

From: *The Cambridge Companion to Malebranche*, ed. S. Nadler (CUP, 2000), 165-89.

## MALEBRANCHE'S THEODICY

Donald Rutherford

The topic of theodicy looms large in Malebranche's thought. His distinctive views on the subject form the basis of one of his most famous books, the Treatise on Nature and Grace (1680), and occupy a prominent place in important later works such as the Dialogues on Metaphysics and Religion (1688). Embracing issues of the relation of the divine will to creation and our knowledge of that will, Malebranche's theodicy is inextricably linked to his signature doctrines of occasionalism and vision in God. Together they form a single comprehensive theory that attempts to explicate the existence and nature of the world, and the special place of human beings within it, in relation to God as creator.<sup>1</sup>

What has come to be called the problem of theodicy signifies a cluster of issues, some of which any theological explanation of the world's existence must confront, others of which are specifically associated with the tenets of Christian theology. Of the first sort are basic questions about the world's imperfection and what this implies about God's apparent lack of concern for the welfare of human beings. If God is all powerful, all wise, and all good, why does he permit natural circumstances (floods, earthquakes, drought) that are unworthy of his perfection and that bring harm to human beings, particularly the innocent who have done nothing to earn God's punishment? Why does God allow wicked people to exercise their wickedness in harming the innocent, and then, apparently, fail to punish the wicked, who profit from their evil deeds? Questions such as these strike at the fundamental justice of God's action: How could God allow

such things to happen, unless he is in some way limited by less than supreme goodness, knowledge, or power?

Malebranche's answers to these questions lead directly to the central thesis of his theodicy: the doctrine of the simplicity and generality of God's will. His preoccupation with the theodicy problem, however, cannot be disentangled from a second set of issues deriving specifically from Christian theology, particularly God's distribution of the grace necessary for salvation. It is an established part of Christian doctrine that no human being merits salvation; thus those who are saved owe their salvation to God's mercy alone, which is communicated through his grace. How God distributes this grace was one of the most bitterly contested topics of seventeenth-century theology. Scripture teaches both that God wills to save all human beings and that not all human beings are saved (TNG I.39; OC 5:47; R 127).<sup>2</sup> The Jansenist cause, defended by Blaise Pascal and Antoine Arnauld, had maintained strenuously that any grace received from God must be efficacious and that God limits this grace to his "elect." Given this position, Jansenists were forced to deny the most straightforward reading of the claim that God wills to save all human beings. Citing Augustine as their authority, they allowed that God might will to save all types of human beings but not every human being; for granting that not every human being is saved, this would undermine the efficaciousness of God's will. Malebranche, by contrast, is committed to the view that, in accordance with Scripture, God wills to save all; consequently, he is faced with the task of explaining why all human beings are not saved and why this result does not jeopardize God's perfection.<sup>3</sup>

The boldness and originality of Malebranche's theodicy is contained in his conception of a single doctrine capable of addressing both dimensions of the theodicy problem. In both cases, the justice of God's action can be understood in terms of the simplicity and generality of his will,

a will that is guided by God's infinite wisdom. It is this wisdom, above all, that Malebranche is concerned to defend as the basis of our knowledge and love of God. As he writes in the anonymous letter that prefaces the Treatise on Nature and Grace, "The author... avows that his main plan is to make God lovable to men, and to justify the wisdom of his conduct in the minds of certain philosophers who push metaphysics too far, and who, in order to have a powerful and sovereign God, make him unjust, cruel, and bizarre." (OC 5:3-4; R 107). In his writings on theodicy, Malebranche is principally concerned to reject the claims of those who subordinate God's wisdom to his power and make his will alone the final justification for his actions. The theory Malebranche offers is a remarkable attempt to account for the revelation of Christianity within a theological framework that stresses the generality of God's will, from which follows "a constant and lawful order, according to which he has foreseen, through the infinite extent of his wisdom, that a work as admirable as his is, ought to come into existence" (TNG I.37; OC 5:46; R 127).

In what follows, I examine Malebranche's theodicy in three stages: first, God's original motivation for creation (sec. I); then, the doctrine of God's general will as the governing principle of the order of nature (sec. II) and the order of grace (sec. III).

## **I. Creation**

Considered theologically, the world's existence suggests two basic questions. Why should God choose to create this world rather than any other world he might have created? And, more fundamentally, why should God, an infinitely perfect being, create at all? Malebranche, to his credit, takes this second question very seriously. Beginning from an understanding of God as an infinitely perfect being, sufficient unto himself, there is no necessity that God should create

anything.<sup>4</sup> For Malebranche, this is sufficient reason to reject the ancient view, revived in his time by Spinoza, that the world is a necessary emanation of God. “God suffices fully to himself-for the infinitely perfect Being can be conceived alone, and without any necessary relation to a single one of his creatures” (TNG II.51; OC 5:110; R 162). Given his self-sufficiency, God’s choice to create is entirely free; creation is in no way required for God to be God. Malebranche argues in a similar way against the eternity of the world: “Eternity is the mark of independence; thus it was necessary that the world begin” (TNG I.4; OC 5:18-19; R 113). Because God has produced the world in time, we see that “creatures are not at all necessary emanations from the divinity, and that they are essentially dependent on a free will of the Creator” (TNG II.52; OC 5:110; R 162). At the same time, once produced, such created substances never perish absolutely, for the destruction of what has been created would be “a mark of inconstancy in him who has produced them” (TNG I.4; OC 5:18-19; R 113).

Acknowledging that God is no way obliged to create, how are we to understand the fact that he nonetheless chooses to do so? What would motivate God to act in this way?

Malebranche stresses that this action cannot be understood in terms of God’s need for created beings, or even the love his infinite goodness might inspire for such creatures. As Theodore argues in the Discourse, as an infinitely perfect being, God can be motivated by nothing but himself:

It seems evident to me that... his will is but the love he has for himself and for his divine perfections; that the movement of his love cannot, as with us, come to him from without, nor consequently lead him outside himself; that being uniquely the principle of his action, he must be its end; in short, that in God all love other than self-love would be disordered or contrary to the immutable order which he

contains and which is the inviolable law of the divine volitions (Dialogues IX.3; OC 12:200-1; JS 151).

Whatever God creates, therefore, is only for himself: “God cannot will except through his will, and his will is simply the love he bears for himself. The reason, the motive, the end of his decrees can be found only in him” (ibid.).

Malebranche interprets this motive as God’s glory: “As God esteems and loves himself invincibly he find his glory and takes gratification in a work which in some way expresses his excellent qualities” (Dialogues IX.4; OC 12:203; JS 153). Creation is thus an expression of divine self-love in which God is pleased by the perfection of his own will. For God to enjoy this glory, he does not need to be admired by his creatures: “it is based simply on the esteem and love he has for his own qualities” (ibid.). Furthermore, while his glory supplies a sufficient reason for God to create, it does not “invincibly determine him to will to act” (Dialogues IX.4; OC 12:203; JS 154). Whether God chooses to create remains an entirely free decision. At most, therefore, we can say that if God wills to act, he acts only for his own glory, “since he can only act according to what he is and through the love he has for himself and his divine perfections” (ibid.).

This explanation of the motivation for creation, following directly from the idea of God as an infinitely perfect being, leads to a final, critical question: If God acts solely for himself, how can the creation of the world possibly serve as an adequate basis for his glory? As Theodore observes again, “however perfect the universe might be, insofar as it is finite it will be unworthy of the action of God, whose worth is infinite” (Dialogues IX.4; OC 12:203-4; JS 154). This is, in many ways, the defining moment of Malebranche’s theodicy, for in response to this question he offers the unequivocal answer that the only thing that could justify God’s creation of the world, an act that must necessarily entail his glory, is the production of a divine person:

There must be some relation between the world and the action by which it is produced. Now the action by which the world is drawn from nothingness, is the action of a God; his worth is infinite; and the world, however perfect it may be, is not infinitely lovable, and cannot render to God an honour worthy of him. Thus, separate Jesus Christ from the rest of created beings and see if he who can act only for his own glory, and whose wisdom has no limits, can form the plan to produce anything outside himself (TNG I.3; OC 5:15; R 112-3).<sup>5</sup>

Malebranche closely associates Christ's appearance with the founding of the Catholic church, and in the opening article of the Treatise goes so far as to claim that it is the establishment of the Church that justifies the creation of the world (TNG I.1; OC 5:12; R 112). This claim, however, must be understood elliptically in terms of Christ's role in the world. By the "Church," Malebranche means no temporal institution but the Church everlasting, composed of the souls of those who have been saved through the intercession of Jesus Christ and whose worship of God is unconstrained by the limits of a bodily existence. Nevertheless, it remains the case that no assembly of finite souls could provide a glory sufficient to motivate God's will. Only the presence of Christ, the "man-God" can do this, and Christ himself fulfills the role of savior by serving as a mediator between God and created beings.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Malebranche concludes, "it was necessary that God create the universe for the Church, the Church for Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ in order to find in him a victim and a sovereign priest worthy of the divine majesty. No one will doubt this order in the plans of God, if one takes care to notice that there can be no other end of his actions than himself" (TNG I.6; OC 5:20; R 114).

The appearance of Jesus Christ in the world is fundamental to Malebranche's theodicy at several levels. As noted, Christ alone provides a sufficient reason for God to create: Only the

realization of a divine person can offer a glory proportionate to God's infinite perfection. Equally important, however, Christ himself is a direct manifestation of God's wisdom in the world. As the second person of the Trinity, the Word incarnate, Christ is God's wisdom made flesh.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the point is underscored that creation is not simply an exercise of God's arbitrary will, a demonstration of his infinite power, but rather the realization of divine wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ:

God, loving himself by the necessity of his being, and wanting to procure for himself an infinite glory, an honour perfectly worthy of himself, consults his wisdom concerning the accomplishment of his desires. That divine wisdom, filled with love for him from whom it receives its being through an eternal and ineffable generation, seeing nothing in all possible creatures (whose intelligible ideas it contains) that is worthy of the majesty of its Father, offers itself to establish an eternal cult in his honour and as sovereign priest, to offer him a victim who, by the dignity of his person, is capable of contenting him (TNG I.24; OC 5:38; R 120).

Finally, in addition to embodying Wisdom itself, Christ serves as the essential mediator by which there is raised the "eternal cult" that is God's crowning glory.<sup>8</sup> Only through Jesus Christ are human beings saved for the eternal worship of God, a circumstance which at once allows Christ to be Christ and which enables the world as a whole to acquire a perfection it would not otherwise possess. The corruption of mankind through Adam's sin was foreseen and permitted by God, for the simple reason that "the universe, restored through Jesus Christ, is worth more than the same universe in its initial construction" (Dialogues IX.5; OC 12:204; JS 155).<sup>9</sup>

The means by which Christ's historical mission is carried out bring us to the next stage of Malebranche's theodicy, which is concerned with God's governance of the created world through the parallel orders of nature and grace. Malebranche's appeal to the incarnation of the Word as God's "first and principal design" in creation (Dialogues IX.6; OC 12:207; JS 156) is an account that, by itself, might justify any plan for the rest of the world, provided that it can be understood as furthering this highest end. At one level, this reflects an important point about Malebranche's position, for, as we shall see, he conceives of the order of grace as contributing in an essential way to the fulfillment of Christ's mission, and the order of nature as subordinate to the order of grace. Yet Malebranche insists that both of these orders also directly express God's perfection and are chosen by him for that reason. Although they serve as means to the realization of the highest end, the orders of nature and grace are only worthy of God insofar as they bear marks of his infinite wisdom. This provides the starting point for Malebranche's answer to the two main species of theodicy problem. We turn now, then, to how God's wisdom is manifested in his governance of the created world, first in the order of nature and then in the order of grace.

## **II. The Order of Nature**

Nature is marked by a complex set of regularities: planetary motions, seasonal changes, cycles of birth and death. Such regularity has long suggested to human beings the design of a wise and good God, who exhibits his intelligence in the order of nature and his goodness in the benefits this order brings to human life. Yet nature also contains many apparent irregularities, flaws in the divine order, which thwart the purposes of human beings: rain falls on the ocean instead of on newly sown fields; earthquakes and volcanos destroy entire cities; infants are born



with terrible deformities. How can these events be reconciled with nature's governance by a wise and good God?

Various answers have been proposed to this classical theodicy problem. Some have simply deferred to God's inscrutable ends; others have found greater perfection in the balancing of order with disorder. Malebranche's answer is defined by the emphasis he places on the essential relationship between God's will and his wisdom, a wisdom expressed in God's preference for a world governed by simple and universal laws. Guided by his infinite wisdom, God determines the order of nature solely through "general volitions" (*volontés générales*), which give rise to exceptionless laws of nature.<sup>10</sup> Creation itself is the product of a "particular volition" (*volonté particulière*) that establishes the initial conditions of the world. Thereafter, nature unfolds according to a small number of "constant and immutable" laws which God wills knowing fully the consequences that will follow from them, including natural events harmful to human beings.<sup>11</sup> Malebranche insists that God cannot be blamed for these unfortunate circumstances. As God does not act in nature through particular volitions, he has not directly willed that these events should occur (*TNG* I.18-19, 22; *OC* 5:31-2, 35; *R* 118-20). Instead, we must understand that had God not acted through general laws that have these events as their consequence, he would have acted in a manner unworthy of his perfection. In order to make a world in which everything turned out best from a human point of view, God would have had to have "changed the simplicity of his ways" and "multiplied the laws of the communication of motion, through which our world exists." But then, Malebranche argues,

there would no longer be that proportion between the action of God and his work, which is necessary in order to determine an infinitely wise being to act; or at least there would not have been the same proportion between the activity of God and

this so-perfect world, as between the laws of nature and the world in which we live; for our world, however imperfect one wishes to imagine it, is based on laws of motion which are so simple and so natural that it is perfectly worthy of the infinite wisdom of its author (TNG I.14; OC 5:29; R 117).

Thus, although the world contains many circumstances that threaten the welfare of human beings, these could not have been changed without altering the condition under which alone the world is worthy of God.

Malebranche's account of the relationship between God's will and the order of nature reflects the basic commitments of his occasionalism. According to that doctrine, God is the only real causal power in the world; finite things, minds and bodies, are merely "secondary" causes that occasion the effects of God's general laws. The order of nature, therefore, is identical with the "ways" (voies) in which God efficaciously wills the continued existence of created beings. "Properly speaking," Malebranche writes, "what is called nature is nothing other than the general laws which God has established to construct or to preserve his work by very simple means [voyes], by an action which is uniform, constant, perfectly worthy of an infinite wisdom and of a universal cause" (TNG, "Premier Éclaircissement," 3; OC 5:148; R 196). Given this identity, it is obvious that the order of nature can contain nothing unworthy of God. Malebranche's emphasis on the generality of the laws of nature stems from his conception of God's wisdom as an essential attribute that guides the actions of his will. It is characteristic of a limited intelligence, he argues, to act by particular volitions, in ways that respond to the circumstances of a given situation. An unlimited intelligence, on the other hand, acts by general volitions that take into account all possible circumstances. Such an intelligence governs by laws that are "general

for all times and for all places.... laws so simple and at the same time so fruitful that they serve to produce everything beautiful that we see in the world” (TNG I.18; OC 5:31-2; R 118).<sup>12</sup>

Reasoning in this way, Malebranche is forced to admit that “God could... make a world more perfect than the one in which we live” (TNG I.14; OC 5:29; R 116). By this he means not only that nature is replete with events and deeds that fall short of the standard of God’s perfection, but also that created beings collectively could have enjoyed greater perfection had this not conflicted with the simplicity of God’s ways (Dialogues IX.10; OC 12:213-5; JS 162-4). On this point his position is at odds with that of Leibniz, who maintains that the created world is the best of all possible worlds--the world of the greatest intrinsic perfection--and that it is God’s choice of the “most fitting” laws of nature that allows this maximization of perfection to occur. Malebranche, by contrast, sees an inherent conflict in the relationship between the perfection of created beings and the simplicity and generality of the laws of nature: to have increased the former, it would have been necessary to sacrifice the latter; but this is something God cannot do as God.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of this, within the limits of his theory, Malebranche, too, recognizes at least two senses in which the created world is the best world that God could have created. In the Treatise, in a passage that almost certainly had an important influence on Leibniz, Malebranche affirms that the world is the “most perfect” (le plus parfait) with respect to the laws that govern it:

God, discovering in the infinite treasures of his wisdom an infinity of possible worlds (as the necessary consequences of the laws of motion which he can establish), determines himself to create that world which could have been produced and preserved by the simplest laws, and which ought to be the most

perfect, with respect to the simplicity of the ways necessary to its production or to its conservation (TNG I.13; OC 5:28; R 116).

Beyond this, we have seen that in a deeper sense this must be the best possible world, because it alone is the world in which God has chosen to realize the perfection of his wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ, the founder of the Church dedicated to God's eternal glory. Where the world falls short in perfection is only in the particular circumstances of finite creatures, who, from the perspective of divine wisdom, have no grounds for criticizing God's action.

If this conclusion seems to offer insufficient consolation to those who suffer from natural evils, Malebranche is prepared to admit at least that, "in a very true sense... God wishes [souhaite] that all his creatures be perfect" (TNG I.22; OC 5:35; R 119-20). As noted, God does not bring about the imperfections of created things through particular volitions, nor does he will the laws of nature with the intention of bringing about such imperfections indirectly. We can be sure that if God "had been able (by equally simple ways) to make and to preserve a more perfect world, he would never have established any laws, of which so great a number of monsters are necessary consequences" (ibid.). None of this, however, implies that God ought to abandon the generality of his will in order to correct the imperfections of created things. To hold God responsible on a case-by-case basis for events in the world, would be to eliminate the essential relationship between God's will and his wisdom, which is reflected in the generality of his volitions.

Malebranche pursues this point by stressing the connection between God's general will and the existence of an objective standard of perfection. He frames the issue in terms of a version of the question posed by Socrates in the Euthyphro: Does the perfection of creation derive solely from the fact that God wills it, or does God will this world because his wisdom

determines it to be the most perfect way of acting? To insist that God preserves the world through discrete, particular volitions, Malebranche contends, rather than general volitions prescribed by his wisdom, is to place the ground of the world's perfection in God's will alone.

According to this principle, Theodore argues in the Dialogues,

the universe is perfect because God willed it. Monsters are works as perfect as others according to the plans of God.... However we invert the world, whatever chaos we make out of it, it will always be equally admirable, since its entire beauty consists in its conformity with the divine will, which is not obliged to conform to order (Dialogues IX.13; OC 12:221; JS 169).

In interpreting creation as the effect of an infinite series of particular volitions, Malebranche claims, one commits oneself to the view that the perfection of the world depends solely on God's will exercised independently of his wisdom. But if this is so, we have no basis for believing that the present world is more perfect than any other world God could have created. Rather we must accept that whatever world God should create, no matter how disorderly and chaotic it might be, it would be the most perfect for the simple reason that God willed it. For Malebranche, this amounts to a reductio ad absurdum of the view that God acts in the best possible manner, for it is to abandon any coherent notion of the perfection of God's ways and of the world he creates.

In the Treatise, Malebranche invariably interprets the wisdom of God's action in terms of certain formal characteristics of his will: God is "obliged to act always in a way worthy of him, through simple, general, constant, and uniform means--in a word means conformed to the idea we have a general cause whose wisdom has no limits" (TNG I.43; OC 5:49; R 128-9). In other writings, however, he makes clear that there is also a determinate content to the principle that regulates God's action. This principle, which he designates "order," reflects God's

understanding of the eternal relation among his perfections and those of his creatures, who “as [they] participate unequally in his being, imitate unequally his perfections, have more or less relation to him” (Traité de l’Amor du Dieu; OC 14:7).<sup>14</sup> Order is the ultimate principle governing both the divine and human will:

This immutable order is undoubtedly the inviolable rule of divine volitions, that is, the eternal law, but it is also the natural and necessary law of all intelligent beings.... Nothing therefore is just, reasonable, agreeable to God, except what conforms to the immutable order of his perfections (OC 14:7-8).

The principle of order allows us to penetrate Malebranche’s fullest answer to the problem of theodicy. In the strictest sense, justice is order, for Malebranche. Thus, the justice of God’s action can consist of nothing other than his acting as order, the immutable relation of his perfections, demands. Here, however, we encounter an important subtlety in his position. Nature is marked by an order whose simplicity and generality reflect the influence of God’s wisdom on his will. In its effects, however, nature falls far short of what order itself demands. Although the form of the laws of nature mirrors God’s wisdom, the sequences of events which those laws determine do not. To take a crucial example, the inclination of the human will toward some particular good (bodily pleasure) rather than the universal good (God) constitutes a disorderly movement of the will which is nonetheless governed by the general law of the union of the soul and the body. Thus, natural events--those determined by the the laws of nature--are not necessarily in conformity with order.<sup>15</sup>

Malebranche explains this discrepancy by appealing to an “arbitrary” element in the laws of nature that are the product of God’s general volitions (TNG I.20; OC 5:33; R 119).<sup>16</sup> God wills these laws for the sake of their simplicity and generality, not for the sake of the justice (or

order) that is inherent in the sequences of events they entail. In point of fact, many prima facie injustices occur within the order of nature: natural disasters destroy the lives of thousands; the lusts of the wicked bring grief to the victims on whom they prey. Cases such as these suggest a final, pointed challenge to the justice of God's action. Even if we accept Malebranche's claim that for the sake of his wisdom God must act through simple and general laws, how can the consequences of these laws be reconciled with God's commitment to order? If order demands anything, it is a balancing of merit and treatment. If God even allows the order of nature to bring suffering to persons who are truly innocent, can he be regarded as acting justly?

Malebranche's answer to this question is, somewhat suprisingly, no. If God had, through the effects of the order of nature, allowed the innocent to suffer, God would have acted unjustly. The crucial proviso, however, is that no human being is truly innocent: all are marked by Adam's sin. Consequently, nothing that God allows to happen through the order of nature counts against the justice of his action. If man had not sinned, Malebranche concedes, "then, order not permitting that he be punished, the laws of the communication of motion would never have been able to make him unhappy" (TNG I.20; OC 5:33; R 119). In the absence of Adam's fall, God's plans would have had to have been different, for a truly innocent person could not be subjected to unjustified suffering through the order of nature. Since all human beings are sinners, however, our treatment at the hands of nature is not undeserved. Thus, God's justice is not compromised.

In sum, then, while the laws of nature do not further the ends of order, they also do not violate those ends. In and of themselves, the laws of nature determine an immutable order within which natural events frequently thwart human purposes and human beings act for immoral ends. While expressive of God's wisdom in their form, the laws of nature do no more than set the stage for the drama of creation. Since Adam's fall, the world has been corrupt and the laws of nature

have perpetuated this corruption. Creation is repaired only through the actions of Jesus Christ, whose appearance in the world signals the beginning of our redemption. To understand how this occurs, we must turn to the general laws by which God governs the order of grace, for it is by means of this order that God fulfills the promise of creation and thereby realizes the full expression of his wisdom.

### **III. The Order of Grace**

The present world is an imperfect world, a world of physical and spiritual corruption. But this world is not the totality of God's plan for creation. It is no more than a prelude to the "future world," in which the souls of the blessed will be reunited, under the rule of the Jesus Christ, in the eternal Church dedicated to God's glory.<sup>17</sup> For Malebranche, creation is only worthy of God in virtue of this goal. Thus, to fully understand his theodicy, it is necessary to understand the means by which God selects for eternal life those of his creatures who will become the members of his Church.

No human being deserves the reward of eternal life. As a consequence of Adam's sin, salvation is only possible for human beings in virtue of God's grace.<sup>18</sup> Malebranche and his Jansenist opponents agree that no human being is able to earn this grace through her own efforts alone. Thus, the "future world" is, in Malebranche's words, "a work of pure mercy" (TNG I.35; OC 5:44; R 126). The crucial point of disagreement between the two parties concerns the manner in which God communicates his grace to human beings. Jansenists such as Arnauld maintain that God's mercy is selective ("many are called but few are chosen"), and that his grace is necessarily efficacious: it cannot be without its intended effect. It follows that God cannot be understood as willing to save all human beings without exception. If God wills to save all and



not all are saved, then God's will would be inefficacious, which implies a lack of power in God. For Arnauld, the essence of God's mercy is that he distributes his grace as he sees fit through particular volitions, which express his desire for the salvation of the "elect."

Malebranche's account of God's distribution of grace is very different. He too insists on the necessity of divine grace for salvation and accepts that not all human beings are saved; however, he strongly rejects Arnauld's claim that it is the particularity of God's volitions that explains his discrimination between those who receive grace sufficient for salvation and those who do not. In light of his infinite wisdom, God is no more inclined to act by particular volitions in the order of grace than in the order of nature. Since it is the same God who is the author of both orders, Malebranche argues, it is necessary that they contain marks of "the same wisdom and the same will" (TNG I.23; OC 5:37; R 120).<sup>19</sup> Thus, God establishes the order of grace solely through general volitions, the first of which is that all human beings be saved (TNG I.42; OC 5:49; R 128). Given this, Malebranche must face the question of why, if God wills that all human beings be saved, it happens that not all are saved. How is it that despite God's general will, the "rain of grace" often falls on hearts that fail to benefit from it? (TNG I.41; OC 5:48; R 128)

Framed in this way, the problem of God's justice in the order of grace is exactly parallel to the analogous problem in the order of nature. What recommends God's action in both cases, and defines it as worthy of his wisdom, are the simplicity and generality of his ways: "God being obliged to act always in a way worthy of him, through simple, general, constant, and uniform means--in a word means conformed to the idea that we have of a general cause whose wisdom has no limits--he had to establish certain laws in the order of grace, as I have proved him to have done in the order of nature" (TNG I.43; OC 5:49; R128-9). Because God is determined to

distribute his mercy according to the simplest, most general, and most fruitful laws, his grace inevitably falls on those who are unprepared to receive it: souls whose degree of corruption outweighs the grace they receive.<sup>20</sup> This, Malebranche argues, is a circumstance God could correct through an infinite number of particular volitions, allotting his grace to match the particular needs of the sinner, but this would undermine the simplicity and generality of his laws. In this respect the parallel between the orders of nature and grace is complete:

[Just] as one has no right to be annoyed that the rain falls in the sea where it is useless, and that it does not fall on seeded grounds where it is necessary... so too one ought not to complain of the apparent irregularity according to which grace is given to men. It is the regularity with which God acts, it is the simplicity of the laws which he observes, it is the wisdom and uniformity of his conduct, which is the cause of the apparent irregularity. It is necessary, according to the laws of grace that God has ordained, on behalf of his elect and for the building of his Church, that this heavenly grace sometimes fall on hardened hearts, as well as on prepared grounds. If, then, grace falls uselessly, it is not the case that God acts without design.... Rather the simplicity of general laws does not permit that this grace, which is inefficacious in this corrupted heart, fall in another heart where it would be efficacious. This grace not being given at all by a particular will, but in consequence of the immutability of the general order of grace, it suffices that order produce a work proportional to the simplicity of his laws, in order that it be worthy of the wisdom of its author (TNG I.44; OC 5:50-1; R 129-30).<sup>21</sup>

Malebranche readily acknowledges that one consequence of this view is that the “grace of feeling” bestowed by God is not always sufficient to secure the salvation of its recipient. Such

grace inevitably has some effect on the soul, inclining it toward God, but “it does not always produce the whole effect which it could cause, because concupiscence opposes it” (TNG III.19; OC 5:132; R 182). Again, he believes this supports no serious objection, for in willing the distribution of grace, God is acting not for the sake of individual sinners but for his own glory, which is found only in the perfection of his ways. God’s mercy is expressed in his choosing to will grace at all and in his willing it universally; that not all sinners benefit equally from this grace is a sign neither of God’s injustice nor his inequity. No sinner can claim to deserve divine grace; and though God’s acting by simple and general laws has the effect of electing some and not others for salvation, this election cannot be construed as preferential treatment of the former, for God does not act by particular volitions with the intention of bringing about the salvation of those souls alone. He simply acts in the wisest possible manner, for the sake of his own glory, foreseeing and permitting whatever effects follow from his general volitions. Given this, Malebranche argues, we owe God our love regardless of the outcome of his action:

Let men... love and adore not only the good will of God, by which the elect are sanctified, but also the secret judgments of his justice, through which there is so great a number of rejected ones. It is the same order of wisdom, it is the same laws of grace, which produce the effects which are so different. God is equally adorable and lovable in all he does: his conduct is always full of wisdom and of goodness (TNG I.47; OC 5:52; R 131).<sup>22</sup>

The grace necessary for salvation and for the establishment of the Church originates in God, who is the sole cause of everything in the created world (TNG II.1; OC 5:66; R 138). Yet Malebranche holds that the realization of these ends would be impossible without Jesus Christ. As we have seen, at the most fundamental level, Christ alone justifies creation as the incarnation

of the Word: the “man-God” who serves as the head of the Church devoted to God’s eternal glory. Christ, however, is also deeply implicated in the process by which this end is brought about. Both as a terrestrial being, Jesus of Nazareth, and as a celestial being, the resurrected Son of God, Christ serves as the essential mediator between God and human beings, and through him alone an order of grace is possible. Summarizing the multiple roles played by Christ within the order of grace, Malebranche declares, “What he said, what he did, what he suffered has thus been to prepare us to receive the celestial rain of grace through his doctrine, through his example, through his merits, and to make it efficacious” (TNG I.49; OC 5:53-4; R 132).

Malebranche assigns three distinct functions to Christ within the order of grace. Through his teachings and example, Jesus brings the Word of God to human beings. He shows them what it is to be a Christian, one worthy of entering the Kingdom of God. By accepting his teachings, by following his example, human beings cannot guarantee their salvation, but they thereby prepare themselves to receive God’s grace should it be forthcoming:

That which is most opposed to the efficacy of grace, is pleasures of sense and feelings of pride: for there is nothing which corrupts the mind so much, and which hardens the heart more. But did not Jesus Christ sacrifice and destroy, in his person, all grandeurs and sensible pleasures?.... To what is his doctrine reducible; which way do his counsels tend? Is it not to humility and to penitence, to a general privation of everything which flatters the senses, of everything which corrupts the purity of the imagination, of everything which sustains and which fortifies the concupiscence of pride?.... Thus [sinners] can remove some impediments to the efficacy of grace, and prepare the ground of their heart, such

that it becomes fruitful when God pours his rain according to the general laws which he has prescribed to himself (TNG I.49-50; OC 5:53-4; R 131-2).

Jesus Christ is also the “meritorious cause” of grace. It is Christ’s sacrifice alone, his atonement for the sin of Adam through his crucifixion and death, which establishes a proportionality between humanity and divine grace. God’s grace is pure mercy in relation to the merit of human beings; it is earned through Christ’s sacrifice of himself: “Since all men are enveloped in original sin, and they are by their nature infinitely beneath God, it is only Jesus Christ who, by the dignity of his person and by the holiness of his sacrifice, can have access to his Father, reconcile us with him, and merit his favours for us” (TNG II.2; OC 5:66; R 138-9).

From the point of view of Malebranche’s philosophy, it is the third of Christ’s functions that is of greatest interest. It is a fundamental claim of Malebranche’s occasionalism that God, the only true cause, acts through general volitions, which bring about their effects only insofar as they are determined through particular occasional causes.<sup>23</sup> As the order of grace is an order defined by certain general laws governing God’s distribution of grace to human beings, it is necessary in this case as well that there be occasional causes which serve to determine the efficacy of God’s general laws. According to Malebranche, order further demands that these causes have some relation to the plan [dessein] for which God has established the order of grace: the formation of his Church through Jesus Christ (TNG II.4; OC 5:68; R 139-40). Thus, “the rain of grace” is not diffused in our hearts according to the different positions of the planets or the natural movements of bodies, but must be occasioned by the actions either of Jesus Christ or of “the creatures united by reason to him.” We know, however, that “grace is not given to all those who wish for it, nor as soon as they wish for it,” and that it is sometimes even given to those who do not ask for it; thus the efficacy of the laws of grace is not determined by the

volitions of human beings (TNG II.5-7; OC 5:68-70; R 140-1).<sup>24</sup> It follows that only Christ can fill this role: “Since God had a plan to make his Son the head of his Church, it was appropriate that he make him the occasional or natural cause of the grace that sanctified it; for it is from the head that life and movement must be diffused in the members” (TNG II.9; OC 5:70; R 141).

The Christ who is the occasional cause of grace is neither the terrestrial Jesus nor Christ in his divinity, but rather Christ in his “resurrected humanity” as the “Son of God.” As resurrected humanity, Christ lacks the power to bringing about the Church through his own efforts; he can do no more than “desire” and “pray” that the necessary grace be bestowed on men by God (TNG II.13; OC 5:72; R 143). Since his soul “has not at all an infinite capacity, and he wants to place in the body of the Church an infinity of beauties and ornaments,” Christ prays ceaselessly that grace be given to human beings (TNG II.11; OC 5:71; R 142); and his prayers are always answered. His Father refuses him nothing, “for faith teaches us that God has given to his Son an absolute power over men, by making him head of his Church; and this cannot be conceived, if the different wills of Jesus Christ are not followed by their effects” (TNG II.12; OC 5:71; R 142).

Thus the Church, the final tribute to God’s glory, is formed through the combination of God’s general will and power and Christ’s particular desires for the salvation of individual souls.<sup>25</sup> Because his soul is united to eternal wisdom, Christ’s desires are “always conformed to order in general, which is necessarily the rule of divine wills and of all those who love God.” Order determines for Christ the goal of raising to the glory of God, “the greatest, the most magnificent, the most finished Temple that can be” (TNG, “Premier Éclaircissement,” 14; OC 5:162-3; R 208). To this end, Christ wills the salvation of an infinite variety of souls, from saints to inveterate sinners, “by the means most in conformity to order.” Yet Christ, focusing on the

beauty of particular “ornaments,” and willing that particular degrees of grace be conferred on particular souls, does not have in view the plan of the Temple as a whole. Consequently, “it is necessary that he incessantly change his desires--it being only an infinite wisdom which can prescribe general laws to itself in order to execute its plans” (TNG, “Premier Éclaircissement,” 14; OC 5:164; R 209). The result is that only in the fullness of time will the “mystical body of Jesus Christ”--the members of his Church--form “the perfect man” (TNG II.16; OC 5:74; R 144). Thus, the Church is a work in progress; but once completed it will endure forever.

Although Christ is cast by Malebranche as an enlightened servant of God, he is a servant with whom God as creator cannot dispense. As abstract, infinite wisdom, God is limited to acting through general volitions, which by themselves cannot bring about determinate effects such as the formation of the Church. Only Christ can exercise the particular volitions necessary to realize this end. Malebranche’s masterstroke is to stress here Christ’s identity as the concrete embodiment of wisdom: the one soul whose volitions conform perfectly to order. Thus wisdom, which had constrained God to act according to general laws, redeems itself in Malebranche’s scheme as a concrete subject capable of acting by particular volitions:

It is in this way that eternal wisdom returns, so to speak, to its Father that which it had taken away from him--for not permitting him to act by particular wills, it seemed to make him impotent. But being incarnate it so brings it to pass that God, acting in a way worthy of him by quite simple and quite general means, produces a work in which the most enlightened intelligences will never be able to observe the slightest defect (TNG, “Premier Éclaircissement,” 14; OC 5:165; R 210).

Malebranche interprets creation as an act by which God glories in his own perfection, expressing his infinite wisdom both in his “ways” and in the person of Jesus Christ, who in a “future world” rules the Church dedicated to God’s eternal glory. To achieve this goal, he believes, the Fall was an essential event within human history. Without the corruption of man by sin, there would be no role for Christ to play in creation, no place for the man-God who alone renders the created world worthy of God and serves as the head of his Church. Without the Fall, human nature would have remained in its original state of perfection and eternal life would have been our just reward. “If man had remained in a state of innocence, since his wills would have been meritorious of grace and even of glory, God would have had to establish in man the occasional cause of his perfection and of his happiness--the inviolable law of order will have it so.” The result, Malebranche sardonically remarks, is that “Jesus Christ would not have been the head of the Church, or at least he would have been a head with whose influence all the members would have been able to dispense” (TNG II.9; OC 5:70; R 141). Thus, for God to create at all, man had to sin, to be redeemed by the man-God. Only in this way does eternal wisdom find its proper place within the future world, in the form of Jesus Christ united to the members of his “mystical body.” Through Christ and the order of grace, wisdom completes the work of creation, rendering it a fitting tribute to God.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

What is most impressive, finally, about Malebranche’s theodicy is his distinctive attempt to give equal weight to the demands of philosophy and faith, reason and Scripture. In justifying the ways of God to man, Malebranche’s starting point is the philosopher’s God: an infinitely perfect being, who acts according to the dictates of supreme wisdom. It is God’s wisdom alone



that renders him lovable to human beings, and without this wisdom in which we partake, we would have no basis for understanding and appreciating the work of creation (Treatise I.7; OC 5:25; R 114). As Theodore declares in the Dialogues, “everything is inverted if we claim that God is above Reason and has no rule in his plans other than his mere will. This false principle spreads such blanket darkness that it confounds the good with the evil, the true with the false, and creates out of everything a chaos in which the mind no longer knows anything” (Dialogues IX.13; OC 12:220; JS 168).

At the same time, Malebranche strongly resists the inclination, to which Leibniz arguably succumbs, of allowing reason to overwhelm the revelation of Christianity. There can be no satisfactory explanation of the existence and nature of the created world without appeal to the appearance of Jesus Christ: “God has let his work be corrupted. Reconcile this with his wisdom and with his power. Extricate yourself from this problem without the aid of the man-God, without admitting a mediator, without conceiving that God had principally the incarnation of his Son in view. I defy you to do it with all the principles of the best philosophy. For my part I find myself at a loss every time I try to philosophize without the aid of faith” (Dialogues IX.6; OC 12:207). Malebranche’s theodicy is thus, fundamentally, a Christian theodicy. The existence of the world, particularly in its historical dimension, cannot be understood apart from God’s intention to realize a divine person that renders the world worthy of him.

Throughout his writings Malebranche is quick to criticize an excessive reliance on what he calls the “anthropologies” of Scripture: its attribution to God of human characteristics, emotions, and foibles. To foster a proper attitude of love and reverence for God, he believes, one must begin--as his philosophy does--with “the abstract idea of an infinite wisdom, of a universal cause, of an infinitely perfect being” (TNG I.57; OC 5:62-3; R 136-7). The central tenet of

Christianity--the divinity of Jesus Christ--adds to the philosopher's God the paradox of God become man. Within this paradox Malebranche locates the basis of his theodicy. As the concrete embodiment of wisdom, Jesus Christ in union with his Church forms the sole end for the sake of which God could create, the only end which accounts for the existence of a world. For Malebranche, the justice of God's creation is defined by wisdom itself, which, as order, provides the standard by which justice is conceived: "nothing is just, reasonable, agreeable to God, except what conforms to the immutable order of God's perfections" (OC 14:8). Thus, the crux of Malebranche's theodicy is that creation is justified precisely in virtue of culminating in wisdom's perfect expression of itself, Jesus Christ and his Church, through which God's greater glory is affirmed.

---

<sup>1</sup> To speak of Malebranche's theodicy is to impose on him a term most closely associated with his younger contemporary Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, the author of the work that introduced the term "theodicy" (theos = god; dike = justice) to the philosophical lexicon: Essais de Théodicée, sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal (1710). Since the eighteenth century, the term has acquired a broader meaning that eliminates any specific reference to Leibniz's thought. It is in this sense that I use it here. The issue is complicated, however, by the close intellectual relationship between Malebranche and Leibniz. Although many of the central doctrines of Leibniz's theodicy were in place by the early 1670s, he clearly drew considerable inspiration from his reading of Malebranche's Treatise on Nature and Grace, an influence that is reflected in both the Discourse on Metaphysics (1686) and the Theodicy itself. Despite this debt, there remain significant differences between the views of the two philosophers. For further discussion, see Robinet, Leibniz et Malebranche; C. Wilson,

---

“Leibnizian Optimism”; Sleigh, Leibniz and Arnauld; Rutherford, “Natures, Laws, and Miracles”; Nadler, “Choosing a Theodicy”; Riley, Leibniz’ Universal Jurisprudence.

<sup>2</sup> For the former, see I Timothy 2:4; for the latter, Matthew 22:14.

<sup>3</sup> For a helpful account of the theological background to Malebranche’s theodicy and further references to the literature, see Patrick Riley’s “Introduction” to his translation of the Treatise on Nature and Grace.

<sup>4</sup> In the Dialogues on Metaphysics and Religion, Malebranche’s spokesman Theodore poses the question bluntly: “But how can God will that we exist, he who has no need of us? How can a Being who lacks nothing, who is entirely self-sufficient, will anything? That is what creates the difficulty” (Dialogues IX.3; OC 12:200; JS 151).

<sup>5</sup> “Scripture and reason teach us that it is because of Jesus Christ that the world exists, and that it is by the dignity of this divine person that it receives a beauty which makes it pleasing in the sight of God” (TNG I.27; OC 5:41; R 122).

<sup>6</sup> “[S]ince a finite world, a profane world, still contains nothing divine, it cannot have any real relation to the divinity; it cannot express the attribute essential to God, His infinity. Thus God can neither derive His gratification from it, nor consequently create it, without denying Himself. What, then, does He do? Religion teaches us this. He renders His work divine through the union of a divine person to the two substances, mind and body, from which He composes it. And he thereby elevates it infinitely and, principally because of the divinity He communicates to it, He receives from it that first glory which is related to that of the architects who constructed a house which does them honor because it expresses the qualities they are proud to possess.... Extricate yourself from this problem without the aid of the Man-God, without admitting a mediator, without conceiving that God had principally the incarnation of His Son in view. I defy

---

you to do it with all the principles of the best philosophy” (Dialogues IX.6; OC 12:205-7; JS 155-57).

<sup>7</sup> This point is emphasized in the “Additions” to the first article of TNG: “But what divine person will sanctify the work of God. It will be the Eternal Word. For it is the Word or wisdom of God which must be, as it were, the first thing consulted in order to regulate divine action and to make it that God could act” (OC 5:12).

<sup>8</sup> “Yes, Aristes, vile and contemptible creatures that we are, through our divine leader we render and shall eternally render divine honors to God, honors worthy of the divine majesty, honors which God receives and will always receive with pleasure.... God regards us in Jesus Christ as Gods, as His children, as His heirs, and as co-heirs of His dearly beloved Son. In this dear Son He has adopted us. It is through Him that He gives us access to His supreme majesty” (Dialogues IX.6; OC 12:206; JS 156).

<sup>9</sup> See TNG I.36, 40; OC 5:45, 47; R 126-7.

<sup>10</sup> See TNG, “Premier Éclaircissement,” 1: “I say that God acts by general wills, when he acts in consequence of general laws which he has established” (OC 5:147; R 195).

<sup>11</sup> These include laws of the communication of motion and laws of the union of the soul and the body. Of the former, Malebranche writes: “Indeed I am persuaded that the laws of motion which are necessary to the production and the preservation of the earth, and of all the stars that are in the heavens, are reducible to these two: the first, that moved bodies tend to continue their motion in a straight line; the second, that when two bodies collide, their motion is distributed in both in proportion to their size, such that they must afterwards move at an equal speed” (TNG I.15; OC 5:30; R 117).

---

<sup>12</sup> “The more enlightened an agent is, the more extensive are his volitions. A very limited mind undertakes new plans at every moment; and when he wants to execute one of them, he uses several means, of which some are always useless. In a word, a limited mind does not sufficiently compare the means with the end, the power and the action with the effect that they must produce. On the contrary a broad and penetrating mind compares and weighs all things: it never forms plans except with the knowledge that it has the means to execute them.... [God] ought not to multiply his wills, which are the executive laws of his plans, any further than necessity obliges. He must act through general wills, and thus establish a constant and lawful order, according to which he has foreseen, through the infinite extent of his wisdom, that a work as admirable as his is ought to come into existence” (TNG I.38; OC 5:46; R 126-7)

<sup>13</sup> On the contrast between Malebranche’s and Leibniz’s positions on this point, see Rutherford, “Natures, Laws, and Miracles,” and Nadler, “Choosing a Theodicy.” For a fuller account of Leibniz’s conception of this as “the best of all possible worlds,” see Rutherford, Leibniz and the Rational Order of Nature, chs. 1-3.

<sup>14</sup> “Order is nothing but the relation that the divine perfections, both absolute and relative, have among themselves.” (OC 14:8).

<sup>15</sup> This point is critical for Malebranche, because it opens a space in which moral action becomes possible for human beings. If order, as the rule of justice, were identical with the order of nature, then one could not “correct” nature (e.g. by saving victims of a natural disaster) without acting against divine law. In the Traité de morale, Malebranche uses this as another argument against the view that God acts by particular volitions, for if that were the case God would have to be understood as positively willing every event in nature, and “it would be a crime

---

to avoid by flight the ruins of a collapsing building” (TM I.21; OC 11:25). See Riley, “Introduction,” pp. 40-1.

<sup>16</sup> See also Méd. Chrét. VII.18; OC 10:76.

<sup>17</sup> Malebranche makes it clear that this “future world” is part of the plan of creation: “God wishes us to learn that it is the future world which will properly be his work [ouvrage] or the object of delight and the subject of his glory. The present world is a neglected work. It is the home of sinners, it is necessary that disorder be found in it” (Méd. Chrét. VII.11-12; OC 10:73). See also TNG I.24 and I.54: “God discovers in the infinite treasures of his wisdom an infinity of possible works, and at the same time the most perfect way of producing each of them. He considers, among other [things], his Church, Jesus Christ who is its head, and all the persons who must compose it in consequence of the establishment of certain general laws” (OC 5:57; R 134).

<sup>18</sup> The denial of this claim forms the basis of the Pelagian heresy condemned by St. Augustine. Malebranche defines grace, which is “the principle or the motive of all the lawful movements of our love,” as “either a light which teaches us, or a confused feeling which convinces us, that God is our good: since we never begin to love an object if we do not see clearly by the light of reason, or if we do not feel confusedly by the taste of pleasure, that this object is good--I mean capable of making us happier than we are” (TNG II.1; OC 5:66; R 138). His position, therefore, is that God is not loved as God, unless our soul has received divine grace. In its absence, our will is guided by the desire for particular goods conducive to human happiness, rather than the one true good: God.

<sup>19</sup> See also TNG I.37; OC 5:45; R 126.

<sup>20</sup> While Malebranche gives greatest emphasis to the simplicity and generality of God’s laws, he also commends their “fruitfulness,” insofar as they produce the greatest variety of

---

degrees of grace: “That which constitutes the beauty of the spiritual edifice of the Church is the infinite diversity of the graces which he who is the head of it distributes to all the parts that compose it: it is the order and the admirable relations which he places between them: these are the different degrees of glory which shine from all sides” (TNG I:30; OC 5:42; R 124). Here again we find an idea, the combination of order and variety, that figures prominently in Leibniz’s theodicy, although Leibniz had embraced this idea of the “harmony” of divine wisdom prior to reading Malebranche.

<sup>21</sup> See also TNG I.53; OC 5:56; R 133-4.

<sup>22</sup> For elaborations of this theme, see TNG I.46; OC 5:52; R 130-1 and TNG I.55; OC 5:55; R 134-5: “Someone will say, perhaps, that these laws are so simple and so fruitful that God had to prefer them to all others, and that, loving only his own glory, his Son had to be incarnated-- that he has done nothing purely for his elect. I grant it: God has done nothing purely for his elect. For St. Paul teaches me that he made his elect for Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ for himself. If, to render God lovable to men, one has to make him act purely for them, or in a way which would not be the wisest, I would prefer to remain silent. Reason teaches me to make God lovable by making him infinitely perfect, and by representing him as so full of charity for his creatures, that he produces none of them with the plan [dessein] of making them unhappy.”

Assuming that God wills the salvation of all human beings, Malebranche argues, the notion that he does so through particular volitions leads to the absurd conclusion that God sometimes intentionally confers on souls a degree of grace that is almost but not quite sufficient for salvation: “to what purpose is it to give three degrees of spiritual delectation to one for whom four degrees are necessary, and to refuse them to him to whom they would be sufficient to convert him? Does this agree with the idea that we have of the wisdom and of the goodness of

---

God?” (TNG I.45; OC 5:51; R 130; cf. TNG I.52; OC 5:55; R133). Obviously, this argument only has force against those who accept, as the Jansenists do not, that God wills the salvation of all human beings.

<sup>23</sup> “[I]n order that the general cause act by general laws or wills, and that his action be lawful, constant, and uniform, it is absolutely necessary that there be some occasional cause which determines the efficacy of these laws, and which serves to establish them.... The laws of the union of the soul and the body are only rendered efficacious by the changes which take place in one or the other of these two substances. For if God made the pain of a pricking felt by the soul without the body’s being pricked, or without the same thing happening in the brain as if the body were pricked, he would not act by general laws of the soul and the body, but by a particular will” (TNG II.3; OC 5:67; R 139).

<sup>24</sup> Indeed, Malebranche argues, since the advent of sin, we could not perform this function: “Being all in a state of disorder, we could no longer be an occasion for God to give us grace. We needed a mediator not only to give us access to God, but to be the occasional cause of the favours which we hope for from him” (TNG II.8; OC 5:70; R 141)

<sup>25</sup> Or types of souls; see TNG II.17; OC 5:74-5; R 144.