

An unqualified principle of sufficient reason connotes the symmetry of mutual requirement; i.e., the cause requires the effect even as the effect requires the cause.

But this means that there is no genuine contingency. Nothing can be contingent because everything must be necessary. This, however, is absurd, assuming, as I do, the principle that meaning requires contrast. If nothing is contingent, then neither can anything be necessary in any meaningful sense of the word.

The existence of the effect is always sufficient reason for the existence of the cause—a cause being precisely a necessary condition of its effect. But the existence of the cause is never sufficient reason for the existence of the effect, which has no sufficient reason, however much it does and must have necessary reasons, causes, or conditions.

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A qualified principle of sufficient reason abandons the dream—in reality, the superstition—of explaining and justifying particular things by some ultimate reason or necessity (cf. *Anselm's Discovery*: 197). The particular thing has no sufficient reason, although that there are particular things, some particular things or other, does have a sufficient reason, this being that *creativity* could not not exist and could not not produce particular things as its products (*Insights and Oversights*: 184). In other words, that there is creativity as such, with its two essential aspects of divine and nondivine creativity, is an unconditionally necessary truth—although the *only* unconditionally necessary truth. As such, it is to be explained as inherent in all experience and in all clear and coherent thought about experience. On the other hand, that there is this particular thing or that is a contingent and factual truth, which can be explained only causally or genetically, by showing how, given a certain past course of creativity, it was *possible*, or, in many cases, *probable*, that something more or less like the particular thing would come into being. To ask for an ultimate why going beyond this and excluding all

free choice, chance, and randomness from reality, is to appeal to an unqualified and therefore false principle of sufficient reason (313).

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Ultrarationalism is the position according to which there is and must be an ultimate reason for everything, including all particular things, all actualizations of possibilities.

Ultraempiricism is the position according to which there is not and cannot be an ultimate reason for anything, including God, who can only be, if existent at all, a wholly and simply irrational contingent fact.

The truth in ultrarationalism, or of (a sane or properly qualified) rationalism, is that not all knowledge of existence can be factual or empirical. That God exists is strictly metaphysical or nonempirical, and hence knowable by reason apart (not from experience altogether, but) from any and all particular experiences of the sort required by any properly factual or empirical knowledge.

The truth in ultraempiricism, or of (a sane or properly qualified) empiricism, is that all knowledge of individual existence other than God's as well as of all specific kinds of existence is and must be factual or empirical. That this, that, or any other possibility is actualized can be known—even, indeed, by God—only through particular experiences, as distinct from experience and reason as such.