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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
[En ligne], éd. par R. Hillman, 2017, mis en ligne le 15-11-2017,

URL : http://umr6576.cesr.univ-tours.fr/publications/tragicomedy

La collection

TRADUCTIONS INTROUVABLES

est publiée par le Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance,
(Université François-Rabelais de Tours, CNRS/UMR 7323)
dirigé par Benoist Pierre

Responsable scientifique
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ISSN
1760-4745

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Introduction

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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 *Tragiqve comedie francoise de l'homme iustifié 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 Navarre[1] – 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

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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 Hüsken (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], *Tragœdia 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'vne de l'autre, sont au vif representées, 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,

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10 Nathaniel Woodes, *An excellent new commedie intitutled, 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], I.i); 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); forthcoming.

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 sacrifiant* 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, Leaue, La terre, etc*., Receuil 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'Abondance [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

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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 XVe 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 corruption[26] – 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 asseuré / 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 iustifié 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 Catalogue[30]), 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 iustifié 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'auenture 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*

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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 sacrifiant* (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 sacrifiant* de Théodore de Bèze et sa traduction anglaise par Arthur Golding", *Dieu et les dieux dans le théâtre de la Renaissance. Actes du XLVe 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 Univesitaires de Rennes, 2008), pp. 161-77.

> *esté touché: monstrant euidemment que c'est iustification, foy, loy, bonnes œuures, & quel est le vray vsage 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:

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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 proprieté & 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 XVIe 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 Gouvert*: "*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, reverenced 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 Kirchmeyer's *Mercator* farts noisily), no Catholic disguising (as in Bale's frequent practice[43] or *Abraham sacrifiant*, where Satan appears as a monk).

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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'Istoire . . . et Moraliser ung Petit': Aspects of Allegory in the Mystères", *Les Mystères: Studies in Genre, Text and Theatricality*, ed. Peter Happé and Wim Hüsken, 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*:

> *Sodomismus*. I will corrupt Gods Image
> With most unlawfull usage,
> And brynge hym into dottage,
> Of all concupyscience.
> *Idolatria*. Within the flesh thu 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 gouuerner*
> *Ce beau Saint, & tousiours mener*
> *Ces desirs, à cercher 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-

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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 suiuant, / 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 beginnings[46] – 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

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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 *Elckerlijk*, 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-ie pas assez prudent & sage? / Plus ie le suis qu'vn 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-ie tenu promesse, / T'ayant suiuy dés 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*
> *Decentement, en ensuivant l'vsage*
> *De nostre temps, auec 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

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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" (Woodes, I.i).

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 Kirchmeyer'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 Knowlege, 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.
>
> [*Ie 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 tresbien la conscience*]" (Conclusion, 26) in Christ.

It is, therefore, precisely on the common ground of concience/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 [*espreuuent en leurs consciences d'où vient nostre iustification & salut eternel*]" ("To the Reader", p. 5; sig. a2r). 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.