporaries, there is no gratuitous display, no scatology (Satan in Kirchemeyer's *Mercator* farts noisily), no Catholic disguising (as in Bale's frequent practice⁴³ or *Abraham sacrificiant*, where Satan appears as a monk).

on *Humanité's* behalf in a loose adaptation of the Parliament of Heaven motif. (On the latter in the French mysteries, see Alan Hindley, “Laisser l'histoire . . . et Moraliser ung Petit': Aspects of Allegory in the Mystères”, *Les Mystères: Studies in Genre, Text and Theatricality*, ed. Peter Happé and Wim Hüskén, Ludus, 12 (Amsterdam: Rodopi), pp. 197-205.

⁴¹ The word “*enrage*” makes for a specific link with devils in the French tradition.

⁴² Cf. my overview of this phenomenon in the English medieval and early modern theatre: Richard Hillman, “‘Old fools are babes again’: Shifting Perceptions of Folly and Childishness from *Mankind* to Shakespeare and Jonson”, *Folly's Family, Folly's Children*, ed. Richard Hillman, Theta – Théâtre Tudor, vol. XII, publication online, Scène Européenne, Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, Tours, 2016 (<<http://umr6576.cesr.univ-tours.fr/publications/Theta12/fichiers/pdf/Hillman.pdf>>), pp. 3-14.

⁴³ See Paul Whitfield White, “The Bible as Play in Reformation England”, *The Cambridge History of*

The treatment of Concupiscence is equally subtle and in keeping with her allegorical role, even as her theatrical potential as fleshly temptress is exploited – to the point of one extended lyrical parody of romantic harmony (I.ix.466-501). Barran's Concupiscence – this is also the term in French – is not merely that traditional vice (one of the Seven Deadly Sins) who elsewhere goes under the name of Luxuria, Lust or Lechery. As Satan's eldest daughter, implanted by him within the flesh of Mankind, she represents all the varied, and varying, appetites that bind man to the things of this world and alienate him from God, including wealth, honour and pride.⁴⁴ The principle is clearly articulated by Satan himself:

Of every vice you are the source,
The nurse that feeds such men their force –
Wherefore it's needful well to govern
This splendid saint and always turn
Him to what may honour impart:
All must be done to draw his heart
To vainglory.

British Theatre, vol. I: Origins to 1660, ed. Jane Milling and Peter Thomson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 111.

- 44 On the range of meanings of “concupiscence” in French and English see, respectively, *Le Trésor de la langue française* and *OED*, s.v. The narrowing of the term to signify fleshly appetites, and sexual desire in particular, is documented in both languages and is what permits Barran to present Mankind's fall into all manner of sinfulness as a literal seduction. Paul identifies “concupiscence” with “lust” in Rom. 7:7-8 in expounding the function of the Law, and the denotation runs straight through to Milton: cf. John Milton, *Paradise Lost, Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey Press, 1957), IX.1079.

Bale, unlike Barran, allegorically dramatises a distinction between fleshly and spiritual corruption in *Thre lawes*:

<i>Sodomismus.</i>	I will corrupt Gods Image With most unlawfull usage, And brynge hym into dottage, Of all concupyscience.
<i>Idolatria.</i>	Within the flesh thou art, But I dwell in the hart, And wyll the sowle pervart From Gods obedyence. (II.683-90)

Cf. Wager, who deploys a panoply of vices, including Carnall Concupiscence, expressive of “all the pleasures of the fleshe” (l. 384), under the aegis of Infidelitie, self-described as “the Serpents sede” (l. 322) and clearly the equivalent of Barran's Sin:

Loke in whose heart my father Sathan doth me sow,
There must all iniquitie and vice nedes growe,
The conscience where I dwell is a receptacle
For all the diuels in hell to haue their habitacle. (ll. 323-26)

[*Tu es la source de tout vice,
 Tu es de ces gens la nourrice,
 Parquoy il faut bien gouverner
 Ce beau Saint, & tousiours mener
 Ces desirs, à chercher honneur:
 Il faut tousiours tirer son cœur
 A vaine gloire.*] (III.vi.1065-71)

In the end, the female gendering of Concupiscence is again exploited, this time in a frankly comic way, after she is put in her properly subordinate place within his physical being by Mankind, with the aid of Grace. (Being part of his make-up, she cannot be eliminated until the soul is liberated from the body.) He responds to her final effort at seduction with, “You get away from me, old witch! [*Va t'en de moy, vieille sorciere*]” (V.viii.1917). She then ruefully soliloquises on her sad fall in status from mistress of the house to chamber-maid but consoles herself with the thought that “if one lord holds me in sway, / A hundred others me obey! [*pour vn seigneur que j'auray, / A cent autres commanderay*]” (V.viii.1926-27). The play’s message of salvation thus effectively acquires a post-script reminder that each spectator must exercise his (or her) own free will in order to profit from it. In effect, Concupiscence momentarily and backhandedly assumes the function of the Doctor or Expositor who draws the lesson in numerous moralities.

V

This barb tossed at the audience – an interpellation indeed, if a humorous one – highlights Barran’s deft management of allegory in general, and particularly with respect to Mankind himself. By definition and convention a universal figure – and so he presents himself when he steps fearfully onto the threatening stage of this world in the third scene (I.iii.221-48) – he is suddenly presumed to be resolvable into individuals. Elsewhere, too, this effect, enacting the multiplicity of sinfulness, is related to the operations of Concupiscence. It is by her influence in different forms that Satan enumerates his innumerable victims in his opening monologue (I.ii.95 ff.),⁴⁵ and she herself reports to him, “Moved by you, moreover, I find / That all desire, with eager mind, / To harbour me [*Quand de vous suis esmeue aussi / Tous desirent par grand soucy / M'entretenir*]” (I.ii.189-91). Under her influence, Mankind in Rabbi’s eyes initially appears as a swarm of sin-

45 This is as close as the play comes to evoking the damnation of stock types of sinners, and Satan’s reference remains oblique and distanced by grim humour: “They are the grand whom I uphold – / Then leave the bastards to God’s care! [*Ce sont les grans que i’entretiens, / Laissant tous ses coquins à Dieu*]” (I.ii.114-15).

ners – “They all chase after vain delights, / Like animals completely senseless [*Chacun va son desir suiivant, / Comme les bestes insensees*]” (I.vi.366-67) – before cohering again into allegorical comprehensiveness as “the sinner [*le pecheur*]” (378). Moreover, in abetting Mankind’s Pharasaical pretensions, Rabbi, too, takes Concupiscence into his heart, according to Paul (IV.i.1161-71), and so visibly doubles the figure of the sinner. (Rabbi’s pride and self-righteousness, amounting to vainglory, are in any case glaringly apparent and call for the chastisement they receive.)

In her ultimate futile effort at persuasion, Concupiscence urges Mankind to give himself variously to pleasure, “As worldlings all are wont to do [*Ainsi que font tous les mondains*]” (V.viii.1914), and with consummate irony offers him an excuse with which to soothe his conscience: “We’re all human – is this not true? / Then let’s do as both poor and rich [*Ne sommes-nous pas tous humains? / Suiuons la commune maniere*]” (1915-16). In contemptuously rejecting her, Mankind resumes the unitary role he has now securely achieved – that of the emblematic Christian.

It is, of course, built into the genre – arguably from its beginnings⁴⁶ – that Everyman figures in morality plays acquire more-or-less particular identities at various points, whether or not they bear names narrowing their range of moral or social reference, such as Wit, Magnificence, Lusty Juventus, Mercator, or Philologus (in *The Conflict of Conscience*). They often proceed through typical stages of life, which may also be nominally identified (as in *Mundus et Infans*);⁴⁷ they may come already divided into faculties (as in *Wisdom*). Barran takes active advantage of the fact that his character’s name in French remains (untranslatably) poised between the general – “all of Mankind” – and the particular: “the individual in question”.⁴⁸ Thus Mankind indirectly evokes a succession of life-stages by way of Concupiscence’s evolution from sensuality towards vainglory; early on, he even displays a brash youthful naivete by vaunting the contrary: “Enough

⁴⁶ Pace Craig, who maintains a nostalgia for a (hypothetical) pure medieval English morality drama which “took Mankind as its hero” and deplores the subsequent particularising of that figure: “The result was that the English morality play almost, but not quite, lost its original distinctive feature of representing generalized humanity on the stage” (p. 378); see his analysis of this process (pp. 378-84). Curiously, Craig took *Everyman* (at least in a supposed original form) as typical of the oldest kind of English morality; he was evidently sceptical about the priority of the Dutch *Elckerlijck*, which is not now in doubt; see pp. 346-47 and 346-47, n. 3.

⁴⁷ Craig, p. 378, sees such division as a natural extension of universal representation, but it is surely a step towards individualisation.

⁴⁸ A comparison may be drawn with *Everyman*, where the protagonist’s name is used variously in the singular and plural senses; see A. C. Cawley, ed., *Everyman* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1961), p. 30, n. to l. 66. Cf. also Richard Hillman, *Self-Speaking in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama: Subjectivity, Discourse and the Stage* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 45-47, on the discursive negotiation of particular *versus* universal identity in that play.

prudence and wisdom can't I boast / For someone of my age – and more than most? [*Ne suis-je pas assez prudent & sage? / Plus ie le suis qu'un autre de mon aage*]” (I.v.345-46). Later, when adapting herself to his Pharisaic phase, Concupiscence asks rhetorically (and ironically), “Friend, have I not told you the truth, / Followed you ever since your youth? [*Amy, n'ay-je tenu promesse, / T'ayant suiuy des ta ieunesse?*]” (III.vii.1081-82). Despite such scattered moments, however, and others when he serves as a lens for viewing humanity in its diversity—as when Faith urges indulgence towards his “fellow-man [*tes prochains*]” (V.v.1802)—the dramatic function of Barran's character depends on an unusual resistance to particularity: he does not readily take on distinctive traits but reasserts his engagement with the whole of humanity so as to speak, not from an individual perspective, but for all of *us*. Nor does this alter—on the contrary—when his experience of the divine glory engenders the desire to share it *with* all of us through praise: “of thy wonders all shall hear [*Ie diray donc à tous, tes grans merueilles*]” (V.vii.1891).

The single highly specific identity Mankind acquires – that of a Pharisee, decked out with the gear specified (and condemned) by Jesus in Matthew 23:5 (see III.i.1038 ff.) – is the exception that proves the rule, an aberration calculated to feed directly back into the spiritual pattern. For his hypocritical ostentation of holiness at Rabbi's instigation precisely entails a self-conscious assertion of particularity – “Here I show as a man of virtue [*Me voicy en homme de bien*]” (III.v.1045) – even exemption from humanity; he becomes a fountain, not a seeker, of grace, convinced (as we all are at some level) of his own uniqueness:

To you, Lord God, I offer grace,
I who, not wicked like the rest,
Keep from all evil, knowing best
That which you, by Your Law, ordain.
All others, as to me is plain,
To theft, false-witness, lechery
Are given, while, Lord, as for me . . .

[*O sire Dieu, ie te rens graces,
Que comme tous, ne suis meschant,
De tout mal me garde, sachant
Ce que commandes par ta Loy:
Tous les autres, comme ie voy,
Sont paillardz, larrons, faux-tesmoingz,
Mais moy, Seigneur . . .*] (III.viii.1132-38)

Mankind thereby attracts Concupiscence's scornful dismissal of his distinctiveness as such: “types like that [*telles gens*]” (III.vi.1973). And when Paul instructs him to put off the outward signs of his false pretence, once he has renounced it, he is visibly gathered

back into the common condition, confirmed as an example to – and theatrically representative of – all humanity:

We must in public places fittingly
Be clad to suit the customs of our age
And with the exercise of judgement sage.

[*Il nous conuient estre au de-hors vestuz
Decemment, en ensuivant l'usage
De nostre temps, avec iugement sage.*] (V.vi.1853-55)

Paul's point matches the play's theatrical and didactic restraint. In general, the doctrinal contention between Protestants and Catholics is restricted to the biblical – in effect, the abstract and doctrinal – level. Barran's Pharisee boasts of following distinctively Catholic fasting practices (III.viii.1140-41), which are thereby assimilated to the outward exigencies of the Law; he arrogates a quasi-priestly power to curse and bless. But he is not transformed by costume into a transparent stand-in for a Catholic ecclesiastic – again, in contrast with Bale's polemical technique.⁴⁹ Rabbi is obviously marked as specifically Jewish, the Law as Mosaic, even if Rabbi's angry outburst at Paul when, in one of several lapses from abstraction, he loses self-control – “Heretic fit to burn! [*heretique bruslable*]” (II.vi.849) – resonates tellingly in the post-Reformation air (while echoing Satan at I.vii.438). The fundamental opposition remains that between the Old Testament and the New, for which the respective preachers *stand*, as both advocates and embodiments. Barran's target in his own time and place is perfectly clear, and appears at selected moments when the allegorical masks are allowed to slip, but his universal setting and characters make a subtler means than Bale's or Kirchmeyer's polemic of affirming Christian “truth” and “true” Christianity. And so, in the list of speakers in Act Five, Scene Two, Mankind is finally introduced explicitly, not as a convert to Reform, but simply as a “Christian” (“*L'Homme Chrestien*”).

VI

Behind Barran's broad insistence on keeping his allegorical framework firmly in place, and especially his commitment to Mankind's inclusive generality, may well lie, as his prefatory

49 The identification of Catholic priests as Pharisees is a commonplace of Reformation polemic. Hence Satan in *The Conflict of Conscience* speaks of the Pharisees as his “children” in a self-introductory speech whose tone and claim to dominance in this world bring it close to that of Barran's Satan. Cf. his opening lines: “High time it is for mée to stirre about, / And doo my best, my kingdom to maintaine” (Woods, Ii).

remarks suggest, a distrust of theatricality as highly prone to abuse. But the paradoxical result is to lend his emblem of sinful illusion, despairing disillusion, and ultimate redemption a highly theatrical power that seems to arise from within the character – something universal in the sense of being specifically and recognisably human. Precisely because the sinful nature of man is a given, as Protestant theology insisted, with Concupiscence “always already” lodged within (even if for dramatic purposes she displays what might be termed outward mobility), the struggle between vice and virtue traditionally exteriorised in the form of psychomachia could gain no purchase on the spiritual history thus unfolded. It is especially telling that there is no personification of conscience – the faculty staged as the source of spiritual terrors, for instance, in Kirchemeyer’s *Mercator* and, of course, of “doleful desperation” in Woodes’s play. In *Mankind Justified by Faith*, such models give way to another more dynamic one – a process launched by the devastation produced by self-awareness, leading to a spontaneous access of despair, and finally issuing in the realisation of faith, heavenly in origin but experienced internally. In this respect, the contrast is particularly marked, not surprisingly, with the resolutely Catholic *Everyman*, where conscience plays no role at all and the salvific function is enacted by Knowledge, who acts as a guide in transmitting the teachings of the Church.

“Conscience” is finally inseparable in Barran’s work from “consciousness”. Indeed, French “*conscience*” unites both meanings, and the word is used recurrently in the text to signify not merely an inward quality but inwardness itself. The sinner, we are told (in the Argument to Act One), at first rejects exhortations to goodness, “not yet being touched by the virtue of the Law and of the spirit of God in his conscience [*n’estant encores touché de la vertu de la Loy & de l’Esprit de Dieu en sa conscience*]” (p. 9; sig. a5^r). In the key scene where Mankind’s heart is exposed, Death speaks of finding nothing but viciousness in his “conscience”:

Nothing can I perceive within his conscience
But crime upon crime: ambition and hate
Have moved into his heart and rule in state.

*[Je ne voy rien dedans sa conscience
Que tout forfait, haine & ambition
Dedans son cœur font habitation.]* (IV.ii.1288-90)

From this point on, the evocation of Romans 2, which begins with an attack on hypocritical judges of others, is unmistakable:

But thou, after thine hardnes and heart that can not repent, heapest
vnto thy self wrath against the day of wrath and of the declaration of
the iuste iudgement of God. (Rom. 2:5)

Mankind's subsequent transformation across terror and despair into faith duly corresponds to Paul's rejection of the outward sign of Jewishness according to the Old Law, circumcision of the flesh, for "circumcision . . . of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:29).

Faith expresses the wish for Mankind, once he has been made a Christian: "may conscience never cease / To lend you strength in your adversities [*tousiours ta conscience, / Te donne force en tes aduersitez*]" (V.v.1820-21). But she also makes this power of conscience self-strengthening through the production of greater consciousness: "Causing your knowledge of it to increase [*En t'accroissant tousiours sa cognoissance*]" (1823). The Conclusion speaks of the need we all have to "solidly assure our conscience [*asseurer tres-bien la conscience*]" (Conclusion, 26) in Christ.

It is, therefore, precisely on the common ground of conscience/consciousness that spectators or readers are finally collectively interpellated under the sign of Mankind, thereby coming full circle from the role defined in the prefatory address. There readers were informed that "conscience", not outward show, must lead them to true understanding; they should not merely "consider diligently [*considerent diligement*]" but "realise feelingly in their conscience, where our justification comes from and our eternal salvation [*espreuent en leurs consciences d'où vient nostre iustification & salut eternal*]" ("To the Reader", p. 5; sig. a2^r). As has been seen, it is "in his conscience [*dans sa conscience*]" that each is to be engaged. The ultimate power of Barran's anti-theatrical theatricality arguably consists, not in staging the opening of Mankind's breast so as to expose – to himself, it should be emphasised – the fact "that his heart to rottenness is wed [*qu'il a le cœur du tout pourry*]" (IV.ii.1273), but in convincing the spectator that the character, like him or herself, actually has a heart to reveal.



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Mankind Justified by Faith: Tragicomedy

by Henri de Barran

Translated, with Introduction and Notes,
by Richard Hillman

Référence électronique

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by Henri de Barran

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Richard Hillman

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Contact : alice.loffredonue@univ-tours.fr

Translation

Richard Hillman

CESR - Université François-Rabelais, Tours

Note on the Translation

The present translation is based on the only early edition known: Henry de Barran, *Tragique comedie francoise de l'homme iustificié par Foy* ([Geneva]: [Zacharie Durant], 1554), of which there are five extant copies. My copy-text is that available on Gallica, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (NUMM-70279). The original title page carries epigraphs from Galatians 3:2 – “Receiued ye the Spirit by the workes of the Law, or by the hearing of faith (preached)?” – and (less legibly) Hebrews 10:38: “the iust shal liue by faith”. (The English bible cited throughout is *The Bible and Holy Scriptvres, etc.* [Geneva: (n.pub.), 1562]; STC 2095], with comparative citations taken at several points from *Le Nouveau Testament, etc.* [Geneva: Jean Bonnefoy, 1563; Gallica NUMM-108678].)

I have also consulted the only later edition of the play, which modernises spelling and, to some extent, grammar: Henri de Barran, *Tragique comédie française de l'homme justifié par Foi*, ed. Régine Reynolds-Cornell, *La comédie à l'époque d'Henri II et de Charles IX: Première série, Vol. VI, 1541-1554*, ed. Luigia Zilli, Mariangela Miotti, Anna Bettoni and Régine Reynolds-Cornell (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1994). Variants are noted where they seem significant. I have included the material regrettably omitted from that edition – the marginal biblical references (using the standard abbreviations), as well as the author's address to the reader and the arguments prefacing each act. The verse-paragraphing within speeches has been restored, and I generally punctuate in a way closer to the original. For the reader's convenience, however, I adopt the modern editor's line numbering (continuous for the main body of the text, but with Prologue and Conclusion numbered separately). The fairly numerous original stage directions are given in italics, slightly adapted in most cases; additional directions in roman type are supplied at a few points, but exits, entrances, character groupings and action are generally clear enough without them.

Barran makes use, often to effective dramatic purpose, of differing line-lengths: chiefly tetrameter and pentameter (mostly iambic), but even trimeter; the rhyming is primarily in couplets, but, for special effects, some intricate stanzaic forms are employed. I have done my best to reproduce these technical features.

Characters

1. The Law
2. The Spirit of Fear
3. Satan
4. Sin
5. Death
6. Concupiscence¹
7. Mankind (“L’Homme”)
8. Rabbi, preacher of the Law
9. Paul, preacher of the Evangile
10. Faith
11. Grace
12. The Spirit of Love

¹ The term as it is used in the play refers to worldly appetite of all kinds, hence to worldliness itself, but theatrically exploits the common specific application to the sexual impulse. See Introduction, _____.

To the Reader

I am not ignorant, Christian reader, of the great abuses that are committed daily, as much by those who play comedies, tragedies and other similar histories taken from sacred Scripture, as by those who are present at them. For the former think only of temporal reward, or rather imprint on the understanding of their auditors some opinion of their fine ability,² often mingling profane and dissolute matters with the holy words. The latter are content to pass the time in some pleasant manner, delighting more in the attractiveness of the characters, or indeed in language merry and amusing, than in the utility and edification that they might gain from the experience. This is why commonly, after such dialogues, some dissolute farce is played, since the whole is considered worthless if the merry farce is not added on. I say nothing of other great abuses which may be committed there, the performance of which – whatever edification they may convey – is forbidden to all Christians. For that reason, many fine minds desist from composing such comedies or similar stories, for, although they may be holy and highly profitable, nevertheless the corruption of men is such that they abuse them in one way or another. For that reason I also hesitated to publish this tragicomedy, to the point where I kept it back for almost two years, resolving never to make it known. But, considering that all the faithful know how to use good things for the honour of God and the edification of their fellow-man, I have no fear of presenting them, being certain that such persons have the honour of God in such high esteem that for nothing in the world would they wish that such stories, intended for edification, should serve for destruction. Therefore, I pray the readers, and admonish them in the name of God, not to abuse his sacred scriptures as a foolish pastime, but to consider diligently, and indeed to realise feelingly³ in their conscience, where our justification comes from and our eternal salvation. For although by the ministers of the Word we have knowledge of the articles of our faith, nevertheless this means of teaching by dialogues may somewhat serve the purpose. And in as much as the article of justification is the foundation of all Christian doctrine, I thought that this manner of speaking through characters would not be unprofitable in bringing us to some awareness of it. For indeed I have done nothing but take the pronouncements of holy Scripture on which this doctrine is founded and ordered them in the form of French verse, knowing that this manner of composing is not unworthy of the holy Scripture, considering that a certain part of it has been so composed. It is true that I have not taken such great care of the suitability and perfection of that rhythm (as the low style of my writing shows well enough) as of the truth of the doctrine, which is Christian and not poetic, since, moreover, I am far from being a poet. Now, I have wished to show in this “Mankind Justified” the diverse opinions that are held of justification, some saying it comes by works, others by faith, concluding that it is only God our Lord who, by his grace alone, justifies us and pardons us our sins in his son Jesus Christ, whom we apprehend with all his benefits by means of living faith. Such is our object, which (if we understand well) we understand to be the principal part of all Christian doctrine. And although such a means of teaching in French verse is easy and delectable, nevertheless it is not adapted to all minds, since not everyone can readily propose in this manner all the necessary points that the question involves. I have said “to all minds”. For I know well that many have the elegance and gift to compose as well as to understand all good doctrine, not less in verse than in prose – many, but not all. For that reason I am myself not satisfied to have treated the subject of justification in French verse. And indeed I did not know how sufficiently to make an exposition in such a form of composition, nor similarly to respond to several objections and arguments that one might advance on the subject. Therefore, I have determined, with God’s help, after this to write a little treatise in prose on the subject, not containing other matter, but to declare in greater perfection what has been

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- 2 “[F]ine ability”; orig. “bonne grace”, a term which here, as in the next sentence, where I translate it as “attractiveness”, seems calculated to contrast with the spiritual grace on which the play will insist.
- 3 “[R]ealise feelingly”: orig. “epreuent”.

briefly touched upon – showing manifestly what are justification, faith, law, good works, and what their true use is according to the holy Scriptures. With regard to the disposition and order which I have followed in this tragicomedy, I have arranged it by acts and scenes, not so much in imitation of comic poets, as in order to divide the speeches and dialogue – also so that one may make a pause at certain points, if by chance one were to have it read or set forth in public performance.⁴ But if that is done, once again I pray all its readers and auditors that this may be in all modesty and reverence for God and for his Word, and that the holy Scripture, which was bestowed by God with marvellous indications for our salvation, should not be turned to derision and mockery, and consequently be made an occasion for our perdition. Hoping, therefore, that it will be used legitimately, and in a Christian manner, for the honour of God and the edification of faithful consciences, I set it forth and give it wholeheartedly to all those who desire the advancement of the reign of Jesus Christ, by whom I pray our good God and father to maintain and increase in us all his holy grace, imprinting in us knowledge of him, so much so that it shall bring forth the fruits of good works in his honour, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

4 “[M]ake a pause”: orig. “faire pose”. This suggests a combination with medieval practice, which often signalled a “*pausa*” in dramatic manuscripts for various dramaturgical purposes (asides, displacement of characters, changes of point of view, etc.). The range of such effects may be gathered from Mario Longtin, “Conventions de lecture: l’exemple de la *pausa* dans le *Mystère de Sainte Barbe* en cinq journées”, *Langues, codes et conventions de l’ancien théâtre: Actes de la troisième rencontre sur l’ancien théâtre européen, Tours, Centre d’Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance, 23-23 septembre 1999*, ed. Jean-Pierre Bordier (Paris: H. Champion, 2002), pp. 83-92.

Prologue

1 Since you seek, with honourable desires,
 2 Such pastime as both pleases and inspires,
 3 To your minds is now to be presented
 4 What will do you good and make you contented,
 5 Which will show by agreeable discourse
 6 Our ultimate useful and sweet recourse
 7 Called Justification of our condition,
 8 And how it is that we may have remission
 9 Of our sins, in addition to the favour
 10 Of gracious God, our father and saviour.

11 You will see, therefore, the causes of sin,
 12 Also how mankind, being steeped therein,
 13 Comes by the Law his state to recognise,
 14 So that, seeing he is, by sturdy ties,
 15 To Sin and Death bound in captivity,
 16 With all his might he struggles to break free.

Rom. 3

17 Rabbi says that, his mind to pacify,
 18 The Law's conditions he must satisfy.
 19 Paul says not so, since the Lord will by grace
 20 All the sins of those who repent efface.
 21 But the sinner his faith in Rabbi places,
 22 So that soon after great dismay he faces:
 23 In service to the Law he pays the price
 24 Of knowing and feeling still more his vice.
 25 That's why Rabbi veils the Law's countenance,
 26 While the sinner claims that each ordinance
 27 He follows – but none in reality:
 28 Thus he becomes a perfect Pharisee.

29 By Pharisee we would have understood
 30 That man whose heart contains no truthful good,
 31 But only the appearance and the show,
 32 Who in his life and mode of thought is also
 33 Distinct from other mortals and apart,
 34 Thirsting to have the world to him impart
 35 All honour at all times and preference;
 36 Who, if he sometimes succours indigence,
 37 Does so only to make himself admired,

38 Sure he has the power and force acquired
 39 To gain salvation by his goods alone
 40 And Paradise obtain, too, for his own.
 41 The Pharisee is a great hypocrite: *Matt. 15*
 42 God's name's in his mouth, and matching to it
 43 Most holy words, but his heart nothing fills
 44 Except ambition and all other ills.
 45 Now, being in that state, he is content
 46 A little while, but then, subject to judgement,
 47 Sees himself arrayed with every fault
 48 And is quite overwhelmed by that assault.
 49 His fall into despair your eyes will trace,
 50 And desperate indeed would be his case
 51 If Faith and Grace⁵ divine did not prevent
 52 That deadly ruin which was imminent.
 53 But you will see him by Faith elevated,
 54 And in the rank of a Christian instated,
 55 For such firm assurance he will possess
 56 Of the benevolence and loving goodness⁶
 57 Of holy God by Jesus Christ his Son
 58 That lasting peace of mind will then be won.
 59 Now the threats of Satan from him are barred
 60 Because he trusts in God as his safe-guard;
 61 Therefore he'll offer on each due occasion
 62 In steadfast Faith to God his orison,
 63 And him adoring warmly, faithfully,
 64 By Grace he'll come to live eternally.
 65 Please you, then, grant us the sweet gift of silence,⁷
 66 And you may rest assured that in his conscience
 67 Each one of you will be interpellated.
 68 So well, also, is the story related,
 69 That there is no person to whom we'd say
 70 He's not – in silence – welcome to this play.

5 “[F]oy” and “grace” are not in upper case in the original here, but the text is inconsistent on the practice, and I have chosen to capitalise spiritual qualities where the reference is felt to evoke an allegorical character; the inevitable slippage between an abstraction and its embodiment is often exploited deliberately.

6 “[L]oving goodness”: orig. “bonté”.

7 The insistence on silence (reiterated in l. 70) is standard and confirms that the play was intended for staging, while ll. 69-70 suggest a broad public.

Act I

Argument

We have brought The Law onstage first in this tragicomedy to show that God has imprinted his Law on our understandings, and made it manifest to us by his living voice, so that none can be excused because he has not heard it. From the Law comes the Spirit of Fear, which is in man before he is completely bereft of sense by his Concupiscence. Next we show that Satan, the mortal enemy of God and of his ordinances, attempts to thwart the glory of God and the salvation of man, in that he attracts all men to evil through their Concupiscence. And because it has pleased God to wish to draw sinners to penitence by the mystery of the Word, we have placed there two ministers, signifying two means by which God calls us: namely, by threats and fear, and by promises and love, thereby illustrating the diversity of opinions on this question, and showing that there are false ministers seducing sinners on the pretext of holy Scripture, whom the sprit must judge whether they are of God or not. Now in the beginning, the sinner rejects both of them, because they wish to turn him away from sin, not yet being touched by the virtue of the Law and the spirit of God in his conscience.

Scene i

The Law, The Spirit of Fear

THE LAW

1 Hear me, you heavens, the earth and the sea,
 2 And all you mortals, young and old, hear me!
 3 Hear the Law speaking, your sovereign mistress,
 4 For it's to you that I my words address.
 5 How comes it that, though by you so reviled,
 6 And from amongst you cruelly exiled, *Rom. 8.*
 7 I still exist? What thing is so perverse,
 8 So horrible in all the universe,
 9 That you regard with as much deadly hate
 10 As holy Law? O nature reprobate!
 11 Exists there any monster apt to ravage,
 12 Were it Satan or some devil more savage,
 13 That would not by you be well entertained
 14 And dearly by the lot of you maintained?
 15 And I, who am so just and so divine,
 16 Of ruin am made to carry the sign,
 17 And therefore am allowed so little worth
 18 That I cannot remain at peace on earth.
 19 From that time when God sent me to the world,
 20 Against me all mortals hatred have hurled;
 21 What's more, their hearts are so corrupt within,
 22 They dare to name me causer of their sin,
 23 In that there can exist no violation *Rom. 4*

24 And as a consequence no condemnation,
 25 Where earlier no Law had been established.
 26 It is the Law, therefore, they say, that's furnished
 27 Occasion so often to be delinquent:
 28 Wrong your conclusion, false your argument!
 29 It's true that God, for all the human race,
 30 The holy Law has justly put in place,
 31 But not so that Law (as the wicked claim)
 32 May cause the fault for which they are to blame,
 33 But rather to denote that there is distance
 34 Between God and you, for great arrogance
 35 Would make the creature claim an equal place
 36 With his Creator. Oh, you rotten race!⁸
 37 What boldness! Law compels you to accord *Gen. 3*
 38 Your Creator's rights as master and Lord.
 39 The Law of prelat⁹ is thus a sign;
 40 By her are also taught the feats divine
 41 Of the Almighty: who else can instil
 42 In man the knowledge of his Author's will? *Exod. 20*
 43 Now, then, when he his Maker's Law transgresses,
 44 Himself a shifting liar he confesses.
 45 It follows thus that God is justified
 46 As alone (though this by sinners is denied) *Rom. 3*
 47 Just¹⁰ and perfect, constant and veritable;
 48 And so the Law, in essence equitable,
 49 Must serve you as a rampart high and wide,
 50 Encompassing Mankind on every side. *1 Tim. 1*
 51 Without Law, what safety for anyone?
 52 No parent would be honoured by his son;
 53 No one could be sure to preserve his life;
 54 Right out of your hands, your own wedded wife

8 "Oh, you rotten race!": orig. "O pourriture!". Cf. the Law's later accusation that Mankind's "heart to rottenness is wed [il a le cœur du tout pourry]" (IV.ii.1273).

9 The same word in French as in English, and distinctive enough to require retaining. The term inevitably evokes the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy, and in the Reformist context would surely have been self-discrediting on the part of Law. The latter thus becomes associated with both Jewish and Catholic perversions of the truth; hence it is suggested from a double perspective that "she" needs to be put in her legitimate but limited place.

10 The repetition "justified"/"just" is in the original.

55 Would be ravished away; and at all moments
 56 Your house you might see pillaged of its contents.
 57 In short, without Law disorder would reign,
 58 For even she can scarcely it restrain,
 59 So far advanced, alas, is your corruption.
 60 Therefore I say to you, as my conclusion,
 61 That there is need that God should laws dictate
 62 To range all things by number, size and weight, *Wisd. 11¹¹*
 63 For otherwise there's nothing can persist
 64 In stable state. Therefore, you must resist
 65 No longer, but render obedience
 66 With all your heart, or else here is the sentence
 67 Which God has given you by his decree:
 68 That all of you condemned to death shall be *Gen. 2*
 69 The very moment you have transgressed me.
 70 I wish it to be stated publicly,
 71 So that none shall offend by ignorance.
 72 Now, what is more, by divine ordinance
 73 I must, since you will thus your love deny
 74 To God, all-gentle, to your hearts apply
 75 That spirit whose title is servile Fear. *Gal. 4*
 [to the Spirit of Fear]
 76 Now, then, spirit agile and light, appear
 77 All mortals to maintain beneath Law's sway,
 78 For I've seen them do ill in every way.
 79 If by constraint they could not be dissuaded.
 80 I dearly wish that they could be persuaded
 81 By honest love and fear that's mild and kind,
 82 But there's no point: force must be used to bind
 83 Them,¹² till that time when they're made capable

11 Orig.: "Qu'il est besoing que par loix toute chose / En poidz, mesure, & nombre Dieu dispose". The reference is clearly to *Wisd. 11:17*, where God is praised for withholding his infinite power to punish sinful mankind with destruction: "but thou has ordered all things in measured number and weight". In the 1562 Geneva bible, the apocryphal books are printed after the canonical books of the Old Testament. While rejected by Reformation theologians as not sacredly inspired (in contrast with the canonical status confirmed for Roman Catholics by the Council of Trent [1546]), the Apocrypha were still generally held in high regard; Luther translated the Book of Wisdom (also known as the Wisdom of Solomon).

12 Orig.: "vser de contrainte / Faut". The dislocating inversion and enjambment accentuate the vio-

101 All's held beneath my potency;
 102 Mine is all the excellency
 103 And grandeur that this world can boast:
 104 Those who of learning have the most;
 105 Those said all-powerful to be;
 106 Those shining so resplendently
 107 With some species of sanctity;
 108 Judges filled with iniquity;
 109 The haughty in their pride's great height, *Job 41*
 110 Who trace my ways by day and night;
 111 Procurers, too, of benefices;
 112 Those who pursue great offices –
 113 All such I count within my fold:
 114 They are the grand whom I uphold –
 115 Then leave the bastards¹⁵ to God's care!¹⁶
 116 Much good it does aloud to blare
 117 And curse mankind with vehemence,
 118 Threatening dire consequence!
 119 All of that like the wind goes by.
 120 The Law is wont to rail and cry
 121 Against these mortals, well advised
 122 To turn to good. I'm not surprised:
 123 I know quite well that in my power
 124 All mortals lie from their first hour,
 125 More than the Law's, which makes them groan,
 126 While I – let it be widely known –
 127 Have ways that coddle them and please,
 128 And one chief means to do them ease
 129 And draw them without violence,
 130 Namely, my daughter Concupiscence.
 131 By her I fetch them all my way.
 132 The Law may well cry out and say
 133 What she likes, for I'll do so well
 134 That in terror of me shall dwell,
 135 More than of her, all humankind.

15 Orig. "coquins".

16 The irony here is compounded by the idea that Satan functions only as permitted within the divine scheme.

136 Not one of them, in sum, you'll find
 137 Who does not grovel at my feet.
 [*to Sin and Death*]
 138 Now, children, boldness I entreat!

SIN

139 Why doubts my father and creator?¹⁷
 140 Must our mettle be still greater?
 141 Our triumph is prepared, and well,
 142 For dragging all mankind to hell.
 143 Just let us our craft exercise,
 144 For all that's covered by the skies
 145 Fears us and is obedient.
 146 Where are the mighty and the potent
 147 Whom we do not strike down for you?
 148 Where is David, where his virtue?
 149 Say where the brilliant judgement lies
 150 Of Solomon so great and wise.
 151 Cyrus, Alexander, Darius –
 152 Even Caesar could not parry us:
 153 So many monarchs turned to ashes,¹⁸
 154 As all mankind our power dashes!
 155 Am I not Sin, of matchless force
 156 Because I am of Death the source? *Rom. 5*
 157 I dominate all humankind,
 158 Him, indeed, of filthiest mind,
 159 Although by him I am committed.
 160 Then, perfect father, we are fitted –
 161 What course of action do you choose?

SATAN

162 I wish henceforth to see us use¹⁹
 163 Our privileges and our full rights.

17 “[M]y father and creator”: orig. “mon pere & auteur”. Here, as elsewhere, the evil characters parody the language of divinity.

18 “[A]shes: orig. “en cendre”. Reynolds-Cornell amends to “en cendres” – unnecessarily, I think; the translation is not affected.

19 “[U]se”: orig. “vsions”; Reynolds-Cornell, ed., gives “usion”, which must be a typographical error.

164 The Law proclaims it from the heights
 165 That our rule mortals should reject,
 166 Not ceasing harsh threats to direct
 167 To have us be no longer served,
 168 And she alone to be observed,
 169 And this on pain of stark damnation.

SIN

170 All serves the end of their perdition,²⁰
 171 Since in the end, it's empty breath.
 172 As long as man's subject to death,
 173 From me he cannot be immune –
 174 That's sure.

SATAN

 But him to importune,
 175 By Fear he is now to be haunted.
 176 Well, anyway, I'm not too daunted,
 177 Being certain that you will do
 178 For me the most you're able to.

CONCUPISCENCE

179 Who will refuse what you command,
 180 Belovéd father of our band?²¹
 181 The eldest daughter, am I not,
 182 My dear progenitor begot,
 183 Who bears the name of Concupiscence?
 184 For since I took up residence
 185 In human nature, spawned by you,
 186 I am the offspring of you two.
 187 Due honour, then, I you accord
 188 As to my father and true lord.

20 The imperfect rhyme “damnation”/“perdition” is identical in the original.

21 Orig.: “[Q]ui estes nostre père”; Reynolds-Cornell, ed., emends “notre” to “mon”, but cf. below, ll. 195-99. There are sound theological grounds for representing Satan as the father also of Sin and Death. These are effectively expounded, with immediate reference to *Paradise Lost*, by Robert B. White, Jr., “Milton’s Allegory of Sin and Death: A Commentary on Backgrounds”, *Modern Philology* 70.4 (1973): 337-41.

189 Moved by you, moreover, I find
190 That all desire, with eager mind,
191 To harbour me.

SATAN

I know it well;
192 That's why no more in doubt I dwell.

CONCUPISCENCE

193 Then let us leave the Law to cry
194 Along with servile Fear.

DEATH

And I –
195 Into this life I made my entry,
196 Father Satan, through your own envy;
197 You first engendered me by Sin
198 When to the world she entered in
199 Through Adam. Therefore, tell me how
200 You wish to use me.

*Wis. 2:24*²²

SATAN

Wait for now –
201 You all shall serve me. [to Concupiscence]
For this time,
202 To make that sinner sure in crime,
203 You must give him blandishments²³
204 To comfort him in his intents,
205 Use words of soothing kind to ease him.

CONCUPISCENCE

206 I know well what things will please him.
207 For if he has not liberty,

22 I change the original reference's "2.d" to conform to the standard numbering; it is clearly the last verse of Wis. 2 that is cited: "Neuertheles, thorow enuy of the deuill came death into the worlde: and they that holde of his side proue it." "[E]nuie" in l. 196 of the French text surely plays on the sense of sexual desire.

23 Orig.: "Il te le faut entretenir". Reynolds-Cornell, ed., omits "le", as is clearly erroneous.

208 Is not from all subjection free
 209 To God or Law, he feels frustrated;
 210 Nothing by him is so much hated
 211 As when he's held in such subjection.
 212 I follow closely his affection,
 213 Cause him with clarity to see
 214 He has no master, and is free.
 215 Thus my advice he's bound to heed.

SATAN

216 That is a precious means indeed.
 217 Go: experience is the way
 218 To know who bears the greater sway –
 219 God, who from sin Mankind would guard,
 220 Or I, who want him from good barred.

Scene iii

Mankind [*in sin*],²⁴ Concupiscence, The Spirit of Fear

MANKIND

221 Who has ever been so unfortunate
 222 As I, conceived and born in human state?
 223 Who was ever so mutable and fragile
 224 As I, just like the earth that made me, vile? *Gen. 2*
 225 Who was ever to more evils made subject,
 226 Even among beasts, and the most abject?
 227 What thing is there that on the earth bears life
 228 That feels in itself such dangerous strife,
 229 As I, mere mortal? Casting my glance wide,
 230 Enemies I see on every side:²⁵
 231 Above my head the Law looms threatening;

24 Orig. "L'homme pecheur".

25 Mankind's vivid imagery of enemies above, below and around him evokes a dynamic three-level staging, at least imaginatively.

232 I see below the form of hell's great king;²⁶
 233 I see besides them Satan, Death and Sin –
 234 All of a single mind to drag me in.
 235 I am enclosed all round by Concupiscence;
 236 The Spirit of Fear that stirs in my conscience
 237 Troubles me much.²⁷ Alas, what must I do?
 238 One must please God – I know well it is true – *Rom. 7*
 239 By keeping his Law, but also intense is
 240 In my flesh another, drawing my senses.
 241 And so I am caught between two contraries,
 242 Which promises, alas, great difficulties.
 243 What then? To God I must commit my cause,
 244 Beseech that to him my spirit he draws,
 245 And that, if into sin they should deceive me,
 246 By Grace he would be willing to relieve me.
 247 And even now already I'm aware
 248 That Concupiscence comes: I must take care.

CONCUPISCENCE

249 How now, my friend, tormenting yourself still,
 250 And for no reason? Not yet had your fill?
 251 You were created of such noble kind;
 252 The very child of heaven is your mind;
 253 Your understanding clear and deftly wise,
 254 Sufficient quite to penetrate the skies;
 255 Your reasoning power, so just and fair,

26 “[H]ell’s great king”: orig. “des enfers le grand roy”. Obviously, for Barran, he is to be distinguished from Satan and probably to be identified with Beelzebub, to whom Satan will call for help when he is bound (V.iii.1740) and who has some biblical claim to preeminence (Matt. 10: 25, Mark 3: 22, Luke 11: 15). Mark 3: 23-26, however, provides support for the popular confounding of the two devils, while contemporary demonology tended to proliferate names and categories in various ways. Christopher Marlowe, in *Doctor Faustus*, has Beelzebub and Lucifer named interchangeably as prince of hell, but the probably non-Marlovian “B-text” of 1616 makes both figures appear to oversee the magician’s damnation; Milton makes Beelzebub second to Satan in the ranks of the devils (*Paradise Lost*, II.299-300). In the tradition of early modern religious drama generally, as in Barran, Satan is the evil principle that engages directly with humankind, in keeping with both the serpent’s seduction of Eve and Satan’s temptations of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11).

27 The double inwardness/outwardness attributed to Concupiscence and the Spirit of Fear effectively implants Mankind within the play’s allegorical mechanism.

256 Suffices²⁸ to make you fully aware
 257 Of difference between the good and bad:
 258 From your self-torment, what gain's to be had?
 259 Do you fear God? What is that God? A dream!
 260 The Law's a lie, whatever she may seem;
 261 The rest are nothing but pure fantasies,
 262 And all their speeches merely mockeries.
 263 And so, my friend, know your own excellence;
 264 To no one should you give obedience;
 265 You are sufficient to bear your own sway.
 266 Remain, therefore, at all times blithe and gay;
 267 As such you can live in greater content:
 268 Deliver your mind, therefore, from this torment,
 269 And let no master over you appear.

MANKIND

270 Oh, how your words are pleasing to my ear!

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR [entering]

271 Sinner, the Law, your great lady and mistress,
 272 Is at hand. You see, too, Sin's heinousness,
 273 Death and Satan – all three enforcers²⁹ here.

MANKIND

274 My darling,³⁰ alas, that's just what I fear!

CONCUPISCENCE

275 By apprehension you need not be pained:

28 The repetition of “suffisant(e)” in the original ironically insists on the danger of relying on human reason in its fallen state. The seduction of Mankind by Concupiscence here obviously recalls that of Eve by the serpent. Cf. also Temptation's approach to Humanité in Jean d'Abondance (i.e., Jehan d'Abundance), *Le Gouvert d'humanité*, ed. Xavier Leroux (Paris: H. Champion, 2011), ll.223 ff., which includes flattering his physical and moral excellence (“*Extrait est de noble rasse!* [Derived you are from a noble race]” [l. 233]); henceforth cited as *Le Gouvert*.

29 Orig. “sergens”.

30 Orig. “Ma mie”: a standard term of endearment for a woman; Concupiscence has, after all, seduced him and made him dependent on her. This is evident also in his childishness. While the pattern is not explicit here, it is common in morality plays to trace the protagonist's progression from youth to age. Cf. below, ll. 346, 1082.

276 For all these things, I promise you, are feigned.³¹

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

277 Do you not know that God has founded fast *Exod. 20*

278 His holy Law, that He has sentence passed

279 Of death on those who scorn commands of hers? *Deut. 27*

280 Don't you see the three executioners,

281 Ready to exercise on you their might?

MANKIND

282 Alas, my dear, I tremble at the sight.

CONCUPISCENCE

283 By apprehension you need not be pained:

284 For all these things, I promise you, are feigned.³²

285 We simply need to make you unafraid.

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

286 How do you think you can the Law evade?

287 The potency how could you ever shun

288 Of God most-high? Alas, where could you run?

289 Don't you fear the harsh sceptre in her hand?

290 See Satan, Sin and Death, who ready stand,

291 If you offend, to strike with all their might?

MANKIND

292 Alas, my dear, I tremble at the sight.³³

31 Cf. the false reassurance by Sensual Suggestion of Woodes's Philologus, whose conscience torments him with fear of the divine wrath: "These are but fancies certainly" (IV.iv). Sensual Suggestion has accosted him in his spiritual despond, as Concupiscence does Mankind, and distracts him by showing him all manner of worldly pleasures in a "mirroure" (IV.i). Suggestion is the Vices' effective last resort in corrupting the protagonist, but, like all the characters in *The Conflict of Conscience*, he is male, and his operations lack the seductive dimension of Concupiscence. Generally parallel, too, is the attempt of Infidelitie to cheer up the conscience-stricken protagonist in Lewis Wager, *The Life and Repentaunce of Mary Magdalene, Reformation Biblical Drama in England: An Old-spelling Critical Edition*, ed. Paul Whitfield White (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), ll. 1234-40, 1309-12. In this context, it appears that a well-worn motif is being reorientated ironically when Erreur in *Le Gouvert* insists that Catholic teachings are fabrications: e.g., "Caresme n'est que fiction [Lent is a mere fiction]" (l. 983); cf. ll. 1441, 1489, and 1517.

32 Ll. 353-54 exactly repeat ll. 345-46.

33 A repetition of l. 352.

310 [to Concupiscence] I well know it's your practice to
entice
311 These straying mortals, cunning Concupiscence,
312 Causing them thus all their knowledge and sense
313 To lose, until they nothing can perceive –
314 Not God, or Law, or hell – nor can receive
315 In their ears God's voice which calls them in vain
316 To him. Then, now that wasted is my pain,
317 I shall withdraw, hoping that in my turn,
318 Together with the Law, I may return. [Exit the Spirit of Fear.]

Scene iv

Satan, Sin, Death, Concupiscence

SATAN

319 Oh, I'm filled with a flood of joy:
320 The blindfold was a wily ploy!
321 Let's leave him therefore at his ease
322 And listen to those words that please.

SIN

323 I'll rest and let her edify.³⁸

DEATH

324 And I.³⁹

SATAN

How sweetly she'll him ply!
[to Concupiscence]
325 But you must with solicitation,
326 Darling, and steady instigation,
327 Urge him to every sort of pleasure.

38 “[E]dify”: I choose the term advisedly, given its common use for religious instruction.

39 Reynolds-Cornell, ed., makes this a question, as is not indicated in the original and does not seem necessary.

CONCUPISCENCE

328 I'll do your will in fullest measure:
329 Have I not rather well begun?

SATAN

330 Our cause is much advanced, not won,
331 And nothing will be gained till more
332 We do.

CONCUPISCENCE

All things I'm ready for.

SATAN

333 Then listen to me. What we need
334 Is for your coaxing to succeed
335 In making him the Law attack:
336 From doing so he'll not hold back,
337 For sight he's lost, all thanks to you,
338 And will not have her in his view.
339 From fear he'll have immunity
340 And act sure of impunity.

CONCUPISCENCE

341 Just so I'll do as you command.

SATAN

342 And I'll be waiting close at hand.

Scene v

Mankind, Concupiscence

MANKIND

343 Now a restful life I visualise,
344 Regardless of the Law, and of her allies.
345 Enough prudence and wisdom can't I boast

346 For someone of my age – and more than most?
 347 Then I'll submit to no authority.
 348 Dear Concupiscence, you're enough for me!

CONCUPISCENCE

349 A worthy resolution, wise indeed;
 350 A blissful life the two of us will lead!

MANKIND

351 Whatever you wish, I promise to do.

CONCUPISCENCE

352 If you trust me, all pleasures will accrue.

MANKIND

353 Even as my mistress I'll defer to you;
 354 Down with Law! All matters I'll refer to you!

CONCUPISCENCE

355 Destroy the Law: let's go and do the deed.

MANKIND

356 I cannot see her – help, a guide I need.
 [*being in front of the Law*]
 357 Now, then, come on – grab it all, smash and tear:
 [*as he strikes the Law*]
 358 Look, like mere wax, I rend it everywhere.⁴⁰
 359 Of God, all the devils, I'm not afraid,
 360 Sin, or Death – they're just fables Fear has made.
 361 Have I not finally been rendered free? –
 362 In which state always I intend to be!

40 Seemingly a clue to staging: Mankind may well be breaking a waxen model of the tablets on which the Law is inscribed, but the original tablets were of stone, and of course he cannot destroy the Law itself. In Wager's play, The Lawe enters "holding stone tablets" (l. 1108 SD), in keeping with traditional iconography.

Scene vi

Rabbi, Mankind, Satan, Concupiscence

RABBI

363 How this world turns and turns about;
 364 All, I see, will go inside-out,
 365 Unless I set affairs to rights.
 366 They all chase after vain delights,
 367 Like animals completely senseless:
 368 God's laws they readily transgress,
 369 Of hesitation show no trace;
 370 Then are they not a wicked race?
 371 It's evident I must take charge
 372 And give them warning clear and large
 373 Against their deeds to Law contrary;
 374 For I see no one besides me
 375 To plead her case with zeal so burning:
 376 I am her Rabbi, full of learning.
 377 To all, then, I the Law must preach.⁴¹
 378 Here, now, the sinner comes in reach;
 379 With him I'll show myself severe.
 380 [*to Mankind*] Villain, come here! Have you no fear
 381 Of God and of his pending judgement?
 382 Where is the knowledge he has sent?
 383 What do you think? Can you not tell
 384 You'll quickly find yourself in hell
 385 If soon to God you don't resort?

MANKIND

386 Now what wind blew you to this port

41 Cf. Rom. 2:17-20:

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the Law, and gloriest in God.

18 And knowest (his) will, and allowest the things that are excellent, in that thou art instructed by the Law.

19 And persuadest thy self that thou are a guide of the blinde, a light of them which are in darkenes.

20 An instructor of them which lacke discretion, a teacher of the vnlearned, which hast the forme of knowledge, and of the trueth in the Law.

387 To bring me up with words so short?
 388 I like only pleasure and sport,⁴²
 389 And now you come to nettle me!

RABBI

390 Just like some beast, then, will you be,
 391 Not having God before your eye?

SATAN

392 Hold your noise, O glorious Rabbi!
 393 Who asked you to come here today?
 394 May every evil come your way!
 395 Your words my hearing mortify.
 [to *Concupiscence* – a whispered suggestion]
 396 “Let that God in heaven remain.”⁴³
 397 For if he starts his thoughts to send him,
 398 He’ll be afraid and not offend him.

CONCUPISCENCE [to *Mankind*]

399 Let that God in heaven remain.

MANKIND [to *Rabbi*]

400 Let that God in heaven remain.
 401 To God I will pay no attention:
 402 Let simply my own will be done,
 403 As up till now has been assured.

RABBI

404 O how your senses are obscured,
 405 Having of God no cognizance!
 406 But know that by such ignorance
 407 Evil will you more deeply stain.

42 Ll. 385-88 likewise rhyme on the same sound in the original.

43 Satan thus “prompts” Concupiscence, who passes the message to Mankind. The echoing effects and repetitions beginning with this line make an effective dramatic technique, as well as a shrewd allegorical point. The rhyme scheme becomes unusually intricate for the rest of the scene.

MANKIND

408 Let that God in heaven remain.

RABBI

409 I see your flesh and heart inured
410 To every vice and violation,
411 God's will held in abomination,
412 So full of twisted spite your brain.

MANKIND

413 Let that God in heaven remain.

RABBI

414 With such a life as that procured,
415 Making mere pleasure your ambition,
416 You will go straight to your perdition.
417 Leave bad, and good you will obtain.

MANKIND

418 Let that God in heaven remain.
419 To God I will pay no attention:
420 Let simply my own will be done,
421 As up till now has been assured.
422 Go, dreamer! Enough I've endured! [Exit Rabbi.]

Scene vii

Paul, Satan, Concupiscence, Mankind

PAUL

423 Sure it is that a noble heart
424 Is called to play a gentle part,
425 And rigour is no way to teach,
426 So I will go to him and preach,
427 Advising him that God, by Grace,
428 Each sinner would in Christ embrace,
429 If he in Faith to him resorts;

430 But if with vice he still consorts,
 431 Pursues the course of his abuse,
 432 He shall be held beyond excuse,
 433 Having to stubborn hardness turned.
 434 [*to Mankind*] Listen, my friend, God is concerned
 435 For you, loves you without surcease;
 436 Do likewise, then, yourself and cease
 437 To be to him antagonistic.

SATAN

438 O what a cunning heretic!⁴⁴
 439 A hundred devils take the bastard!
 440 That song he sings could hit us hard,
 441 So soft and sweet is its refrain.

CONCUPISCENCE

442 I'll make it such a source of pain
 443 That he'll prefer to leave it quite.
 444 [*to Mankind*] If you want to pursue delight,
 445 Of that liar no word retain.

MANKIND [*to Paul*]

446 Let that God in heaven remain.

PAUL

447 All will show of some vice the trace;
 448 But if you live so all the time,
 449 Seeking merely riot and crime,
 450 You give yourself too dark a stain.

MANKIND

451 Let that God in heaven remain.

PAUL

452 Pardon by Christ Jesus' Grace

44 Orig.: "O L'heretique ingenieux!" Besides the comic incongruity of the term "heretic" in Satan's mouth, one may detect a (literally) damning echo of Catholic condemnations of the doctrine Paul represents. Cf. below, II.v.849.

453 You'll have for all, if you repent:
 454 Then do, before the time is spent;
 455 Do not his tender care disdain.

MANKIND

456 Let that God in heaven remain.
 457 Get out of here – don't show your face!

Scene viii

PAUL [*as he leaves*]

458 Oh, it's a task of daunting measure
 459 To draw towards true penitence
 460 Mankind, when he with Concupiscence
 461 Follows merely lust and pleasure.
 462 He is now the prisoner sure
 463 Of Satan, who controls his sense;
 464 Both Love and Fear he does abjure,
 465 With God, in rank irreverence.

Scene ix⁴⁵

Concupiscence, Mankind

CONCUPISCENCE

466 So trust to me, my friend,

45 Cornell-Reynolds, ed., plausibly suggests that, given the lyric quality and form of this scene, it may have been sung or danced. The *carpe diem* message is, of course, undermined by ironic reminders of death, time and divinity, while the idyllic mood gives way at the end to unease, especially on the part of Concupiscence, who knows better. There are similarities to the lyric effusions in *Le Gouvert*, as the protagonist is seduced in the tavern (ll. 321 ff.); there Remort de Conscience, when he intervenes, is dismissed as a spoilsport by *Peché*: “Mais d’ou dyable vient ce folla, / Qui nous vient icy caquetter? [But where the devil does that idiot come from who comes here to chatter to us?]” (ll. 379-80). Cf. Satan’s rebuke of Rabbi above, I.vi.392-94.

467 All turmoil let us end
 468 And live deliciously.
 469 No care our bliss shall sever;
 470 Let us live thus forever,
 471 Both well⁴⁶ and joyously.

MANKIND

472 Live thus I wish to do,
 473 My darling, just we two,
 474 Never-ever to part.
 475 Let's follow our desire,
 476 Push all our pleasures higher;
 477 They'll always have my heart.

CONCUPISCENCE

478 We two will always be
 479 Together, happily
 480 Living our days well spent.
 481 While you with me remain
 482 And give your will free rein,
 483 You will live free from torment.

MANKIND

484 I will believe, my dear,
 485 Your words, and persevere
 486 Always as they direct.
 487 I love your counsel well;
 488 In counsel you excel:
 489 Each part I will respect.

CONCUPISCENCE

490 Let's leave these underlings
 491 Who spoil talk of good things.
 492 Let them go hang⁴⁷ elsewhere.

46 Orig. "[b]ien"; both the material and (ironically) the moral senses apply.

47 "[H]ang"; orig. "resuer"—literally, "sweat", but the sense is of a rude dismissal.

MANKIND

493 I've said to them good-bye,⁴⁸
 494 But I'm afraid they'll try
 495 Again here to repair.

CONCUPISCENCE

496 Then let us rather fly,
 497 For, not to tell a lie,
 498 Those types – I like them not.

MANKIND

499 Well, I don't give a damn,
 500 Free from fear as I am
 501 That I'll believe one jot!⁴⁹

48 “[G]ood-bye”: orig. “A-dieu”, which is strongly ironic in context; I have tried to recuperate the irony in the wording of l. 499.

49 The evocation of damnation is not there in the original but is consistent with the ironic mentions of fear (“crainte”) and belief (“croye”).

Act II

Argument

We show in the second the means whereby the sinner comes to cognizance of his sin, namely by the strength of the Law, the transgression of which engenders the ire of God. Consequently, the sinner is put into the power of Sin and Death, to the point where he would desire to be out of this world, as a result of suffering such torment, although in this way he may not by any means depart, but will enter more deeply into them, as is declared to him by the Law. Therefore, he seeks the means of having remission from his sins, whereupon the two ministers arrive: one proposes justification by the Law and by good works, the other by true repentance and Faith in the mercy of God. But the sinner believes the former. Thus he is placed in service to the Law.

Scene i

Rabbi, Paul Mankind, Concupiscence

RABBI

502 Uselessly, Paul, our time we spend;
 503 But listen – here’s what I intend:
 504 To bring him back to cognizance
 505 Both of himself and of his conscience,
 506 From every vice to turn his head,
 507 Unto the Law he must be led,
 508 For Law will make him realise
 509 How gravely him who rules the skies,
 510 The sovereign God, his ways offend.

PAUL

511 My thoughts in this direction tend:
 512 That upon Faith we must then call
 513 To comfort him, for he will fall
 514 By the Law into grievous woe.
 515 Of that I’m sure, for I also
 516 Was just as subject to his flaw,
 517 A wretch who, living without Law,
 518 Did with my will too much comply,
 519 But then, the living God on high
 520 Showed through the Law his angry face.⁵⁰

50 Paul’s conversion experience made him the perfect model and instrument for converting others; especially pertinent to Barran’s treatment is his former zealotry in promoting Jewish law and tradition (see Gal. 1:13-14).

521 So I drew back and turned to Grace,
 522 To seek and have from God his pardon,
 523 Who deigned to give me his dear Son,
 524 Being by Faith to him directed.

RABBI

525 See him flee there, by sin infected!
 526 Let us go after him and take him;
 527 The Law without a doubt will make him
 528 Know how damnable is his state.
[taking the sinner]
 529 Come here, O Mankind reprobate!
 530 Will you forever favour vice?
 531 Unless you follow my advice,
 532 You will go straight unto perdition.

MANKIND

533 Oh, rough and rude is the condition
 534 You present, vile fellow: so far
 535 From hope of pleasing me you are,
 536 I want with you no amity.

PAUL *[to Mankind]*

537 My friend, I have for you great pity,
 538 Seeing your state is damnable.
 539 But if you were amenable,
 540 Our counsel would your ill relieve.

MANKIND

541 Your counsel? No word I believe!

RABBI *[pulling the sinner]*

542 Here, here, come now.

MANKIND

What's all this fuss?

PAUL

543 For your own good, come now with us.

MANKIND [*to Concupiscence*]
544 How do you take this, mistress mine?

CONCUPISCENCE
545 Dear friend, I fear they've some design
546 To ambush you.

MANKIND
I'm not afraid.
547 Their hands we'll easily evade
548 When we want to.

PAUL
It's for your profit.

MANKIND
549 Well, then, give me your hand on it.
550 Rightly or no, I'll go along,
551 But I shall live – don't get me wrong –
552 As I have done and always will.

RABBI [*to Paul*]
553 Though harder than an age-old anvil,
554 Soft he shall once again be made.

CONCUPISCENCE
555 Ah, my heart feels a piercing blade,
556 Fearing that woe may come our way.

MANKIND
557 We will follow them, come what may.

Scene ii

Rabbi, the Law, Sin, Death

RABBI

558 O Law divine, O dame most excellent,
 559 Humbly to you I offer and present
 560 Mankind hardened, in vice's grip held tight,
 561 Rejecting God, in falseness his delight.
 562 We have set out for him and preached God's Word,
 563 But he, perverse, considers it absurd.
 564 I used severity and confrontation;
 565 Another tried with gentle exhortation:
 566 Of Faith and God he simply will not hear,
 567 And so he is immune to Love and Fear.
 568 In short, there is no means to set him straight
 569 But you, who will impress on him the state
 570 He's been reduced to by that vice of his.
 571 So therefore, if you please, now do your office:
 572 Remove his blindfold and restore his sight;
 573 Reduce him with language that will affright,
 574 With which you often make the mountains shake
 575 Causing the heavens, sea and earth to quake,
 576 And smoke to billow from hard stones and rocks:
 577 All hearts impure and swollen your voice shocks.
 578 When you give voice with your own special sound,
 579 Then none so perfect and so good is found
 580 But he his sin confesses straightaway,
 581 And soon enquires for the shortest way
 582 By which to extricate himself from sin.

THE LAW

583 Then right away with him I will begin,
 584 The frightful rigour of my face disclosing:
 585 I'll set on him with language so imposing
 586 That almighty God's full anger he'll feel.
 587 [*to Sin*] Come hither, Sin, and bring in at your heel
 588 Your wages⁵¹ – that's Death, of which you're the source;

51 Orig. "loyer"; I translate so as to evoke Rom. 6:23: "the wages of sinne is death". The French Gen-

589 Engender in him the cruellest remorse *Rom. 6*
 590 Of conscience, then eat at him constantly:
 591 Thus you'll see to what degree foul and filthy
 592 Is his way of living, his nature too.

SIN

593 If I've merely slumbered hitherto,
 594 It's high time that from slumber I awake.
 595 Come here, O Death, your dreadful dart now take;
 596 Carry with you your scythe, your teeth prepare.

DEATH

597 My burning darts will serve you anywhere.

Scene iii

The Law, Mankind, Sin, Death

THE LAW

598 O hardened one, with so much vice in you,
 599 Why have you failed to keep your God in view,
 600 So to forestall commission of such ill?
 601 Why have you, false in all, disloyal still,
 602 My son chased from you, the Spirit of Fear?
 603 My voice most holy did you never hear
 604 The sacred will of God to you expounding?
 605 Don't you know that God, his goodness abounding,
 606 Had granted you great knowledge and good sense?
 607 But now, thanks to the lure of Concupiscence,
 608 The object of my stringent prohibition,
 609 Sense, reason, memory go to perdition.

eva version of 1563 has "gages", but cf. "le loyer du peché est mort", likewise referencing Rom. 6, as explicated by Jean Calvin, *Institution de la religion Chrestienne: Composée en latin par Iean Calvin, & translitée en François par luymesme, & puis de nouueau reueuë & augmentée, etc.* (Geneva: Jean Gerard, 1551), p. 345.

610 You do not know God, his goodness and power;⁵²
 611 You have not loved him – you don't to this hour.
 612 Instead, mere false desires to pursue,
 613 Yourself in worldly pleasures to imbue,
 614 You do not cease, and crimes to perpetrate.
 615 Well, now it's I who'll make you know your state,
 616 How deeply you are wretched and damnable.
 617 Come, let's tear off that blindfold detestable,
 618 To show you how extensive are your wrongs,
 619 For that office also to me belongs.
*[The Law tears off the blindfold, at which the sinner, astonished,
 falls to the ground, whereupon the Law says:]*
 620 Then here and now, open your eyes and learn
 621 To feel your God's ire against you turn.
 622 Don't you fear, foul one, with horror not thrill,
 623 Starkly exposed to his furious will?
 624 Do you suppose at all that you can shun it?
 625 Do you not feel Sin strike you heart, and stun it,
 626 Threatening you with Death that has no end?
 627 Don't you see her all her effort⁵³ expend
 628 To make you suffer for eternity?

MANKIND

629 Ah, what terrible news you bring to me!

SIN [*seizing Mankind*]

630 There, I've got you, false traitor, fast, and faster:
 631 Acknowledge me now for your lord and master.⁵⁴
 632 Death I bestow upon you as your wages:
 633 Strike, then, Death with the full force of your rages.

DEATH [*seizing Mankind*]

634 To Death, to Death must you be subjugate:

52 “[G]oodness and power”: orig. “grand [*sic*] vertu”, which encompasses both notions.

53 “[H]er effort”: orig. “son effort”, which Reynold-Cornell, ed., unnecessarily makes plural (“ses efforts”).

54 “[L]ord and master”: the original, “Seigneur & maistre”, is likewise unambiguously masculine, although the character is female, as we have just been reminded in l. 690 (“her”, orig. “elle”).

635 Every sinner falls into that state
 636 Who does not love God but instead despises
 637 His holy Law, which he so greatly prizes.
 638 Does fierce remorse not beat within your head?

MANKIND

639 Oh yes, Death, it does – I wish I were dead!
 640 Therefore I pray you to end my travails
 641 By leading me to those shadowy vales
 642 Where humans go who leave the world behind.

DEATH

643 What, do you think, cursed sinner of foul kind,
 644 You will escape us after you have died?
 645 Poor sinner, to illusion you are tied:
 646 Then from our power nothing can detract,
 647 And a cruel vengeance we will exact –
 648 Harsher than that which here before you knew.

SIN [*to Mankind*]

649 Dead, more than living, you'll have a clear view
 650 Of all your sins displayed before your eye.

DEATH [*to Mankind*]

651 Do you suppose (I say) that when you die
 652 You'll be exempted from my lasting reign?
 653 Do you not know that it is there I reign⁵⁵
 654 Over sinners much more than I do here?

THE LAW

655 There to you eternally will appear
 656 God in his wrath, and you will feel his ire
 657 As being – far beyond description – dire.
 658 In short, no end of torments will you know.
 [*to Sin and Death*]
 659 But in the meantime, beat him, strike him, so

55 The identical rhyme on “regne” as verb and noun is present in the original.

660 That there's no lull in our sweet lullabies.⁵⁶

SIN [*striking him*]

661 There, then, now try another on for size!

662 Let us strike, O Death, our forces unite.

DEATH

663 I'm not pretending – I use all my might.

Scene iv

The Spirit of Fear, Mankind

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

664 Do you not now perceive with open eyes

665 That you've angered God, who dwells in the skies?

666 Do you not feel his fury on you bent

667 To deal to you horrific punishment?

668 Do you not see that Sin now does you in,⁵⁷

669 That ugly Death has snared you in its gin?

MANKIND

670 I do so, alas, and I feel the pain,

671 Well knowing it is justly I sustain

672 All trials, the more because I banished you.

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

673 Yet I with rigour had admonished you,

674 Showed how the Law, with Sin and Death, was strong.

MANKIND

675 It's true, and so I acted with great wrong

676 When I rebelled and drove you from my sight;

56 “[O]ur sweet lullabies”: orig. “en nostre doux langage” (obviously ironic).

57 The original likewise features internal rhyme and a play on words: “Peché te despeche”.

677 Surely I was then in less grievous plight
 678 Than I am now; but alas, tell me, please:
 679 How may I hope to gain a little ease?

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

680 Learn, yet again learn – let this give you pause –
 681 To hold God in fear and revere his laws.
 682 Having the Fear of God as your companion,
 683 Many a sin, because of fear, you'll shun.
 684 It's true that, by itself, fear counts as vile,
 685 And I am used to being scorned as servile,
 686 But better that you should with me remain,
 687 Than God quite forsake and his law disdain.
 688 Pray also to God that with loving fear,
 689 Which renders every soul from vices clear,
 690 His spirit may consent your heart to fill.
 691 Nevertheless, let you be mindful still
 692 That by the Law will be broken and dashed
 693 Sinners who are not daunted or abashed.

Scene v

Rabbi, Paul

RABBI

694 That sinner's to the quick astounded.
 695 So on vice was his being grounded
 696 He had to bow beneath the Law
 697 With good sense to repair that flaw.
 698 But I perceive it is by me
 699 From this distress he'll be set free.
 700 Now God he may well satisfy,
 701 For by the Law he'll ratify
 702 His thorough reconciliation.

PAUL

703 But lacking any expectation

704 That Law's dictates he can observe,
 705 Tell me, then, how his works may serve
 706 To bring the rest he seeks to reach.
 707 Rather, a discourse we should preach
 708 Of Faith and merciful forgiveness.
 709 For that is how God offers access
 710 For all who sin to Grace and pardon.
 711 Thus, I esteem, may he be won
 712 Most readily from his distress.

RABBI

713 So you'll teach me my business,
 714 How in this case I must proceed?
 715 I understand quite well his need.

PAUL

716 Well, let us go and we shall see:
 717 I know what his response will be.

Scene vi

Mankind, Rabbi, Paul, Satan transformed

MANKIND

718 Alas, how wretched my condition!
 719 Oh, wicked, destined to perdition!
 720 Oh, shall I have no consolation,
 721 No pity for my situation
 722 From someone who might give relief?

RABBI

723 What could have caused in you such grief,
 724 Poor mortal, and brought you so low?

MANKIND

725 My friends, I know nothing but sorrow,
 726 And live with pain that is most dire,

727 For God pours forth on me his ire,
 728 Since I espied the visage blazing,
 729 Heard the voice with power amazing
 730 Of Law, to whom you introduced me;
 731 Alas, see how she has reduced me:
 732 You see she's brought me to my knees,
 733 Given me to my enemies.

PAUL

734 But you, poor wretch, are your own bane;
 735 Against the Law you plead in vain:
 736 For your woe stems not from her, truly,
 737 But from that treacherous unruly
 738 Concupiscence, which dwells in you.

MANKIND

739 Well I see it – indeed, it's true:
 740 But for my pain what may be done?

PAUL

741 For all your ills the best solution
 742 Is to nurture sincere repentance,
 743 And place in God full confidence
 744 His pardon to receive and Grace:
 745 For he alone does sins efface
 746 By Christ and his abounding goodness.

*Matt. 3**Isa. 43 and 53*

MANKIND

747 I wish to ask you, nonetheless:
 748 Will God to succour me assent
 749 As I am now, and be content
 750 With penitence by Faith sustained?
 751 Or need my pardon be obtained
 752 By Law, and I in her confide?

RABBI

753 All by the Law are justified.

PAUL

754 Ah, friend, the Law does no such thing.
 755 None is so perfect in his living *Rom. 3*
 756 That he in everything obeys. *Rom. 8*
 757 Now, anyone who merely strays
 758 On some small point⁵⁸ – know that one must
 759 Not number him among the just. *Jas. 2⁵⁹*
 760 Thus he earns his God's execration.
 761 See, then, friend: have no expectation
 762 That justice⁶⁰ in the Law you'll find;
 763 Through Faith is God's good will inclined *Rom. 3*
 764 To sinners.

RABBI

By the Law it's won,
 765 As I well know. I am the one –
 766 Not so? – who boasts a doctor's learning,
 767 Observant, too,⁶¹ and well discerning.
 768 For she has been by God established
 769 And to the whole of mankind furnished
 770 So that his godhead they may serve.
 771 It's by the Law you may deserve
 772 In Paradise your life eternal.
 773 Believe me – it's the truth I tell
 774 And speak to you in perfect conscience.

PAUL [*to Mankind*]

775 But as you see, for your offence
 776 You by the Law are now consigned
 777 To these tormentors so unkind. *Rom. 4*
 778 Could you then ever possibly
 779 Repose beneath her rule? You see

58 The original adds a question-mark, which Reynolds-Cornell, ed., is surely correct in suppressing.

59 Cf. Jas. 2:10: "For whosoever shall keepe the whole Law, (and) yet faileth in one (point,) he is gilty of all".

60 "Justice" is also the term in the original, evidently in the sense of "justification".

61 Orig.: "Voire aussi grand observateur", with "observateur" in the sense of one who conforms to rules.

780 From that alone there's not a chance.
 781 But having Faith and with repentance,
 782 God will to you prove merciful.

RABBI

783 Yet first of all he must be mindful
 784 Of the Law, and follow it wholly,
 785 For only through the Law most holy
 786 Will he by God be entertained.

PAUL [*to Mankind*]

787 Go forth to God in Faith unfeigned; *Rom. 10*
 788 Your hope all on his goodness lay:
 789 By him you'll not be turned away
 790 But will be welcomed, have no fear.

RABBI [*to Mankind*]

791 Come, follow me; don't linger here.
 792 For he'll not be by God received
 793 Who never has good works achieved.
 794 Thus to the Law you must submit.

PAUL

795 I will teach you a means most fit
 796 To meet with God in fine array:
 797 The garment fresh you must display *Rom. 6*
 798 Of Christ, which living faith obtains. *Gal. 5⁶²*
 799 As King of Justice sole he reigns,
 800 And his dominion has no term.

RABBI

801 By the Law comes love that is firm
 802 Towards God and towards your neighbour.

62 Poor printing makes this marginal reference doubtfully legible, but "Galat." is almost certainly correct, as clearly at the beginning of Scene vii. Cf. Gal. 5:6: "For in Iesus Christ nether Circumcision auaieth aniething, nether vncircumcision, but faith that worketh by loue."

PAUL

803 Not for nothing are these asked for,
804 But you can't have them without Grace. *Rom. 8*

RABBI

805 Follow me, and you'll learn to trace
806 The only path to God – through Law.

PAUL

807 Faith brings union with God – not awe; *Rom. 6*
808 Then as a Christian you will live,
809 Service as his true son you'll give,
810 And he by Grace will grant your boon.

RABBI

811 Yet you must judge and decide soon
812 Which of us two you will believe.

MANKIND

813 I beg you for a brief reprieve.

SATAN TRANSFORMED

814 One reads declared in holy Scripture,
815 Where all is truth and truth is pure,
816 They are not just who hear Law's will, *Rom. 2⁶³*
817 But those prepared it to fulfil.
818 One owes the Law, then, observation
819 And by that means may gain salvation.

RABBI

820 This gracious spirit have you heard,
821 By holy writ his truth conferred,
822 Speak what I told you, every word?

63 Cf. Rom. 2:13: "For the hearers of the Law (are) not righteous before God: but the doers of the Law shall be justified." Satan's speech conspicuously omits the same chapter's strictures against outward conformity, as opposed to that of the "heart" (2:15, 29), and ignores the next chapter: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the Law" (Rom. 3:28).

PAUL

823 Wait now, for this is quite absurd!⁶⁴ *1 Cor. 2⁶⁵*
 824 Satan has taken this disguise –
 825 And yet the Scripture he applies
 826 Confirms my case: for since the Law
 827 Cannot be followed without flaw,
 828 None by works gains a perfect state;
 829 Thus hearing is inadequate.
 830 Wherefore you see there must be found
 831 Salvation on some other ground:
 832 The means we have is by God's Grace,
 833 Which can through Christ our sins efface.

RABBI [*to Mankind*]

834 Don't believe that, for well I know
 835 That all he says is empty show.
 836 Nothing remains but that we see
 837 Which of us two your guide shall be.

MANKIND

838 The thoughts of both I have well weighed.
 839 Since great offence to God I've made
 840 By breaking the Law, then must I
 841 Strive to appease the Lord most-high
 842 By means of Law, and gain his Grace.

RABBI

843 I promise you, here in this place,
 844 That if his Law you don't transgress,
 845 He will free you from this distress
 846 Imposed on you by Death and Sin.

64 In the original, too, successive couplets rhyme on the same sound.

65 This chapter bears pertinently on the distinction between divine truth, as Paul preaches it, and the blind wisdom of this world. Still more obviously to the point is 2 Cor. 13-15 with its distinction between false and true apostles:

For such false apostles are deceitful workers, and transforme them selues into the Apostles of Christ.

14 And no maruelle: for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing, thogh his ministers transforme them selues, as thogh(they were) the ministers of righteousnes, whose end shall be accordyng to their workes.

MANKIND

847 I'll follow you now – let's begin.

PAUL

848 The Law will judge you to damnation.

*Rom. 7*RABBI [*to Paul*]

849 Heretic fit to burn! Be gone!

850 No more I'll stand your company.

PAUL

851 You can say what you like of me.

852 The fact remains, I have assurance

853 From God, secure within my conscience,

854 That with such words you fool his ear.

855 But that will in due time appear.

MANKIND [*approaching the Law*]

856 When I perceive her, my heart trembles.⁶⁶

RABBI

857 Fear nothing, I'll present your case

858 And introduce you face to face.

Scene vii

Rabbi, The Law

RABBI

859 Here is the man, Law most-esteemed,

860 Who hopes by you he may be deemed

861 Worthy to put off God's just ire

862 And his beneficence acquire

66 An unrhymed line in the original.

863 By service perfect and sincere.

THE LAW

864	I accept him, but be it clear	<i>Gal. 3</i>
865	He'll do God's wishes, never swerving	
866	In punctiliously observing	
867	The will of his high majesty –	
868	If not, I will for him have ready	
869	Torments so keen it may be said,	
870	That's how God's wrath falls on one's head,	<i>Rom. 4</i>
871	With which his spirit shall be riven;	<i>1 Cor. 15</i>
872	Then to Sin shall power be given	
873	On him, and Death, implored in vain,	
874	Shall keep him in eternal pain.	

Act III

Argument

The sinner, being in service to the Law, feels his burden to be unbearable: so much so that he sees his corruption more than before and is more solicited by his Concupiscence; so far is he from obtaining peace by means of the Law. Therefore, he complains to Rabbi, who had put him in this state. Then Rabbi places a curtain before the Law, by which we signify that there is no one who can satisfy the Law's rigour, if her true condition is manifest. This is shown by the people of Israel's inability to hear, when God pronounced the Law in his majesty;⁶⁷ rather, they shrank back, saying, "God is not speaking to us; otherwise we shall die". But many false prophets conceal such virtue, preaching only outward works, for which Christ sharply rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees.⁶⁸ By this means the sinner becomes a hypocrite and a Pharisee, esteeming himself just and perfect by his works and failing utterly to see that his heart within is infected. Therefore, he relies on his good works, which he performs out of vainglory,⁶⁹ so much so that he boasts of and glorifies them, publicly praying to God in great arrogance.

Scene i

The Law, Sin, Death, Concupiscence, The Spirit of Fear, Mankind

THE LAW

875 Those poor folk are greatly deceived
876 Who, when they are by Sin aggrieved,
877 At my high throne display their throes;
878 For merely I increase their woes,
879 Unless through Faith they're welcomed in
880 By God – and there's the origin
881 Of their destruction come the Judgement.
882 Lay on, then, Sin, with special torment
883 For Mankind, whom you must appal
884 Until his pains his thoughts recall
885 To God in full obedience.

SIN

886 Lady of highest eminence,
887 He'll never find me at a distance,
888 For, to tell truth, there is no chance
889 He'll satisfy all your demands.

67 Here there is a marginal reference to Rom. 20.

68 Marginal references indicated to Matt. 5 and 6.

69 "[V]ainglory": orig. "vaine gloire".

THE LAW

890 Leave him, then, in torturing hands
891 Forever, subject to Death's force.

SIN [*to Mankind*]

892 Are you not stirred now by remorse,
893 As servant to the Law ordained?
894 [*to Death*] See the Law's zealot entertained,
895 You too, O Death, in fitting sort.

DEATH [*to Mankind*]

896 Never will you attain that port
897 Intended by your navigation,
898 For on you I'll have domination
899 While to this Law you're bound in fee.

CONCUPISCENCE

900 Alas, alas, listen to me!
901 Let us begin now to rejoice,
902 No longer hearing the Law's voice,
903 If we're to live at our own ease.

MANKIND

904 Do not suppose she can me please.⁷⁰

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

905 That false woman seeks to seduce you.

THE LAW

906 I see I must at last reduce you
907 And simply pack you off to hell.

MANKIND

908 I'm on the way, I see it well,
909 That leads to ultimate perdition.
910 O what a curse plagues this condition,

⁷⁰ Spoken, I take it, to Concupiscence with reference to the Law ("she"); he is falling into temptation.

911 To which I gave my full assent
 912 Not long ago! How I repent
 913 That such a one I took for mistress:
 914 Never will she cure my distress.

Scene ii
 Rabbi, Mankind

RABBI

915 I must not linger any longer:
 916 I go to show support still stronger
 917 For him the Law is to amend.
 918 I see him there –
 [*to Mankind*] Now tell me, friend,
 919 Have I not to my word proved true,
 920 Making the Law mistress to you?
 921 It's I who caused her to agree.

MANKIND

922 What then? I never thought to see
 923 Again with me both Death and Sin.
 924 Yet now I feel still more hemmed in
 925 Than ever was the case before:
 926 Each time I would take one step more,
 927 To God's wrath I feel more a prey.
 928 Alas, I am almost mid-way
 929 Between hell-pains and execration,
 930 Sensing more sharply my damnation
 931 Than when without all Law I strayed.
 932 And what is more, I feel conveyed
 933 By Concupiscence deep within,
 934 As if by force, to practise sin
 935 A hundred-fifty-thousand ways.
 936 By beasts most cursed to spend their days
 937 In wretchedness such pain's not borne:
 938 Beaten by Law, by Sin I'm torn;

Rom. 7

939 To bite me Death will never cease.
 940 So I see well that my release
 941 From ill can never come from there.
 942 I must, then, have recourse elsewhere
 943 To put myself in healthy state.

RABBI

944 Now listen: does not reason dictate
 945 That from all ill you turn away,
 946 And that by works you make your way
 947 Into God's favour and his Grace?

MANKIND

948 Can you not see that's out of place?
 949 That's what I told you formerly,
 950 And since, alas, too well you see
 951 I took the Law as my sole guide
 952 Yet never have they left my side –
 953 Sin, Satan, and Death too is seen:
 954 And, still worse, more foul and unclean
 955 I know myself to be in conscience,
 956 Because I feel my Concupiscence
 957 Drawing me more and more to vice.

Rom. 7

RABBI

958 Listen, I'll give you my advice.
 959 All good works and everything just,
 960 To rid you of your ills, you must
 961 Perform as suits the Law's behest.
 962 Don't kill; in nothing be dishonest;
 963 Count theft and lies abomination;
 964 Thank God often for your creation,
 965 In great abundance giving presents:
 966 Thus will you have for your offence
 967 A thorough and complete remission.

Exod. 20

MANKIND

968 That is mere idle repetition:
 969 So you have many times maintained.

RABBI

970 Now I proclaim you will have gained
 971 By your great merits influence
 972 With God such that you may dispense
 973 And share them with the undeserving.

MANKIND

974 Your strictures I have tried observing,
 975 But I see my impurity,
 976 Shown by the Law's great clarity,
 977 Such that I cannot bear her sight.
 978 Thus, Rabbi, I am surely right
 979 That by the Law I am expected
 980 To be, in truth, far more perfected
 981 Than I was led to think by you.

RABBI

982 Since you don't dare her face to view,
 983 It must be covered with a veil:
 984 Then her commandments may prevail,
 985 And you can give her satisfaction.

MANKIND

986 Your idea, then, put into action.

RABBI [*having covered the face of the Law*]

987 Behold the Law God has bestowed:
 988 Do no one harm—that breaks his code;
 989 Perform all good works publicly.
 990 Then Death and Sin are bound to flee;
 991 Never then can their power reach you.
 992 This your experience will teach you.

Scene iii

Satan, Sin, Death, Concupiscence

SATAN

993 There's the sinner in finest kind,
 994 Well satisfied, being quite blind
 995 To the Law with her dazzling face;
 996 It seems to him that while no trace
 997 He outward shows of fault or defect,
 998 He shall be entire, and perfect.
 999 On his good deeds he shall repose
 1000 And see to it his honour grows.
 1001 Deep in his heart, then, lie in wait;
 1002 There for a time no stir create,
 1003 But listen for the proper moment,
 1004 When he shall be called to judgement,
 1005 Yourselves to declare.

SIN

I'll do so,
 1006 There, then, O Death, let us both go
 1007 Out of his sight.

DEATH

I give consent,
 1008 But after, with unsparing torment
 1009 I will afflict him.

SATAN

Concupiscence,
 1010 Within him take up residence,
 1011 Acting at my solicitation.

CONCUPISCENCE

1012 From him I'll meet with no negation.

SATAN

1013 Let's leave him in his deeds to glory.

CONCUPISCENCE

1014 You'll soon hear him recount his story.

Scene iv

PAUL

1015 Oh, the great harm that these preachers produce,
 1016 Preaching without Faith of good works and merits!
 1017 For sinners are thus subject to abuse,
 1018 Informed that merely doing well acquits
 1019 Them of sin: so they turn to hypocrites,
 1020 Not fully realising the Law's great brilliance.
 1021 Faith must be preached, along with true repentance; *Acts 2*
 1022 Then after ask abundance of good deeds.
 1023 He who holds Christ in Faith's continuance
 1024 Of Faith's true fruits will have all that he needs.

Scene v

Mankind [*as Pharisee*],⁷¹ Rabbi

MANKIND

1025 Just now I feel I could take flight,
 1026 So very easy seems, and light,
 1027 The heaviest of all commandments.
 1028 I follow all requirements –
 1029 Yes, do more than the Law intends
 1030 (I've counted on my fingers' ends),
 1031 For I the Councils keep as well.⁷²
 1032 With weaklings I no longer dwell,

71 Orig. "L'Homme pharisien".

72 Most immediately, no doubt, the decrees of the Counter-Reformation Council of Trent. This is a reminder, then, of the assimilation of the Pharisees to the Roman Catholic priesthood and supports a reading of Barran's play as a reaction against plays, such as *Le Gouvert*, promoting Tridentine dogma.

1033 Nor aught with sinners have to do;
 1034 To preachers, then, I bid adieu:
 1035 Of preaching I have need no more.
 1036 Of good deeds I've amassed such store
 1037 I am a saint, to God most dear.

RABBI [*presenting him with a Pharisee's robe*]

1038 You need to put on, then, right here
 1039 These robes, thus set apart in dress
 1040 From others lost in wickedness:
 1041 With them there must be no confusion.

MANKIND

1042 I will add fringes in profusion,
 1043 Along with large phylacteries.

Matt. 23⁷³

RABBI

1044 Your sanctity's confirmed by these.

MANKIND [*being clothed*]

1045 Here I show as a man of virtue.
 1046 Now as a Pharisee should do
 1047 I shall go make my orison.
 1048 [*praying*] I enter, God, your⁷⁴ house as one
 1049 My deeds of worth have rendered just.
 1050 I do no ill nor things unjust,
 1051 But your commandments all apply.
 1052 It's certain, too, that I don't lie
 1053 In calling you God veritable.

73 Especially intended is Matt. 23:5, where Jesus, speaking of the Pharisees' hypocritical preaching of the Law of Moses and ostentatious display of symbols of piety, declares: "All their workes they do for to be sene of men: for they make their phylacteries broad & make long the fringes of their garments". (Phylacteries are small boxes bound on the hand and forehead containing biblical verses expressing obedience to Mosaic law.) The image of prescribing heavy burdens to others which they themselves could not bear is found in 23:4. Cf. Christ's rebuke of the hypocritical Pharisee Simon in Wager, ll. 1889-96.

74 The trace of intimacy that still makes itself felt in modern English when the second-person familiar forms are used in prayer ("thou", "thee", "thine") has inclined me to reserve these for Mankind's later sincere prayers "as a Christian".

1054 Render me, then, God equitable,
 1055 According to my works and merit,
 1056 For which I wish you may acquit
 1057 Of sin all those I have befriended.
 1058 But all those who have us⁷⁵ offended,
 1059 Them to all the devils remand:
 1060 Evil they are and should be damned.⁷⁶
 1061 Do this for me, for I am worthy,
 1062 As Pharisee exemplary.

Scene vi

Satan, Concupiscence

SATAN

1063 I think today I've done quite well,
 1064 O my daughter, who in him dwell.
 1065 Of every vice you are the source,
 1066 The nurse that feeds such men⁷⁷ their force –
 1067 Wherefore it's needful well to govern
 1068 This splendid saint and always turn
 1069 Him to what may honour impart:
 1070 All must be done to draw his heart
 1071 To vainglory.

CONCUPISCENCE

 I grasp your sense:
 1072 For nothing has more influence
 1073 On types like that; they are quite bent
 1074 For honour's sake on diligent

75 The use of “us” (orig. “nous”) at once slides towards the self-important “royal we” and confirms his self-identification with God.

76 Arrogation of power to remit sins and to condemn specifically evokes the Roman Catholic clergy.

77 “[S]uch men” (orig. “ces gens”, literally “these people”): the translation opts for a limited reference to hypocritical sinners, and is supported by “types like that” (“telles gens”) in l. 1073. Still, Satan might here be speaking universally, even, with a gesture, including the audience.

1075 Performance of each worthy deed.
 1076 Now, to your orders paying heed,
 1077 I go to him and will converse
 1078 Most sweetly, and will words disperse
 1079 Adapted to his own desire.

SATAN

1080 Go, then, and into him retire.⁷⁸

Scene vii

Concupiscence, Mankind

CONCUPISCENCE

1081 Friend, have I not told you the truth,
 1082 Followed you ever since your youth?⁷⁹

MANKIND

1083 And I, my lady Concupiscence,
 1084 I gave you all obedience
 1085 Until I languished at Death's door,
 1086 For evils on my head did pour
 1087 While I behaved your will to please.

CONCUPISCENCE

1088 And now, must we be enemies?

MANKIND

1089 No, for as you see, I retain you
 1090 Still in my heart, and there sustain you,
 1091 Receiving from you great delight,
 1092 Such that I often wish I might

78 The original's "retiré" is evidently a typographical error for "retire" ("retire", "withdraw").

79 Cf. again the blandishment of Philologus by Suggestion in the presence of Conscience in *The Conflict of Conscience*: "Thou hast good triall of the faith, which I to thée doo beare, / Commit thy safetie to my charge, there is no daunger néere" (Woods, IV.iii).

1093 Outwardly, too, with you comply.
 1094 The Law, though, I must satisfy
 1095 And by good deeds achieve salvation.

CONCUPISCENCE

1096 Make them, then, fit the situation,
 1097 A source of honour and of fame:
 1098 Everyone knows your perfect claim
 1099 To their possession, for your doctrine
 1100 Is to your life itself akin
 1101 In pure, resplendent sanctity.
 1102 Now, in doing what pleases me,
 1103 Keep me concealed within your heart.

MANKIND

1104 You'll lodge there secret and apart,
 1105 In pleasure well maintained and prized:
 1106 But see you are not recognised
 1107 Either by Law or humankind,
 1108 Or else my deeds quite vain they'll find,
 1109 For by the Law we'd be opposed.

CONCUPISCENCE

1110 Then let our pact not be disclosed.

MANKIND

1111 It will not be. And now keep low
 1112 Within my heart, for forth I go
 1113 To preach to people of my justice.

CONCUPISCENCE

1114 And for my part, I'll do my office.⁸⁰

80 The line is no doubt directed toward the public.

Scene viii
Mankind, Rabbi

MANKIND

1115 Oh, how I'm happy and at ease,
1116 For I do everything I please,
1117 Thanks to my strict observation
1118 Of the Law: no exaggeration
1119 To call me perfectly conforming,
1120 Greatest commandments all performing
1121 To the letter, nothing undone.
1122 Wherefore I have the expectation
1123 In due course glory to procure.

RABBI

1124 Of that I judge you may be sure:
1125 For truly, holy works you do
1126 With unfeigned words to match them, too:
1127 So much you amply demonstrate.
1128 Thus for God your deeds will rate
1129 You Paradise: it stands to reason.

MANKIND

1130 Now I'll go perform my orison.
[The orison of Mankind as a Pharisee]
1131 Everywhere, in every place,
1132 To you, Lord God, I offer grace,
1133 I who, not wicked like the rest,
1134 Keep from all evil, knowing best
1135 That which you, by your Law, ordain.
1136 All others, as to me is plain,
1137 To theft, false-witness, lechery
1138 Are given, while, Lord, as for me,
1139 I fast twice weekly, at the least,
1140 Besides when fasting is increased

Luke 18⁸¹

81 The prayer elaborates on that of the Pharisee in Luke 18:11-12.

1141 For Advent, Lent and Ember days.⁸²
 1142 What's more, I know the different ways.
 1143 I pay the tithes on all I own;
 1144 I nourish, as to you is known,
 1145 Poor people with my ample alms;
 1146 Thus reason bids you have no qualms
 1147 In granting me this world's respect
 1148 And riches; then, Lord, I expect
 1149 You will not show yourself unfair
 1150 But after death for me prepare
 1151 Your Paradise where I may dwell.

RABBI

1152 Indeed, you've spoken very well.

82 Ember days: the English term, which derives from Latin "Quatuor Tempora", corresponds to the original's "quatre-temps", fasting days prescribed at the beginning of each of the four seasons. This is also one of the targets of John Bale's *Thre Lawes* (*A Comedy concernynge thre lawes of nature, Moses and Christ, The Complete Plays of John Bale*, ed. Peter Happé, 2 vols, vol. II [Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986]), III.1172.

Act IV

Argument

Paul, having led Rabbi and pharisaical Mankind to the Law, removes the curtain from in front of her face, preaching the Law in her full virtue and power,⁸³ with her demand for the heart pure and entire. And she shows Mankind his impurity and corruption, indeed consequently subjects him to the ire and malediction of God, to such an extent that he seeks a means to kill himself. Then Satan aggravates his sin and throws him thoroughly into despair, so much so that Rabbi leaves him, unable to provide a remedy despite his best efforts. But Paul makes an effort to console him with the discourse of Faith, as, however, he cannot do until God sends his holy Grace to the sinner.

Scene i

Paul, Mankind, Rabbi

PAUL

1153 I am most thoroughly astounded
 1154 That Mankind, his whole being founded
 1155 On sin, indeed with Sin complicit,
 1156 Who Concupiscence's illicit
 1157 Promptings to base effect applies,
 1158 Should dare to God to raise his eyes,
 1159 Proclaiming himself whole and perfect.
 1160 Arrogant heart, with pride infect!
 1161 I see two there who make that claim,
 1162 Not knowing that they are to blame,
 1163 Corrupted and degenerate.
 1164 I'll show the falseness of their state
 1165 And that in nature they are sinful.
 1166 O you of filth and foulness full,
 1167 How can you think you'll satisfy
 1168 The Law, and with all points comply?
 1169 For sure, you're woefully beguiled,
 1170 And your hearts thoroughly defiled *Matt. 15*
 1171 And soiled by putrid Concupiscence.

MANKIND

1172 Villain, you think you know the essence
 1173 Of what my inmost heart contains?

83 “[V]irtue and power”: orig. “vertu”, which in the context carries both meanings.

1174 To God alone that appertains,
1175 So you discourse rank blasphemy.

PAUL

1176 Ignorant wretch, it's you, not me,
1177 Alas, who blaspheme without ending.
1178 For here you were just now pretending
1179 You stood in a perfect condition.

MANKIND

1180 My works and deeds earned that position,
1181 By holy Law's observance gained.

PAUL

1182 Your holiness is only feigned;
1183 You cling just to the mere outside.
1184 The Law's true might you've not descried,
1185 Her brilliance and her great virtue.

RABBI

1186 What about you? Tell me, do you
1187 Grasp better what I preach all day?
1188 Don't fear for this man anyway,
1189 For his great value I can tell.

PAUL

1190 Ha, Rabbi, I know you too well!
1191 It's you who by the Law abuse him,
1192 For you do nothing but amuse him
1193 With works he outwardly performs.
1194 But such alone are empty forms,
1195 Of power to please God bereft.

*Rom. 14*⁸⁴

MANKIND

1196 Then what for me to do is left?

84 The gist of the chapter is the vanity of following such prescriptions as fasting in the absence of faith; cf. above, III.viii.1139-42.

1197 I think I fail in no command.

PAUL

1198 If you would clearly understand,
1199 Unto the Law we must go back.

RABBI [*to Mankind*]

1200 Come, my company you'll not lack.

MANKIND [*to Paul*]

1201 Here is the Law – but what's the need?

PAUL

1202 Well, then, go on, begin to read
1203 To see if you've with all complied.

MANKIND

1204 I've looked at it from every side;
1205 Nothing I see that I've missed out.⁸⁵
1206 But please, Rabbi, you read it out.

RABBI

1207 Father and mother you shall honour,
1208 And if you live in such a manner,
1209 Long life upon the earth you'll bear.

Exd. 20
Eph. 6

MANKIND

1210 And so I do, as I can swear.

RABBI

1211 Murder must you never commit.

MANKIND

1212 That would I not myself permit.

RABBI

1213 Lechery must you keep at bay.

85 Presumably, tablets recalling the original commandments are used as a prop.

MANKIND

1214 That rule you need not even say.

RABBI

1215 Commit no theft and tell no lies.

MANKIND

1216 Of those I bear away the prize.
1217 Is that all? All this I discharge,
1218 And find so wondrous light the charge
1219 That I choose heavier to bear.

PAUL

1220 Your claims are merely empty air.
1221 The message, still you don't receive it.

RABBI

1222 If something else, I don't perceive it.
1223 Read yourself, if more you discover!

PAUL

1224 Isn't it you who dared to cover
1225 The burning eyes of holy Law?
1226 Thus now you view her without awe,
1227 From her harsh scrutiny protected:
1228 And hence your hearts became infected,
1229 Quite brimming with hypocrisy.
1230 The hypocrite from care is free,
1231 For hidden evil he contains,
1232 Not realising how much it stains
1233 His heart, which is the Law's demand.
1234 But come, that formidable band
1235 Upon her eyes let us undo.

RABBI

1236 We do not dare.

PAUL

Well then, I do!

[*Here Paul removes the veil in front of the Law; this causes Mankind and Rabbi to draw back in fear.*]

Scene ii

The Law, The Spirit of Fear, Mankind, Sin, Death

THE LAW

1237 Woe unto you, who of God have no fear
 1238 And still less love: how false you now appear!
 1239 O hard heart full of infidelity!
 1240 Woe unto you, who are mere vanity:
 1241 Woe unto you, a whited sepulchre,
 1242 For nothing inwardly but blood you harbour,
 1243 Enmities, cruel vengeance, hard exactions,
 1244 Coupled with a hundred other infractions.
 1245 O most false heart, heart wicked and malign,
 1246 Who always to all sorts of crimes incline;
 1247 O cursed heart, with corruption festering,
 1248 Woe unto you, for never anything
 1249 You cared for but gaining honour and glory.

*Matt. 23⁸⁶**Isa. 1*

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR [entering]

1250 O woeful wretch, your sin's a well-known story.
 1251 Now all before your eyes displayed you'll see
 1252 Sin, Death, by which tormented you shall be
 1253 So fiercely you'll wish you'd never been born:
 1254 Then let the cloak from your pretence be torn
 1255 Of saintly piety and pure perfection.

MANKIND

1256 The Law shows me, alas, my deep infection,

86 In this section, the translation draws on the familiar rhetorical turns of the Authorised Version.

1257 And her sheer brilliance I cannot sustain;
 1258 Here can I, therefore, no longer remain,
 1259 For otherwise death surely will ensue.

THE LAW

1260 Without running, O wretch, I can reach you,
 1261 There, I'm no longer hindered by my blindfold:
 1262 To you it seemed as if I was controlled
 1263 By deeds of yours that had no inner substance;
 1264 You were deceived: my holy ordinance
 1265 Requires nothing less than pure affection.
 1266 I rightly, then, pronounce your cursed rejection:
 1267 Corrupted you are and for death reserved;
 1268 Damnation for your sins you've well deserved,
 1269 Unless elsewhere you gain deliverance.

Rom. 7

1270 Sin and Death, now come here quickly, advance:
 1271 Before me bring that curséd hypocrite;
 1272 Do what you must so that fine counterfeit
 1273 Sees that his heart to rottenness is wed.

SIN

1274 Within his heart a long time I've been fed:
 1275 It's time I did myself to him declare.

DEATH

1276 For me as well his heart has been my lair,
 1277 But now I need to show myself outside.

THE LAW

1278 Go, then – let your best efforts be applied.
 1279 Spare nothing; see that you the message render
 1280 To that fair saint so delicate and tender
 1281 That he is nothing but hypocrisy,
 1282 And all his holiness mere fantasy.
 1283 Whatever you do, don't you let him go,
 1284 But give his heart mighty blow after blow,
 1285 To see if he's a saint, as he's been saying.

SIN [*looking into his breast*]

1286 I've opened him: one sees no other thing
1287 But foul desires of his Concupiscence.

DEATH

1288 Nothing can I perceive within his conscience
1289 But crime upon crime: ambition and hate
1290 Have moved into his heart and rule in state.

SIN

1291 Strike without stint that heart that so offends.

DEATH

1292 Let's make sure that his anguish never ends.⁸⁷

Scene iii

Rabbi, Death, Sin, Paul

RABBI

1293 It's time for me to pay a call
1294 On my disciple, to install
1295 My claim to merit heaven with him –
1296 But what's that? Death cruel and grim
1297 Is near him, and Sin too I see.
1298 From them he must be freed by me
1299 Yet again, as before was seen.
1300 All went well with me on the scene;
1301 Without me, nothing right can run.
1302 I'll go right now.
[*calling out from some distance to Sin and Death*]
What's being done
1303 To that epitome of goodness?

87 This is the beginning of the confrontation with despair that ultimately leads to what Paul terms the “circumcision . . . of the heart” (Rom. 2:29). See Introduction, p. 22.

1304 Of God and the Law's holiness
1305 He is a servant of long date.

DEATH

1306 Back, you who falsehoods perpetrate,
1307 Or I'll not fail to swallow you!

SIN

1308 Do you think, Rabbi, you can skew
1309 God's ire from Mankind so tainted?
1310 It seems I must make you acquainted
1311 With his torments: come, closer draw.

DEATH

1312 Now, counterfeiter of the Law!

SIN

1313 This deceiver deserves our care.

RABBI [*fleeing*]

1314 I do believe I must beware.
1315 Their company I must eschew;
1316 There's nothing left to say or do
1317 For me, so I throw up my hands.

PAUL

1318 Yet you know well the Law commands
1319 The ass's burden to relieve:⁸⁸
1320 That dictate do you disbelieve?
1321 And so you'll leave him in this state,
1322 Rabbi, who never hesitate
1323 To claim the Law will justify?
1324 Cursed be he who trusts in that lie!

88 Cf. Exod. 23:5: "If thou se thine enemies asse lying vnder his burden, wilt thou cease to helpe him? thou shalt helpe him vp againe with it." More generally pertinent to Sin's rebuke of Rabbi in ll. 1308-9 is God's admonition in Exod. 23:7: "I will not iustifie a wicked man."

RABBI

1325 Then go yourself, for I don't dare.

PAUL

1326 Oh no? Then that will be my care,
1327 Although the time is not yet right.

RABBI

1328 For that I've lost all appetite.

Scene iv

Satan, Sin, Death

SATAN

1329 Nothing's been done: he has to die,
1330 And surer will I be thereby
1331 To keep that sinner than last time.
1332 He'd heard the Law denounce his crime
1333 In searing tones; Death he had felt;
1334 Sin most ferocious blows had dealt:
1335 Still, his footing he could regain.
1336 It's true that some surcease from pain
1337 We offered of uncertain kind,
1338 But now a great fear fills my mind
1339 That if I let him longer live,
1340 When all is done, the slip he'll give
1341 Me, using means sure to succeed.
1342 I must then act with greater speed
1343 And all my power bring to bear
1344 To lead him into deep despair.
1345 O Sin and Death, your aid now lend,
1346 For well I see the Law's true end
1347 Is far from being utterly
1348 To damn him, but instead that he
1349 Shall have occasion to seek Grace:
1350 Hence the Law shows an angry face.
1351 But we must make him recognise

1352 His evil and himself despise
1353 And then by hanging seek to die.

SIN

1354 Vivid depictions we'll supply
1355 To show to him his damned condition.

DEATH

1356 We must without the least remission
1357 Of God's fell wrath increase his fear.

SATAN

1358 All right, then, let's not linger here
1359 But start the torment to him suited.

DEATH

1360 In short, he must be executed.

Scene v

Satan, Sin, Death, Mankind

SATAN

1361 Poor curséd wretch, doomed by your God to dwell,
1362 Eternally damned, in the pit of hell,
1363 For you've committed crimes innumerable.

SIN

1364 Faithless sinner, traitor abominable,
1365 It's time for you to end your dire woe:
1366 Go on, then, give yourself to Death there; so,
1367 You'll soon be freed from your damnable state.

DEATH

1368 Come now to me, O sinner reprobate:
1369 Through me you must pass into rottenness.

MANKIND

1370 Oh, in this state how great is my distress!
 1371 Of God on high, ah, the dread rage I sense,
 1372 Compelling me to confess my offence,
 1373 In which for so long I have been employed.
 1374 Oh, how I feel and know my heart devoid
 1375 Of all goodness, while sin it over-fills:
 1376 I see myself stained with all crimes and evils.
 1377 Indeed, since I was born, from that same hour,
 1378 Of Concupiscence I've perceived the power;
 1379 Never a moment's peace have I procured:
 1380 Who has ever greater torment endured?
 1381 O Death, come here – I don't you now abhor:⁸⁹
 1382 Despatch me, for I can't bear living more!

DEATH

1383 Ready I am to grant what you implore.
 1384 Satan, Sin, help out – there's no time to waste!

MANKIND

1385 O Death, alas, come rapidly, make haste!
 1386 Cursed be my father and my mother too,
 1387 For I received from them the bitter brew
 1388 That brought me to this state so miserable.

SATAN

1389 All right, wicked wretch, sinner detestable,
 1390 That you are damned you may well understand.

MANKIND

1391 And you, Satan, set to that fact your hand
 1392 And teach me how by hanging I may die.

SATAN

1393 Your wish to learn that art I'll satisfy
 1394 With all my heart, and, what's more, charge no fee:
 1395 Just tie around your neck this cord you see,

89 This line is unrhymed in the original; I have preferred to it with the following couplet.

1396 And afterwards up there around that beam;
1397 By no other means must you ever dream
1398 Of ending your infinite suffering.

MANKIND

1399 I'll be damned if I fail in anything.⁹⁰

Scene vi

Paul, Mankind

PAUL

1400 For some time I left the sinner to stew
1401 In his misery, as his preacher, too,
1402 Abandoned him, his helplessness confessed.
1403 I see him now in such a state, hard-pressed
1404 By Satan and by Death, with his own Sin,
1405 That he'll be ready to drink comfort in.
1406 O my Lord God, lend me your help, I pray,
1407 Through your own Spirit, and to us display

90 Orig.: "Je sois damné si d'vn seul point i'y faut". Here the grim irony is unmistakably built into the text. Cf. above, n. 49; also II.vi.757-59 and n. 59.

The mechanism and iconography of despair are commonplace, but the presentation here closely resembles that in *The Conflict of Conscience*:

... here alas, confusion, and hell, doth mée assaile,
And that all grace, from me is reft, I finde it to be true.
My hart is steele, so that no faith, can from the same insue.
I can conceiue no hope at all, of pardon or of grace,
But out alas, Confusion is alway before my face.
And certainly, euen at his time, I doo most playnly sée,
The deuils to be about me rounde, which make great preparation,
And kéepe a stirre, here in this place, which only is for mee.
Neither doe I conceiue, these thinges, by vaine imagination,
But euen as trully, as mine eyes, beholde your shape and fashion.
Wherefore, desired Death dispatch, my body bring to rest,
Though that my soule, in furious flames of fire, be supprest.
(Woodes, V.ii)

Cf. the evocation by Paul below, in his plea to Grace, of Mankind's "soul, mind / And body ... in great torment confused" (Vi.1565-66). Paul's consolatory preaching broadly parallels that of Woodes's Theologus.

1408 Your charity, and that favour exceeding
 1409 By our dear Saviour Christ to us proceeding.
 1410 I'll go to him right now – this is the moment.
 1411 [*to Mankind*] Hey there, my friend, whatever's your
 intent?

1412 Take care not to place your faith in that crew;
 1413 That is hardly the reason I conveyed you
 1414 Just now to the Law, but to make you know
 1415 Your sins, and that honour to God you owe
 1416 Alone as just and perfect glorified.
 1417 Know now, then, that he is well gratified
 1418 To welcome you in his misericord.

Rom. 3

MANKIND

1419 Alas, let me only attach this cord!
 1420 Cursed be my father and my mother too,
 1421 For I received from them the bitter brew
 1422 That brought me to this state so miserable.⁹¹
 1423 Ah, sorely I feel how I am damnable,
 1424 So that to hang myself is all I seek.

PAUL

1425 Poor sinner, that is blasphemy you speak.
 1426 I grant you are, as you yourself can see,
 1427 As badly off as possibly can be,
 1428 But for your ill there's ready remedy.

MANKIND

1429 I feel God's ire fierce and harsh in me.

SATAN

1430 Come, make haste, wicked one, with rage I strain.

91 The repetition in IV.v.1420-22 of ll. 1386-88 initiates an echoing pattern reminiscent, on a smaller scale, of I.vi.400 ff.; see above, n. 43. The opposition between the sinner's sense of unworthiness, which he has internalised and expresses in formulaic fashion, and the insistent message of mercy is thereby accentuated.

PAUL

1431 By no means yield, but your courage maintain,
1432 Since for your ill there's ready remedy.

MANKIND

1433 I feel God's ire fierce and harsh in me.
1434 What succour, then, may I from you expect?
1435 No recourse but by hanging to effect
1436 My death at once and strangle utterly.

PAUL

1437 Wait a little, for you shall presently
1438 Hear words delivered by a voice divine
1439 To soothe you, if your ear you will incline.

Scene vii

Faith, Mankind, Paul

FAITH

1440 All those persons who to the Law resort,
1441 Hoping to receive for their torment comfort,
1442 In one of two consequent ills are caught.
1443 One is despair, because, when they are brought
1444 To see and feel their great iniquity,
1445 The hell also where they deserve to be
1446 For having the most righteous Law transgressed,
1447 They're driven – O piteously distressed! –
1448 To seek their deaths in almost every case.⁹²
1449 Or if, perhaps, their sin they can outface,
1450 Unaware wholly of the Law's great might,
1451 (For often her face is hidden from sight,
1452 Such that the corruption festers unknown

92 Orig. “[c]ent mille fois” (lit. “a hundred thousand times”). In l. 1448 Reynolds-Cornell, ed., emends “se pourchasser” to “de pourchasser”, I think unnecessarily; the meaning is not affected.

1453 In human hearts, with fictions overgrown,
 1454 Since all acts in hypocrisy performed
 1455 Are faithless before God—unjust, deformed,
 1456 Although they may well bear a fair outside),
 1457 Then, when at last, when God's judgement is applied,
 1458 Those hearts that have not been by faith renewed,
 1459 Soon after shall with sorrow be imbued,
 1460 As clearly they look the Law in the face:
 1461 For by the Law God marks the mortal race
 1462 As all within sin's snares confined and caught.
 1463 And by that knowledge man is so distraught,
 1464 It follows that despair moves into place,
 1465 For from the Law he has no hope of grace,
 1466 Since all in all she can't be satisfied.

MANKIND

1467 So far her words, I see, can be applied
 1468 Exactly to my case: for from the start
 1469 My lifeshe has summed up with perfect art –
 1470 Both stages, and how I in them behaved.

FAITH

1471 No one can ever by the Law be saved,
 1472 For the holy Law is spiritual, *Rom. 7*
 1473 While mankind's nature draws him to the carnal:
 1474 Thus there is disproportion between these.

MANKIND

1475 All this with truth most perfectly agrees.
 1476 One point remains for me to learn: the name
 1477 I wish to know of this celestial dame.

FAITH

1478 I am Faith, from high heaven appearing
 1479 To mankind by way of the purest hearing –
 1480 Hearing, I mean, the one God's voice discourse. *Rom. 10⁹³*

93 Cf. Rom. 10:17: "Then faith (is) by hearyng, and hearing by the worde of God." The Geneva gloss

1481 From there I fashioned here below my course,
 1482 The cognizance of God with you to share
 1483 And that supreme benevolence declare
 1484 He shows to those who for their ill atone
 1485 And will return, through Faith, to him alone.
 1486 Thus one who by my strictures will abide,
 1487 Him I promise to help along and guide
 1488 To God, who is replete with grace and goodness,
 1489 So never then will he be barred from access.⁹⁴

PAUL

1490 Oh, what profit Faith proffers as a present!
 1491 Rise to your feet, then, while you have her present:⁹⁵
 1492 For she will lead you by the hand, I'm sure,
 1493 To Grace and peace, and by her means assure
 1494 The pardon of God, granted by his mercy.

MANKIND

1495 Alas, my friend, I have in memory
 1496 Words you often spoke to me such as those,
 1497 Which promised my by Faith a sure repose,
 1498 But the Law has cast me into a flame
 1499 That sears my soul with its tormenting shame.

Scene viii

Grace, Mankind, Paul

GRACE [*at some distance from Mankind*]
 1500 Grace am I, by the high God sent this way
 1501 To the lower world and the soul astray, *John 1*

(“g”) specifies a reference to preaching of the gospel.

94 As doctrine mandates, a similar exposition is offered by Wager’s Faith (ll. 1473-88), who appears in response to the prayer of the penitent Mary Magdalene; Christ Jesus himself in that play takes the place of Paul as mediator of the divine Word and grace.

95 The original similarly rhymes on “presente” in two different senses.

1502 That pardon for its sins I may dispense,
 1503 Seeking from it no other recompense
 1504 But Faith, which to my throne⁹⁶ it needs to bear.

PAUL

1505 Come then, my friend, for Faith your heart prepare.

MANKIND

1506 My heart and sense, alas, show too much stain.

GRACE

1507 Come to me, all you who travail⁹⁷ in pain. *Matt. 11*
 1508 Come to me, and welcome with all my heart;
 1509 Come to me, for heaven's gifts I impart,
 1510 You who can claim no merit, gold or money. *Isa. 55*⁹⁸

PAUL

1511 She comes carrying in her mouth sweet honey
 1512 And milk that from the divine bounty flow;
 1513 By no means may Sin and Death overthrow
 1514 One who Faith entire to her will bear.

MANKIND

1515 Certainly, she is most gentle and fair,
 1516 But I am so oppressed by sinfulness,
 1517 Fallen within the deep ditch of distress,
 1518 That I can't, alas, any longer stand.

GRACE

1519 Grace and most rapid comfort are at hand,
 1520 If you come to me, sinners desolate;

96 “[T]o my throne”: orig. “à mon throsne”, a clear indication of the staging, which becomes notably dynamic at this point.

97 “[T]ravail”: orig. “travaillez”, which likewise combines notions of labour and suffering. Cf. *Matt. 11:28*: “Come vnto me, all ye that are wearie and laden, and I wil ease you”; “Venez à moi vous tous qui estes trauaillez & chargez, et ie vous soulageray.” See also below, ll. 1528-29.

98 Cf. *Isa. 55*: “Ho, euerie one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that haue no siluer, come, bie and eat: come, I saie, bie wine and milke without siluer and without monei.” Notable is the addition of “merit” (orig.: “Vous qui n’auiez or, n’argent, ne merite”), which confirms the Calvinist lesson.

1521 Come, therefore, and your sorrows will abate.
 1522 Abandon Sin, which retains you all captive:
 1523 I'll render you the sons of God adoptive,
 1524 Delivering you from your prison cell,
 1525 Paying your ransom – and paying it well.

MANKIND

1526 Alas! The burden of my sins is heavy,
 1527 And I can see no way of getting free.

GRACE

1528 Come to me, you by hard burdens aggrieved; *Matt. 11*
 1529 By me you shall be nourished and relieved.
 1530 Come here to me all, for my name is Grace,
 1531 And I present the sinner to the face
 1532 Of that good God who shows me everywhere.⁹⁹
 1533 Light is my burden, my yoke sweet to bear.¹⁰⁰
 1534 Then be assured and put aside all fear;
 1535 Accompanied by confidence, draw near:
 1536 I shall receive you with benignity.

PAUL

1537 Come here – let's seek Grace with alacrity!

MANKIND

1538 Alas, I see no point in being told
 1539 Of Grace and Faith – in any case, consoled
 1540 I never can be, if heavenly Grace
 1541 Does not come here and seek me in this place.

99 “[W]ho shows me everywhere”: orig. “qui me presente à tous”.

100 Orig. “Tres-legier est mon fai, & mon ioug doux”. Echoed are Christ’s words in Matt. 11:30: “For my yoke is easie, and my burden light”; “Car mon ioug est aisé, & mon fardeau leger.”

Act V

Argument

Paul, seeing that the ministry of the Word lacks all power without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, prays to God, with Faith, that he may be willing to send his Grace to the poor sinner. God does so at once, banishing Satan, Sin, Death, and all fear, even the harshness and malediction of the Law, which God renders gentle and friendly to the sinner, having pardoned his sins and clothed him in the justice and perfect obedience of Jesus Christ. And although Concupiscence remains with the Christian, he holds her in subjection, mortifying her day by day by the Holy Spirit of God. In doing so, he perseveres in his holy vocation¹⁰¹ with assurance of eternal life.

Scene i

Paul, Faith, Grace, The Spirit of Love

PAUL

1542 O Lady Faith, if you would know my mind,
 1543 Since it exceeds the strength of humankind
 1544 To raise the sinner from a state so low,
 1545 There is great need, Dame Faith, for you to go
 1546 With me to pray at Grace's lofty throne,
 1547 That the poor sinner may by her be shown
 1548 The honour of repairing where he stays:
 1549 For he, myself and others have no ways
 1550 To God, you know, unless he will provide
 1551 His Grace, from his goodness, to be our guide
 1552 And manifest herself to us. The case
 1553 Is also yours, O Faith, who have no place
 1554 Within our hearts and with us cannot dwell *Eph. 2*
 1555 But by his gift,¹⁰² as you know all too well:
 1556 From God must Faith and Grace to us abound.

FAITH

1557 Your reasoning is evident and sound.
 1558 Therefore, I'll keep you willing company:

101 “[V]ocation”: identical in the original and used in the broad religious sense common among Protestants; see *OED*, s.v., def. 1.b: “The action on the part of God (or Christ) of calling persons or mankind to a state of salvation or union with Himself”.

102 “[B]y his gift”: orig. “par son don”, echoing Eph. 2:8: “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and not that of your selves: it (is) the gifte of God”; “Car vous estes sauuez de grace par la foy: & cela non point de vous: c’est le don de Dieu.”

1559 I promise you that aid and succour he
1560 Denies to no one.

PAUL

Then let's go to her.

[making this request to Grace with Faith]

1561 Since the essence eternal will confer
1562 On you, sent to these sombre vales below,
1563 The comforting of sinners in their woe,
1564 Be pleased, O lady of heavenly kind,
1565 To come and see that sinner, whose soul, mind
1566 And body are in great torment confused.
1567 Alas, by enemies he's so abused
1568 They've brought him to the point of Death, or nearly:
1569 The Law with her sceptre strikes him severely;
1570 Sin holds him in strong bonds securely tied;
1571 By Death as well he has been sorely tried;
1572 Satan is never ceasing to assail him:
1573 If ever at this point your love should fail him,
1574 Sweet Grace, alas, quite hopeless is his cause.
1575 Please you, then, lady, whose heart has no flaws,
1576 To his rescue right now, or he's undone!

GRACE

1577 Let us go, alas, and cease not to run!
1578 That I may embrace him, let's quickly go,
1579 And his heart I'll cause straightaway to know
1580 The love the Spirit of his God¹⁰³ supplies.
1581 Spirit of Love, go before to where lies
1582 Fallen the languorous sinner; go lightly
1583 And there perform a preacher's part forthrightly,
1584 Declaring the love that God for him feels.

103 “[T]he Spirit of his God”: orig. “l’Esprit de son Dieu”, hence identified with the third person of the Trinity – and, in l. 1583, with the inspiration of the preacher (orig.: “Va t’en leger luy servir d’vn precheur”).

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE¹⁰⁴

1585 I fly to him, as with wings on my heels,
 1586 Your most holy commandment to fulfil.
 1587 [*to Mankind*] Poor sinner, it was God's eternal will
 1588 As such to fashion and to form mankind;
 1589 He did so, and to tell in brief his mind,
 1590 He placed in him his image and resemblance. *Gen. 1*
 1591 Now that high gift does man's state so advance
 1592 That God thereby declares by proclamation
 1593 Himself to be the Father, man the son:
 1594 He's therefore man's protector and his saviour.
 1595 It is quite true that by sinful behaviour
 1596 Man renders himself of that state unfit;
 1597 Still, God's vast bounty yields its benefit:
 1598 Again he would all sin eradicate,
 1599 By good your evil more than compensate;
 1600 And so he did, granting his only Son *John 3*
 1601 To ungrateful man, so making donation
 1602 Of his deity and, in verity,
 1603 For his part taking on humanity:
 1604 Thus God with human nature joined and fused. *John 1*
 1605 Now that Son was for your sake so abused *Rom. 8*
 1606 His woes for all sins made full satisfaction.
 1607 Acknowledge, then, God's perfect love in action,
 1608 Which shows to you a gentle father's care.
 1609 You have his Grace, as well, just over there,
 1610 Who comes with still more solace to surround you.

GRACE [*to Mankind*]

1611 My dear child, let me put my arms around you,
 1612 Declaring that by God you've been received.
 1613 For even though in sin you were conceived,
 1614 God is so good that he sends you his Grace.
 1615 Now, therefore, raise up towards him your face
 1616 In order that your sins may have his pardon,

104 The character Love, though far less dynamically presented, is given a roughly similar expository role at the conclusion of Wager's play (ll. 2093-2108, 2117-34), seconding the speech of Iustification (ll. 2057-88) by drawing the moral that "by Faith onely Marie was iustified" (l. 2131).

1617 For God gives you the gift of his own Son.
 1618 Paul, and you, Faith, at once my son unbind.
 1619 Spirit of Love, let it not slip your mind
 1620 Hence the trembling Spirit of Fear to banish, *John 1:4*
 1621 And I in him shall thoroughly extinguish
 1622 The flame of Lady Law with all her rigour;
 1623 Away I shall chase Satan with great vigour –
 1624 Sin, too, and Death, so horrible to see:
 1625 Thus from menacing fear he¹⁰⁵ shall be free.

PAUL [*to Mankind*]

1626 Satan by Sin's means had held you bound fast
 1627 Within his toils, from which you're freed at last
 1628 By virtuous force¹⁰⁶ of that Grace divine.

FAITH

1629 By Faith you are now, and by Grace benign,
 1630 Poor sinner, given back your liberty – *1 Cor. 3¹⁰⁷*
 1631 That's of spirit – serving in verity
 1632 God always with pure heart, always sincere,
 1633 And fearing him, but with a loving fear. *Rom. 8¹⁰⁸*

Scene ii¹⁰⁹

The Spirit of Love, The Spirit of Fear, Grace, The Law, Mankind as Christian¹¹⁰

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

1634 Get out of here, Spirit fearful and pale:

105 Reynolds-Cornell, ed., reads “seras” (i.e., “you will be”), but the original (“sera”) clearly mandates “he”, and emendation seems unnecessary.

106 “[V]irtuous force”: orig. “vertu”, which unites moral value with strength.

107 The biblical chapter is essentially an admonition against liberty in carnal matters.

108 Cf. esp. Rom. 8:15: “For ye haue not receiued the Spirit of bondage to feare againe: but ye haue receiued the Spirit of adopcion, whereby we crye Abba, Father.”

109 The arrangement of verses throughout this scene (quatrains rhyming abba) seems designed to foster the ambiance of reconciliation and divine love.

110 Orig.: “L’Homme Chrestien”.

1635 Long have you kept Mankind in servitude;
 1636 He has endured too great a multitude
 1637 Of sufferings within your dismal jail.

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

1638 O Lady Law, numbed with chill I depart;
 1639 To the Spirit of Love I cede the place:
 1640 Wherever he is, I can't show my face,
 1641 For he is all mercy and gentle heart.

GRACE

1642 O Lady Law, let's put aside all threats;
 1643 The efforts you have made so far suffice:
 1644 This sinner now acutely feels his vice;
 1645 He's now disposed to Grace by his regrets. *Gal. 3*

THE LAW

1646 As you know well,¹¹¹ my sole authority
 1647 Depends on God the most high and immortal;
 1648 Likewise you know that every single mortal
 1649 Is placed beneath me by divine decree.
 1650 You know, as well, divinity's dictate
 1651 That to every sinner who me offends
 1652 Justly (as is well known) his curse he sends, *Deut. 2:7*
 1653 Whereby, through me, Death shall him dominate.
 1654 Lastly, you know what Jesus Christ describes: *Matt. 5*
 1655 Earth and heaven will sooner have a pause,
 1656 Their operations cease, before one clause
 1657 Shall not be kept that Holy Writ prescribes.¹¹²

GRACE

1658 Certain I am, too, that from God you come

111 The repeated insistence that these things are known is in the original.

112 Orig.: "... terre & ciel plustost tresbucheront, / Et de leurs faitz & œuures cesseront, / Qu'vn tiltre seul passe du saint Escrit." Cf. Matt. 5:18: "For truely I say vnto you, Til heauen, and earth perish, one iote, or one title of the Law shal not scape, til all things be fulfilled"; "Car en verité ie vous di, que iusqu'à ce que le ciel sera passé, & la terre, vn iota, ou vn seul point de la Loy ne passera, que toutes choses ne soyent faites."

1659 No less than I, but further to afflict
 1660 With rigour, and with language harsh and strict,
 1661 The soul who's come to me is not your custom.
 1662 Certain it is that thus, as you've submitted,
 1663 Great power you possess of castigation,
 1664 Showing to everyone their condemnation
 1665 (If they lack Faith) for all their faults committed.
 1666 It's true, too, that the functions will be spent
 1667 Of heaven and earth, which will disappear,
 1668 And that not in the slightest can one veer
 1669 From Sacred Writ – that's all too evident.
 1670 But you're aware that perfect satisfaction
 1671 For all Scripture states – including you, Law –
 1672 Was made by Christ, God and man without flaw,
 1673 So that no wrong to you by this is done.
 1674 And yet, although by Christ alone fulfilled,
 1675 You're so, for Christians, in entirety;
 1676 On those, then, you have no authority
 1677 Who take the way, truth, life that Christ has willed.
 1678 Now, therefore, God has made himself propitious
 1679 To each sinner by Faith to Christ united,
 1680 So if by Law he stands to be indicted,
 1681 By Grace and Faith he is no longer vicious.
 1682 Then, all the gifts of Jesus, God's own son,
 1683 Imputed are to those who turn away
 1684 From sinning and, in making Faith their stay,
 1685 Return to his care: they won't be undone.

THE LAW

1686 Inform me then, one of you, if you please,
 1687 In what I serve man in a gracious state,
 1688 And how, given that my threats I abate,
 1689 My perfect will with such mildness agrees.¹¹³

113 Orig: “Par toy tiendray tout mon vouloir parfait” (“By you I shall maintain all my perfect will”). This is grammatically possible but obscure as a completion of the question, especially because the referent of “toy” (singular “you”) is unclear. It seems not unlikely that the compositor substituted “toy” for “quoi” (perhaps looking ahead to the “t” of “tiendray”), and I translate accordingly.

PAUL

1690 To man you are of great utility,
 1691 And precious benefit on us bestow,
 1692 Reminding us, as all too well you know,
 1693 How far from God is man's fragility.
 1694 Further, such is our body's composition
 1695 It seeks for every pleasure to be free
 1696 Of check and bridle; hence, the flesh must be
 1697 Constrained, O Law, by your severe condition.
 1698 Yet to vex the spirit you have the power,
 1699 When it is set by Grace at liberty:¹¹⁴
 1700 It follows God by Faith, in verity,
 1701 Awaiting of freedom from flesh the hour.

THE LAW

1702 Therefore I am, and shall exist, forever,
 1703 Enduring in my force and virtue always,
 1704 But once his great guilt the sinner dismays,
 1705 Different in him shall be my endeavour.
 1706 For suddenly by me he shall be given
 1707 Means his release from woe in Christ to seek:
 1708 Christ showed me full obedience, and meek,
 1709 When by his sacrifice sins were forgiven.
 1710 Then, when man is received by God in Grace,
 1711 Still me, the Law, he cannot do without,
 1712 For my dictates will leave him in no doubt
 1713 That he is a sinner of fragile race.
 1714 What's more, while he, through Faith, is in
 enjoyment
 1715 Of Christ's own absolute justification,
 1716 No vice of his can gain my reprobation,
 1717 For his spirit gives to the Law consent.
 1718 Now therefore, Christian, have no longer fear
 1719 Of me: with Jesus Christ by Faith instilled
 1720 Within your heart, Scripture he has fulfilled

114 I retain the original punctuation here; by omitting the colon, Reynolds-Cornell, ed., confuses the syntax.

1721 In full for you, who have a Faith sincere.

MANKIND

1722 O Lady Law, no pain your voice procures me
 1723 Now, my spirit at peace, and most benign
 1724 You seem; but that is since, by Grace divine,
 1725 Christ was given me, who by Faith assures me.
 1726 Now, then, myself I willingly accord
 1727 To you,¹¹⁵ O Law, and promise to fulfil,
 1728 As best I can, whatever is God's will,
 1729 Having the aid of his misericord.

Scene iii

Grace, Faith, Satan, Sin, Death

GRACE

1730 Oh, you're here, cursed one! Of audacity
 1731 To my face you show huge capacity!
 1732 Here, then – I've got bonds.

FAITH

And they're strong ones, too!

GRACE

1733 Now let's put to the test what they can do:
 1734 They shall be bound by virtue celestial.
 1735 [*to Satan*] Evil spirit, to men pestilential,
 1736 Come over here to me – you must be tied!

SATAN

1737 Oh, woe is me! How I am mortified!

115 “[M]yself I willingly accord / To you”; orig.: “de bon cœur ie m'accorde / A vous.” Reynolds-Cornell, ed. emends to “Avec vous”, which arguably alters the meaning (from “attune myself to” to “come to an understanding with”), even if the phrasing is more idiomatic in modern French.

GRACE

1738 Here, here and now, cursed one! You must be tied.

SATAN

1739 Oh, woe is me! How I am mortified!
1740 O Beelzebub, come help, for I am raging!

GRACE [*seizing Sin and Death*]

1741 Come also, Sin and Death, you cursed offspring
1742 Of the old serpent, author of all wrong.

SIN

1743 O Death, alas, how this restraint is strong!

DEATH

1744 Death, death, and a thousand devils of hell!
1745 These are no fables, I see all too well.¹¹⁶

GRACE

1746 Now hear from me, vile crew of vicious vermin,
1747 What it has pleased divine will to determine:
1748 This man is not to be by you defiled,
1749 For God accounts him as his own dear child.

Scene iv

Concupiscence, Satan, Grace

CONCUPISCENCE [*to Satan*]

1750 So all our efforts were for naught?

SATAN

1751 No, not at all, for he'll be caught,

116 The line ironically harkens back to Concupiscence's deception and blindfolding of Mankind; cf. I.iii.276 and 284; I.v.360.

1752 I have good hope.¹¹⁷

CONCUPISCENCE

For my part, never,
1753 I'm sure, myself from him I'll sever.

GRACE

1754 True, you won't, but weaker he'll find you:
1755 That is why I must also bind you,
1756 To show you you'll no longer wield
1757 Such potent sway, but needs must yield,
1758 By the Holy Spirit abated,¹¹⁸
1759 Until that joyous day awaited
1760 When he from you is liberated
1761 Thoroughly.

CONCUPISCENCE

Still, I'll be instated
1762 In him.

GRACE

But with the difference
1763 I've said: you'll have no influence.

Scene v

Grace, Mankind as Christian

GRACE

1764 Now, then, my son, of fear dispel all trace:
1765 Present yourself before God's holy face
1766 By Jesus Christ in Faith with all perfection.
1767 Pray boldly to God in every place,

117 Orig.: "Nenny, nenny: car ie m'attens / Encor' l'auoir." The devil may rage in frustration but, in contrast to Mankind, he never gives up hope.

118 Ll. 58-61 likewise rhyme on the same sound in the original.

1768 Crying in Faith, "Father, Father of Grace",
1769 With both your mouth and heart in pure affection.

MANKIND [*praying to God*]

1770 O Father of Grace, for eternity,
1771 I dare raise up my eyes, my Lord, to thee,
1772 Dust though I am, and of a sinful race.
1773 Yet thanks to thee such benefit I've won
1774 By Jesus Christ, I count as thine own son:
1775 In his name I appear before thy face.
1776 Doubtless I merit not such dignity,
1777 Had it not pleased thy great benignity
1778 To lead me from the pit of hell to Grace;
1779 Be pleased, then, gentle Father, to impart
1780 Thy ever-present Spirit to my heart,
1781 And so in me give Faith a firmer place.
1782 Grant me of thy sweet favour delectation,
1783 O Jesus Christ, who art my sole salvation,
1784 And by such savour from all others sway me:
1785 May my spirit in thee alone repose;
1786 Instruct me how thy sacred Word to gloze;
1787 And in the end away with thee convey me.

GRACE

1788 To you, dear son, God with frank heart affords
1789 His Grace and peace, and pardon sure accords
1790 For all your sins, accounting you his son;
1791 And what is more, receive, to satisfy
1792 Your ills entirely, and purify,
1793 The blessed Crucifix and grievous passion,
1794 Whereby you are in your God's sight reputed
1795 Just and perfect, because he has imputed
1796 To Jesus Christ your vice and sinfulness.
1797 In him you enjoy your justification,
1798 Thanks to his gift to you, in pure donation,
1799 Of all his perfect justice and his goodness.

FAITH

1800 Now, having had from God pardon and grace,

1801 You also must present a kindly face
 1802 To your fellow-man, and forgive offence:
 1803 You must in such wise live that peace you seek
 1804 With all – the strong and those by faults made weak,¹¹⁹
 1805 To all exemplifying innocence.
 1806 Then, you have only to fulfil the rest:
 1807 Render your Faith to others manifest,
 1808 All virtue practising in works and action;
 1809 Engage yourself quite to think, say and do
 1810 Those things you know your Lord God wants you to,
 1811 And wicked words and deeds at all times shun.
 1812 If, at some moments, of us you lose sight,
 1813 You must still to the certainty hold tight
 1814 That we remain with you, invisible.
 1815 Have no regard to what is mere appearance;
 1816 Rather, be guided by a strict adherence
 1817 To Holy Writ, not to things visible.
 1818 Now may the Lord God by his Grace uphold you
 1819 In his favour, and, by Christ's aid, enfold you
 1820 In Faith and peace; may conscience never cease
 1821 To lend you strength in your adversities,
 1822 And prompt relief in your necessities,
 1823 Causing your knowledge of it to increase.

MANKIND

1824 To God with all my heart myself I give,
 1825 Beseeching the Lord that his Grace may live
 1826 Always in me, and I within it dwell.
 1827 I pray, too, he may constantly instruct me
 1828 By his Spirit, and finally conduct me,
 1829 By way of Jesus Christ, to joy eternal.

[Exeunt Grace, Faith, The Law, and The Spirit of Love.]

119 Orig.: “fortz ou imparfaitz”; the translation attempts to capture both the basic opposition and the moral implication.

Scene vi

Paul, Mankind, Concupiscence

PAUL

1830 Here, now, my friend – you have been wholly freed
1831 Of enemies.

MANKIND

That would be true indeed
1832 If I did not have Concupiscence with me.

CONCUPISCENCE

1833 I have dwelt in you since your infancy,
1834 For in your very flesh I have my share.

PAUL

1835 It's true that burden is heavy to bear.
1836 But Christ wrought so that judgement is forborne
1837 For it, as long as one has been reborn:
1838 For the Christian who has knowledge and sense
1839 Of Jesus Christ confines his Concupiscence
1840 By his spirit, and his flesh crucifies
1841 Along with Christ, who in him mortifies
1842 The false desires of that flesh rebelling:
1843 He must endure this cruel combat, quelling
1844 The flesh's instigations with the Spirit.
1845 Then, regulate yourself by Holy Writ,
1846 Renouncing your affection's grave temptation;
1847 By following this course, from condemnation,
1848 Through Jesus Christ, the Lord, you shall be freed.

MANKIND

1849 I grasp that what you say is true indeed.¹²⁰

120 Ll. 1848-49 likewise echo ll. 1830-31 in the original by repeating the rhyming words (“déliuré”/“vray”), thereby showing that Paul’s efficacious preaching has overcome the reservation Mankind expressed at the opening of the scene.

PAUL

1850 These, your phylacteries, must still be broken.

MANKIND

1851 I wore them visibly¹²¹ to be a token
1852 Of the commandments, but broken they shall be.

PAUL

1853 We must in public places fittingly
1854 Be clad to suit the customs of our age
1855 And with the exercise of judgement sage.
1856 Having the Law upon our hearts impressed,
1857 We must as well see that it is expressed
1858 In works and deeds by living Faith induced,
1859 By which the Law within us is produced.

MANKIND

1860 Now I see well that the kingdom divine
1861 Lies not in garments, head-gear,¹²² outward sign,
1862 But is by Faith within the heart renewed,
1863 And by its fruits then outwardly construed.

Scene vii

MANKIND [*as a Christian*]¹²³

1864 O God, my lord, alas, what alteration
1865 Do I feel? I see, without hesitation,
1866 Your pity and benevolence profuse.
1867 Alas, my neck already in the noose,

121 Orig. “par dessus”, which might mean “on top” and thus indicate especially that worn on the forehead, but the mention is plural and inclusive, suggesting the more general sense of “over [everything else]”, i.e., so as to be seen; I translate accordingly.

122 The original specifies two forms: “chapperon” and “heume”. I generalise and make the moral explicit.

123 The designation no doubt signals a change in appearance, in keeping with the end of the previous scene, and prepares for the pointed contrast with the pharisaic of III.viii.1048-62.

1868 I found myself already¹²⁴ at death's door;
 1869 My grievous sins oppressed me more and more,
 1870 Until I heard, "you're lost, there is no hope".
 1871 Satan cried out that, strangled with the rope,
 1872 I'd go to hell: oh, to what dire anguish,
 1873 In pains, travails, torments and cares to languish,
 1874 That cunning evil race was leading me.
 1875 But now, thanks to thy great benignity,
 1876 I see no danger need I henceforth fear;
 1877 Wherefore, my God, while life I harbour here
 1878 I'll always have in mind thy benefits:
 1879 It is thy Grace divine, Lord, that acquits
 1880 Me now, as I feel sure, of every flaw.
 1881 I hear no more the harsh threats of the Law,
 1882 No more experience the sinner's fright,
 1883 No more of thee in fury have the sight.
 1884 Thus I don't fear a Death that will not cease;
 1885 Rather, I feel within myself such peace
 1886 I must confess that I have been transported
 1887 From death to life, by thee so comforted.
 1888 Alas, for thy great gifts what can be rendered
 1889 By me? Just to tell, and cause to be heard
 1890 By all alive, thy bounties without peer:
 1891 By that means of thy wonders all shall hear,
 1892 So amply thy most precious name I'll praise,
 1893 Since more I cannot do, for all my days.

Scene viii

Satan, Sin, Death, Concupiscence, Mankind

SATAN

1894 For all your days,¹²⁵ I will assail you:

124 The original is similarly repetitive ("desia").

125 The mocking echo of the previous line is present in the original.

1895 My company will never fail you.

SIN

1896 Oh, how my tender touch will draw you!

DEATH

1897 And often, too, my teeth will gnaw you.

MANKIND

1898 I fear no more these threats of yours.

CONCUPISCENCE

1899 Grace your freedom from fear assures.¹²⁶

1900 But with delights to take your ease,

1901 Come rest yourself upon my knees.

MANKIND

1902 Suppose no longer, Concupiscence,

1903 You can lead me. I know and sense¹²⁷

1904 My God and Jesus Christ with me;

1905 Living by the Spirit's decree,

1906 Your pleasure's no affair of mine:

1907 Better die than vex the divine.

SATAN

1908 And yet another time we'll get you.

SIN

1909 Out of my sight I'll never let you.

DEATH

1910 I simply can't leave you alone.

CONCUPISCENCE

1911 You know what promptness God has shown,

126 Concupiscence argues subtly, attempting to turn his sense of grace into an argument that he need not fear giving way to pleasure – a reminiscence of his earlier hypocrisy.

127 I seek to give its full meaning to the original's "j'ay cognoissance".

1912 My friend, to pardon small offences.
 1913 So why not dance and please our senses,
 1914 As worldlings all are wont to do?¹²⁸
 1915 We're all human – is this not true?
 1916 Then let's do as both poor and rich.

MANKIND

1917 You get away from me, old witch!¹²⁹

CONCUPISCENCE

1918 Now here a great change meets my eyes,
 1919 For he will not in any wise
 1920 Live as my desire dictates:
 1921 All my will he repudiates,
 1922 So that I'm now his chamber-maid.
 1923 Alas, how have I dropped in grade,
 1924 Becoming such when I was mistress!
 1925 But he alone . . . – then, what distress?
 1926 For if one lord holds me in sway,
 1927 A hundred others me obey!¹³⁰

Scene ix

Paul, Mankind

PAUL

1928 You must with still more wariness regard
 1929 Henceforth those evil foes that so entice.

128 Cf. again *Erreur* in *Le Gouvert*, who urges *Humanité* to renounce *Penitence* and accept *Luxure's* proposal to “mener joyeuse vie, / Dancer, galler, passer le temps! [lead a joyous life, dance, amuse ourselves, make the most of the time]” (ll. 1490-91), on the grounds that “Jesuchrist / En fin tout te pardonnera [Jesus Christ in the end will forgive you everything]” (ll. 1506-7).

129 Mankind may conceivably exit here, but this would blur the point about to be made by *Concupiscence* that she remains with him as his servant; the dramaturgy is sufficiently supple for her to slip into soliloquy in his presence.

130 A rare satirical moment, prepared for by ll. 1914-16, when the universal inclusiveness of *Mankind* opens into a panorama of down-to-earth human possibilities. See Introduction, pp. 18-21.

1930 But you have God to serve as your safe-guard,
 1931 A shield, and Father's care, of countless price.
 1932 Yet do take care to love not Sin and vice
 1933 Or give your wanton flesh its liberty:¹³¹
 1934 Ensure you do not leave too loosely chained
 1935 Its longings; duly fearing, you must serve
 1936 Your God, lest soul and flesh be further stained
 1937 With Sin, or else from honest Faith you swerve.

MANKIND [*praying to God*]¹³²

1938 O Lord God, through Christ kind Father to me,
 1939 Alas, my great infirmity is plain,
 1940 Which is why I pray thee this grace to do me:
 1941 In Faith and charity me to maintain.
 1942 Here now are Satan, who first taught to feign,
 1943 Cruel Sin, and Death – a hideous sight –
 1944 And Concupiscence, too, bears me such spite
 1945 That I would have, without thy Grace, no choice
 1946 But to be vanquished (oh, dangerous fight!¹³³):
 1947 Be pleased, therefore, to hear, through Christ, my
 voice!

[*Exeunt Satan, Sin and Death.*]¹³⁴

131 In this *dizain*, the line rhymes, unusually, only with the first (l. 1938) of the following one, the prayer that completes and balances Paul's counsel, and which follows the rhyme scheme used, notably, by Clément Marot and Maurice Scève: ababbccdd.

132 Mankind's prayer here pointedly recalls his self-introduction (I.iii.221-46) with its sense of vulnerability and plea for deliverance from his enemies, which now is visibly accorded.

133 "[D]angerous fight": orig. "guerre dangereuse"; Reynolds-Cornell, ed., reads "malheureuse [unhappy]" for "dangereuse". There is no apparent reason for this emendation, which, on the contrary, weakens the sense.

134 While Mankind's prayer produces the disappearance of Satan, Sin and Death, Concupiscence probably remains onstage in the background, in keeping with Paul's next speech.

Scene x
Paul, Mankind

PAUL

1948 Brother and friend, while here below we stay
1949 In bodies that are subject to decay,
1950 We shall be tempted, tormented as well:
1951 Body with spirit must by nature dwell.
1952 But our good lies in the knowledge and sense
1953 Of Jesus Christ, sole means of our salvation,
1954 Who, in bestowing peace upon our conscience,
1955 Sends of favour divine the revelation.
1956 Without this any other good is vain,
1957 Whatever show of worth it may present;
1958 From evil, too, no harm can he sustain
1959 Who of that good possesses true enjoyment.
1960 As for the rest, let us live confident,
1961 Waiting for our redemption to be wrought
1962 On Christ's own day, when, certain of his judgement,
1963 We have all blessings to perfection brought.

MANKIND

1964 I well understand, and feel the effect,
1965 For the experience has been my own
1966 That here we never shall have peace that's perfect,
1967 Except by means of Faith and hope alone.
1968 Now by that hope such influence is shown
1969 It keeps the heart assured, in peace profound,
1970 And though its benefits are not made known
1971 To human sight, the fact should not astound:
1972 Its solid basis is God's sacred Word,
1973 Of solemn weight, without equivocation,
1974 Which in the midst of woes, when it is heard,
1975 Brings to the spirit joy and consolation.

PAUL

1976 Now may the Lord maintain you in his Grace,
1977 And grant that of his Son your eyes may greet
1978 In Paradise at last the holy face.

MANKIND

1979 Amen.

PAUL

God keep you till again we meet.

MANKIND

1980 God keep you, Paul, I say, and I return
1981 Great thanks for your attention shown to me,
1982 As well as your compassionate concern,
1983 Which I shall always hold in memory.

PAUL [*as he leaves*]

1984 Do not forget often to offer prayer
1985 Through Christ to God, no matter where or when.

MANKIND

1986 I shall.

PAUL

1987 To pray is the routine affair
Of Christians. Go with God.

MANKIND

And you too, then.

Conclusion

1 We may thus conclude from this demonstration
 2 That we benefit from justification
 3 For all our sins by means of Faith and Grace.
 4 It is quite true, as right here in this place
 5 You have been shown, that necessarily
 6 The Law, too, serves us in this vitally,
 7 Declaring to Mankind his sinful state.
 8 Now he, feeling this, can hope for no fate
 9 From her but sentencing to pains eternal.
 10 Then he is ready to receive the gospel
 11 Of Grace and peace the Evangel imparts:
 12 It is by this that God to fragile hearts
 13 Gives Faith, and the remission evident
 14 Of all their sins, because the punishment
 15 Entirely was by Jesus Christ assumed.
 16 With love of God the soul is then consumed,
 17 And led by Faith to holy rest and peace.
 18 Next, we maintain that Faith will never cease
 19 To bear as fruit such works as God will bless,
 20 And make us hate all acts of wickedness.
 21 Unless Faith to that fruitfulness has led
 22 Of good deeds done which please God, it is dead.¹³⁵
 23 Also, however, since what we effect
 24 In this poor state will always be imperfect,
 25 We must not place in that our confidence,
 26 But rather solidly assure our conscience
 27 In Jesus Christ, who in his ample justice
 28 Has taken on himself all our injustice,¹³⁶
 29 Thus peace in Faith and sure repose us sending.
 30 Now it is time, this present discourse ending,
 31 To pray to God that, by his holy Grace,
 32 He may cause all of us to see his face

135 “[I]t is dead”: the original reads “elle morte” and evidently lacks the verb “est”, which is supplied in Reynolds-Cornell, ed.

136 The contrasting terms (“justice”/“injustice”) are those of the original.

33

In heaven, seat of bliss, where he does dwell

34

On high. Amen. And may God keep you well.

End

