

Crusius on Freedom of the Will

Michael Walschots

*Penultimate version. Final version published in:

Christian August Crusius (1715-1775): Philosophy Between Reason and Revelation. Edited by F. Grunert and A. Hahmann. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021, pg. 189–208.

<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110647563-008>

The questions of whether or not the will is free, and in what way, undoubtedly belong among the perennial questions of philosophy. It should come as no surprise that philosophers in early eighteenth-century Germany ascribed considerable importance to such questions as well. In the *Theodicy*, for example, Leibniz claims that the question of human freedom is one of two labyrinths in which the mind can get lost.¹ Freedom of the will even became a somewhat controversial topic when Frederick Wilhelm I accused Christian Wolff of endorsing fatalism and thereby denying freedom and moral responsibility, expelling Wolff from Prussia in 1723 as a result.² Given this controversy in particular, one would expect there to be relatively extensive accounts of how philosophers from the period conceived of freedom, both prior and subsequent to Wolff's expulsion. Unfortunately, this is not the case. It is the aim of this paper to make a step towards correcting this situation by providing an account of the conception of freedom offered by one of the most important philosophers in mid-eighteenth-century Germany, and one of Wolff's most important critics, namely C. A. Crusius.

Crusius' conception of freedom is interesting not only as a view subsequent to Wolff's, but also as a view that influenced Immanuel Kant.³ In fact, the few discussions of Crusius on freedom that currently exist in literature consider his view in exactly this respect, namely as a predecessor of Kant's. The existing studies, however, offer either only a very partial account or even misrepresent

¹ See G. W. Leibniz: *Theodicy*. Edited by Austin Farrer, Translated by E. M. Huggard. London 1951, p. 53. The second labyrinth is what Leibniz called the labyrinth of the continuum and is the problem of how space is composed of points which allegedly do not fill space themselves.

² For an account of this event see Lewis White Beck: *Early German Philosophy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts 1969, pp. 258–9.

³ For a discussion of how Crusius' account of freedom and determinism compares to both Wolff and Kant, see Steven Tester's contribution to this volume.

Crusius' conception of freedom of the will. Henry Allison, for example, has written extensively on Kant's conception of freedom.⁴ In an account of how Kant's view relates to that of Leibniz, Wolff, and Crusius, Allison argues that what is most notable about Crusius' view in this context is his emphasis on freedom of the will as entailing the »capacity to choose between given alternative.«⁵ As we will see, although this is certainly one feature of how Crusius understands freedom of the will, it is only one piece of a much more detailed view. Additionally, Reinhard Finster provides what may even be an inaccurate account of Crusius' view. In a study on spontaneity, freedom, and unconditioned causality in Leibniz, Crusius, and Kant, Finster claims that Crusius understands freedom as »*libertas indifferentiae seu aequilibrii*«, i.e. as liberty of indifference.⁶ What Finster fails to realize, however, is that Crusius reserves the notion of *libertas indifferentiae* for a very specific situation, and this is not how Crusius conceives of the condition of the will overall. Given Crusius' importance as a philosopher both subsequent to Wolff and prior to Kant, and given the, at best, only partial and, at worst, inaccurate treatment that his conception of freedom has received in the literature thus far, my aim in this paper is the modest one of providing an accurate account of how Crusius understands the freedom of the will.

The focus of the following is Crusius' first philosophical work and his text on ethics, the *Guide to Living Rationally* [*Anweisung vernünftig zu leben*], first published in 1744. More specifically, I concern myself primarily with the first part of the text, which is devoted to »Telematology« [*Thelematologie*], i. e. Crusius' science of the will. The discussion of freedom takes place in the third chapter of the Telematology, entitled: »On the Freedom of the Human Will [*Von der Freyheit des menschlichen Willens*].« My discussion is divided into two parts. I begin in part one (1) with a brief account of »Telematology« and Crusius' conception of the will itself. Part two (2) is the main body of the paper, wherein I provide an account of Crusius' conception of freedom of the will. I concentrate on two topics: Crusius' metaphysical understanding of freedom as self-determination, and his more psychological understanding of free choice. I conclude with a brief discussion of the relation between freedom and moral progress.

⁴ See especially Henry Allison: *Kant's Theory of Freedom*. Cambridge, New York 1990.

⁵ Henry Allison: *Kant on Freedom of the Will*. In: *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*. Edited by Paul Guyer. Cambridge, New York 2006, pp. 381–415, p. 386.

⁶ See Reinhard Finster: *Spontaneität, Freiheit und unbedingte Kausalität bei Leibniz, Crusius und Kant*. In: *Studia Leibnitiana* Volume 14, No. 2 (1982), pp. 266–277, p. 268 and p. 268n.

1. Telematology: The Doctrine of the Will

Crusius understands moral or practical philosophy to include both the doctrine of natural duties, as well as the doctrine of prudence.⁷ More generally, however, moral philosophy is divided into four sciences: 1. Ethics 2. Natural Moral Theology 3. Natural Law, and 4. The General Doctrine of Prudence. Ethics concerns the virtuous arrangement of our condition and the grounds of virtue as applied to the soul and its unification with the body. Natural moral theology concerns our duties to God. Natural Law concerns both our duties to others as well as a discussion of universal practical philosophy (*allgemeine praktische Philosophie*) more generally. Finally, the general doctrine of prudence is the art of finding the means to human ends in general.⁸ The *Anweisung* is divided into five parts, four devoted to each of these topics, and a fifth part that precedes the others devoted to the doctrine of the will. Crusius calls this doctrine of the will »Telematology [*Thelematologie*]« and defines it as »a theoretical science of the characteristics, powers, and effects of the human will.«⁹ As a theoretical science, Telematology is not strictly speaking a part of moral philosophy. It should rather be regarded as a part of theoretical philosophy, but one that is also distinct from metaphysics. This is because metaphysics does not treat the entire doctrine of the human soul, but only the doctrine of the necessary being of a spirit in general according to laws.¹⁰

A science of the will precedes ethics for good reason: »Since the guide to living rationally has to do with the good arrangement of the human will, a precise understanding of the human will is

⁷ Crusius, C.A. *Anweisung vernünftig zu leben*. Leipzig 1744, Preface. References to Crusius' works are abbreviated as follows:

Anw. – C. A. Crusius: *Anweisung vernünftig zu leben*. Leipzig 1744.

Ent. – C.A. Crusius: *Entwurf der nothwendigen Vernunftwahrheiten*. Leipzig, 1745.

The Preface to the *Anweisung* contains no page numbers, and modern reprints do not assign page numbers either. When citing from this section, I therefore simply refer to the »Preface«.

⁸ Anw. Preface.

⁹ »eine theoretische Wissenschaft von den Eigenschaften, Kräften und Wirkungen des menschlichen Willens«, *ibid.*, §1.

Crusius is not the first to make the study of the will its own science. As is explained in the preface to the *Anweisung*, this title goes back to Crusius' teacher, Adolph Friedrich Hoffmann (1707–41), though Hoffmann only discussed the topic in his lectures (see Anw. Preface).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Preface.

required by those who wish to thoroughly understand and prove everything«. ¹¹ This is consistent with Crusius' general style of presentation in the *Anweisung*, which he describes as »synthetic [*synthetisch*]« in the sense that what comes first is that through which the following must be understood. ¹² The science of the will thus precedes the four parts of ethics, because ethics presupposes certain features about the will. In this way the doctrine of the human will is a »preparation [*Vorbereitung*]« for ethics:

since the guide to a rational life contains within it only such rules that are prescribed to the will, and which therefore for the most part must be extracted from the constitution of the will, it is easy to see that one must first comprehend how the will is constituted from nature and how it functions, before one can sufficiently explain how the same ought to be. ¹³

Telematology is therefore the descriptive study of the nature and function of the will, which precedes the normative investigation of how the will ought to be.

The first term to define in Telematology is the will itself: »I understand under the will the power of a spirit to act according to its representations«. ¹⁴ More specifically, the will is the »effecting cause [*wirkende Ursache*]« itself, and the representations are the »model [*Modell*]« or *causa exemplaris* of our actions. ¹⁵ Action takes place either when we actually bring about the represented object or when we merely strive to do the same but do not successfully bring the object about. ¹⁶ A spirit is a substance that has ideas or which thinks. ¹⁷ This is an intentionally broad understanding of spirit, because Crusius does not wish to reserve the concept to only those things that have abstract representations and concepts, or those things that can think with consciousness, i.e. can think with clarity and distinctness. Animals thus have spirits as well, meaning spirits can be noble or ignoble,

¹¹ «Weil die Anweisung vernünftig zu leben mit der guten Einrichtung des menschlichen Willens zu thun hat, so wird bey denenjenigen, welche alles gründlich verstehen und beweisen wollen, eine genau Erkenntniß des menschlichen Willens vorausgesetzt», *Anw.* Preface.

¹² *Anw.* Preface.

¹³ «da die Anweisung zu einen vernünftigen Leben lauter solche Regeln in sich begreift, welche dem Willen vorgeschrieben werden, und welche demnach größtentheils von der Beschaffenheit des Willens hergenommen werden müssen, so ist leichte zu erachten, daß man erst erkennen müsse, wie der Wille von Natur beschaffen sey und wirke, ehe man hinlänglich erklären kan, wie derselbe seyn solle», *Anw.* § 1.

¹⁴ «Ich verstehen unter dem Willen die Kraft eines Geistes nach seinen Vorstellungen zu handeln», *Anw.* § 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

rational or non-rational.¹⁸ Furthermore, all spirits have a will.¹⁹ This is significant because it means that the will is not to be understood as the power to act according to abstract representations only. In fact, Crusius believes that it is necessary for all spirits to have a will, for otherwise they would have representations that are not useful for anything. Since it is against the perfection of God to create anything useless,²⁰ all spirits, i. e. all things capable of thinking, necessarily also have a will.

Crusius claims that his definition of the will corresponds to the common use of language, which ascribes desire and aversion, as well as action and omission, to the will.²¹ We should distinguish these terms of course and, if we do, then desire [*Begehren*] and aversion [*Verabscheuen*] are specific kinds of willing. Desire is »[t]hat willing whereby we endeavour to make real or bring about a unification with ourselves of that which does not yet exist«. ²² Strictly speaking, however, such a willing is a desire only »insofar as one regards it as an action inside of the willing spirit«. ²³ Desire, for Crusius, is therefore an internal action. It is the internal »endeavour [*Bemühung*]« that seeks to bring about an object, or unify our bodies with an object. Similarly, aversion is »when we endeavor to prevent the reality of a thing or exclude our unification with the same«. ²⁴ As internal actions, Crusius distinguishes from desire and aversion a distinct kind of »striving [*Bestreben*]«, »where one also seeks to effect that which is willed outside of the soul«. ²⁵ As internal actions distinct from such external aspects of willing, desire and aversion are to be regarded as »the ground and effecting cause« ²⁶ of what takes place externally, e. g. bodily movements. Crusius notes that these two »activities [*Thätigkeiten*]« of the will, namely its internal and external aspects, are often confused with one another because they fall under the same heading of »willing and not-willing«. ²⁷

¹⁸ See Anw. §3.

¹⁹ Anw. §4.

²⁰ Anw. §4.

²¹ Anw. §2.

²² «Dasjenige Wollen dadurch wir etwas, das noch nicht ist, wirklich zu machen oder insonderheit eine Vereinigung desselben mit uns hervorzubringen bemühet sind», Anw. §9.

²³ «wiefern man es noch al seine Action innerhalb dem wollenden Geiste betrachte», *ibid.*

²⁴ «wenn wir die Wirklichkeit der Sache zu verhindern oder insonderheit die Vereinigung mit derselben hinweg zu schaffen in Bemühung sind.» Anw. §9.

²⁵ «da man das Gewollte such ausserhalb der Seele zu bewerkstelligen suchet.» *ibid.*

²⁶ «der Grund und wirkende Ursache», *ibid.*

²⁷ «das Wollen oder Nichtwollen», *ibid.*

A subset of the more general category of desire is a »drive [*Trieb*]« or »appetite [*Begierde*]«, which is the kind of willing »which even without intention continues with some permanence«. ²⁸ Such drives can be of the desiring sort, or the averting sort. What is distinct about drives, and which anticipates the focus of this paper, is that they take place even without freedom, or as Crusius states in the above passage, without »intention [*Vorsatz*]«. Crusius defines an »intention« or »decision [*Entschluß*]« as »[t]hat application of freedom to a present case, whereby one actually wills the same«. ²⁹ I will turn to freedom shortly. The important point to stress here is that a drive is a kind of willing that does not require intention or decision to be active, and thus takes place without freedom.

An important element of Crusius' conception of the will is its relation to the understanding. Crusius does not believe in a single foundational power, ³⁰ but takes the will and the understanding to be distinct powers. ³¹ The understanding is the faculty responsible for our representations, and thus every willing relies on the understanding representing that which we will. ³² Importantly, and as I discuss again in what follows, willing is not always in accord with what the understanding represents as good. ³³ This largely has to do with the fact that the good, for Crusius, is not in the first instance grasped by the understanding, but rather relates to willing. Crusius defines goodness as »[w]hat is in accordance with the willing of a spirit«, and evil as »what is against« the willing of a spirit. ³⁴ Crusius then distinguishes between three distinct types of goodness. First, »metaphysically good« is when »something is found to be consistent with the natural ends of God«. ³⁵ Second, »physically good« is »the extent to which something is consistent with the will of created beings«. ³⁶ Crusius claims that if

²⁸ »welches auch ohne Versatz mit einer Beständigkeit fordauret«, Anw. §23.

²⁹ »Diejenige Anwendung der Freyheit zu einem vorkommenden Falle, wodurch man denselben wirklich will«, Anw. §22.

³⁰ For a discussion of the debate surrounding the idea of a fundamental power or force, see Corey Dyck: *The Subjective Deduction and the Search for a Fundamental Force*. In: *Kant-Studien* 99 (2008), pp. 152–79.

³¹ See Anw. §7.

³² Anw. §5.

³³ This is of course an important point of contrast to Wolff. See Christian Wolff: *Vernünfftige Gedanken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen*. Fifth Edition. Frankfurt und Leipzig 1733, §421.

³⁴ »Was dem Wollen eines Geistes gemäß ist, nennet man insofern gut, gleichwie dasjenige, was ihm zuwider ist, insofern ein Uebel heisset.« Anw. §26.

³⁵ »wieferne nun etwas mit den natürlichen Absichten Gottes übereinstimmend befunden wird [...] insofern ist es metaphysice gut« Anw. §26.

³⁶ »Wiefern etwas mit dem Willen der Schöpffe übereinstimmt, so heisset es physice gut«, *ibid.*

a created being has a will, we call those things good that serve as the fulfillment of what it wills. Third is »moral goodness«, namely what is »in accordance with the moral ends of God« and which God wishes to bring about »through reason and the free will of created spirits«.³⁷ What these three types of goodness have in common is that they all relate to a will, either God's will or a created being's will, and things are called good and evil by means of their relationship to such a will.

In addition to the features of the will discussed above, towards the end of the first chapter of the *Telematologie* Crusius claims that »many spirits can possess the perfection such that at the same time and in the same circumstances, where they willed something, they could have also refrained from willing or directed their will towards something else«.³⁸ This perfection, of course, is freedom: »That willing, which one can in the same circumstances omit, or direct towards something else, is called a free willing, and the power for this [is called] freedom«.³⁹ Crusius devotes the third chapter of the *Telematologie* to freedom, and in the next section I reconstruct the most important aspects of how Crusius understands this concept.

2. Freedom

Crusius' first task in his discussion of freedom is to clearly define the concept. This is consistent with his overall aim in the *Anweisung*, which does not amount to presenting new truths: »Moral truths are all just as old as the world. ... But the distinctness and order, the certainty and completeness, the insight into the grounds and connection of moral truths is something that is considered by the majority to only a very low degree«.⁴⁰ He further explains that he takes there to be a certain degree of »unfruitful generality [*unfruchtbare Allgemeinheit*]« prevalent in moral philosophy,

³⁷ »Das moralische Gute aber ist, was den moralischen Absichten Gottes, das ist, denjenigen, welche er durch die Vernunft und den freyen Willen der erschaffenen Geister befördert wissen will, gemäß ist«, *ibid.*

³⁸ »manche Geister die Vollkommenheit besitzen können, daß sie zu eben der Zeit und bey eben den Umständen, da sie etwas wollten, das Wollen auch hätten unterlassen oder ihren Willen auf etwas anderes richten können«, *Anw.* §21.

³⁹ »Dasjenige Wollen, welches man bey eben den Umständen unterlassen, oder auf etwas anderes richten kan, heißt ein freyes Wollen, und due Kraft darzu die Freyheit«, *Anw.* §22.

⁴⁰ »Die moralischen Wahrheiten sind allesammt eben so alt, als die Welt. [...] Allein die Deutlichkeit und Ordnung, die Gewißheit und Vollständigkeit, die Einsicht in die Gründe und den Zusammenhang moralischer Wahrheiten ist etwas, das bey den meisten sich in gar niedrigem Grade befindet«. *Anw.* Preface.

such that it is his aim to more precisely define what is meant by certain concepts.⁴¹ This aim manifests itself in Crusius' discussion of freedom:

I first wish to determine the correct concept that must be connected to the word freedom in accordance with the general use of language, when it is taken to be a natural power of rational spirits, and thereafter also show that there is the same freedom of the will in actuality.⁴²

With this general aim in mind, the first point that Crusius clarifies is that he is not discussing freedom

in that political sense, where it occasionally illustrates only so much as a right to be able to do something without fear of punishment; or where it says only so much as a condition, where one may follow their own judgement in the pursuit of their own ends, in which meanings freedom is set in contrast to the condition of subservience and rule.⁴³

Crusius' focus is rather freedom as »a natural power of the will [*eine natürliche Kraft des Willens*]*«*.⁴⁴ The focus is not the rightful or unrightful use of freedom, but is simply to spell out »the natural properties or essential constitution [*den natürlichen Eigenschaften oder der wesentlichen Beschaffenheit*]*«*⁴⁵ of freedom as a power of the will. This, of course, is consistent with Telematology as a descriptive science.

When defining the concept of freedom as a natural power of the will, Crusius stays true to his aims as laid out in the Preface, where he says that what matters when one offers a definition is that one pay attention to »what seems to be proven with a definition, whether one demonstrates the reality of the defined thing, or the agreement with general use of language, or the utility of the definition's structure and the rationality of one's procedure*«*.⁴⁶ As already mentioned, Crusius' aim in

⁴¹ Anw. Preface.

⁴² »Ich will erstlich den rechten Begriff aufsuchen, welchen man den allgeminen Sprachgebrauche gemäß mit dem Worte Freyheit verknüpfen muß, wenn es vor eine natürliche Kraft der vernünftigen Geister genommen wird, und hernach zeigen, daß es auch dergleichen Freyheit des Willens in der That gebe«, Anw. §38.

⁴³ »Wir nehmen hier das Wort Freyheit nicht in denjenigen politischen Bedeutungen, da es zuweilen so viel anseiget, als ein Recht etwas ohne Furcht der Strafe thun zu können; oder da es so viel sagen will, als ein solcher Stand, da man in Besorgung seiner Endzwecke seinem eigenen Urtheile folgen darf, in welchem Verstande die Freyheit dem Stande der Unterwürfigkeit und Herrschaft entgegen gesetzt wird«, *Anw.* §37.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ »Man muß jedesmahl Achtung geben ,was bey einer Definition zu bewiesen vorkomme, ob man die Wirklichkeit des definirten Dinges, oder die Uebereinstimmung mit dem Sprachgebrauche, oder den Nutzen einer solchen Einrichtung der Definition und die Vernunftmäßigkeit seines Verfahrens darzuthun habe«, Anw. Preface.

defining freedom is in line with the first two of these purposes: he wishes to properly define the concept of freedom in a way that accords with the general use of language, and he also wishes to prove that we have such a power.⁴⁷ With respect to the former, Crusius describes the general usage of the concept of freedom as follows:

A free willing, according to the common concept, should be no externally forced and also no internally necessary willing. It should make the human being capable of the kind of responsibility of their actions, such that one can ascribe these [actions] to it not only as the real cause, but also because it proceeds in one way rather than another, [it should] recognize it [the human being] as capable of a blame attributed to it, praise or condemnation, and thereby be able to hold it to be deserving of punishment or reward. Freedom should be that which makes us capable of being subject to a law and obligation, and of being held accountable for the character of our actions.⁴⁸

With this in mind, Crusius offers us a first definition of freedom: »a free being is none other than one that, at the same time and in the same circumstances, can do or omit something, or can do something else instead, and the power, by means of which it is capable of this, must be called freedom.«⁴⁹ At a very basic level, freedom is therefore reduced to two capacities [*Vermögen*], namely the capacity to either do or omit an action in the same circumstances, what Crusius calls »libertas contradictionis« or liberty of contradiction, and the capacity to undertake to do a different action instead of the present one in the same circumstances, i. e. »libertas contrarietatis« or liberty of contrariety.⁵⁰ Understood as a combination of these two capacities, freedom is the ability to choose for or against a given option, and/or among alternatives.

⁴⁷ In this paper I do not discuss Crusius' three »proofs [*Beweise*]« of freedom, which he offers in §42 of the *Anweisung*. Adequately reconstructing these three proofs would be a significant task on its own, and requires attention to Crusius' epistemology, as well as his theology. For a brief discussion of these proofs, see the contribution by Ansgar Lyssy in this volume.

⁴⁸ »Ein freyes Wollen soll nach dem gemeinen Begriffe kein äusserlich erzwungenes und auch kein innerlich nothwendiges Wollen seyn. Es soll dem Menschen einer solchen Zurechnung seiner Thaten fähig machen, da man ihm nicht nur dieselben als der wirckenden Ursache zuschreiben, sondern auch deswegen, weil er vielmehr so als anders verfahren, loben oder tadeln, ihn einer sich zugezogenen Schuldfähig erkennen, und ihn einer Strafe oder Belohnung deswegen würdig halten kan. Die Freyheit soll dasjenige seyn, welches uns tüchtig macht, einem Gesetze und Verbindlichkeit unterworfen zu seyn, und von der Einrichtung unserer Handlungen Rechenschaft zu geben«, *Anw.* § 38.

⁴⁹ »ein freyes Wesen [kan] nichts anders seyn als ein solches, welches zu einerley Zeit und bey einerley Umständen etwas thun oder lassen, oder an dessen statt etwas anders thun kan, und die Kraft, vermöge welcher es darzu fähig ist, muß die Freyheit heissen«, *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* This is a scholastic distinction that was also used in many discussions of freedom published during the reformation. Franciscus Junius (1545–1602), for example, is a thinker who employed the distinction. See e. g. Willem J.

2.1 Freedom as Self-determination

As a concept that explains our subjugation to law and obligation, which makes us capable of being held morally responsible for our actions, and which is *neither* an externally forced nor an internally necessary willing,⁵¹ freedom, for Crusius, is above all else a concept that signals our independence from complete causal determinism. This is stated explicitly in the preface to the *Anweisung*, where Crusius states that he pays considerable attention to the concept of freedom because, without a correct concept, we risk admitting a real necessity of all things.⁵² Crusius is thus not a strict determinist, but an incompatibilist with respect to the relationship between freedom and determinism.⁵³ Defining freedom correctly is so important, because if we do not define it properly, then it would be possible for us to still use the word but nonetheless believe in a strict necessity of all things.⁵⁴ This is the background against which Crusius further clarifies the concept of freedom in terms of *self-determination*: »One can thus express the essence of freedom through this concept, that it is a power, to determine oneself to an action, without one being determined to it by something else, whether in us or outside us.«⁵⁵ Although Crusius describes this as »determining oneself, it should be

van Asselt, J. Martin Bac, and Roelf T. te Velde: *Reformed Thought on Freedom. The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology*. Michigan 2010, p. 101.

⁵¹ Crusius wants to avoid defining freedom as internal necessity because to do so would make virtue into a matter of luck. Even if we were internally determined by clear representations, »[a]ll of our virtue would thereby be transformed into mere luck in that it only takes place if one were to have a good nature, or has been placed into such connections with other things, whereby one would be determined to such actions that are in conformity with perfection«. (Anw. §40) Similarly, vice would be merely unlucky. (Ibid.) Freedom as internal necessity removes the possibility of true responsibility and blame, because everything would rather depend on whether God gave us a good nature, and on whether God placed us into a favourable relationship to other things. (Anw §40) In order to preserve *real* virtue and vice, as well as *real* responsibility and blame, we need the idea of self-determination, understood not as internal necessitation, but as uncaused causation.

⁵² See Anw. Preface.

⁵³ See the contribution by Steven Tester in this volume for a discussion of Crusius' libertarian view of freedom, in opposition to the compatibilism of his contemporaries and predecessors such as Wolff.

⁵⁴ Anw., Preface.

⁵⁵ »Man kann derowegen das Wesen der Freyheit auch durch diesen Begriff ausdrücken, daß sie eine Kraft sey, sich zu einer Handlung selbst zu determiniren, ohne daß man durch irgend etwas anders, es sey in uns oder ausser uns, darzu determiniret werde«, Anw. §39.

clear from his rejection of freedom as internal necessity that self-determination here does not mean that one is necessitated by one's own representations, as is Wolff's view, for example.⁵⁶ For Crusius, we need a concept of freedom that implies real self-determination in the sense of *uncaused causation*, for if we were to allow that freedom essentially consists in our being determined by internal representations, our actions would not stop being necessary: »because all that is determined, no matter how it is determined, is necessary«.⁵⁷ On the contrary, self-determination implies the complete absence of prior determination:

If therefore apart from the free act something is at hand which makes it that the same [the act] now receives this and no other determination, then the effected substance is thereby determined. But if the same is not at hand, and it [the substance] has nonetheless the power to undertake something, then it determines itself.⁵⁸

Freedom as self-determination therefore involves being able to perform an action, even in those circumstances where there are absolutely no conditions that would make it necessary to act in one way rather than another. Freedom thus amounts to the capacity to begin a causal series without prior conditions.⁵⁹

How Crusius conceives of freedom as self-determination, i.e. uncaused causation, is further clarified when he turns to offer a proof of how such a determination is possible. The question he addresses is how freedom as self-determination is possible as a *metaphysical* concept, a topic covered in both the *Anweisung* and in Crusius' text on metaphysics, the *Sketch of the Necessary Truths of Reason* [*Entwurf der nothwendigen Vernunftwahrheiten*], first published in 1745. In both of these texts Crusius argues that in order to avoid an infinite regress of causes and effects, we need to suppose that there are first causes, which he calls »foundational activities [*Grundthätigkeiten*]«:

It is a matter that belongs to metaphysics to prove that, since there must be between the effect and the effecting cause, the action or activity, which series cannot proceed indefinitely, I say, [to prove] that one must eventually come upon first actions or foundational activities, before which there cannot be another activity of an effecting cause, but which immediately arises from the essence of an active foundational power itself.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ See Wolff: *Vernünfftige Gedanken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen*, §521.

⁵⁷ »weil alles determinirte, wiefern es determinirt ist, nothwendig ist«, *Anw.* §40.

⁵⁸ »Wenn dahero ausser der freyen That etwas anderes vorhanden ist, welches machet, daß derselben jetzo diese und keine andere Determination zukommen muß, so wird die wirkende Substanz dadurch determiniret«, *Anw.* § 39.

⁵⁹ For a discussion of Crusius' relation to Leibniz and Kant on this topic see Finster: *Spontaneität, Freiheit und unbedingte Kausalität*.

⁶⁰ »Es ist eine Materie, welche in die Metaphysik gehöret, zu erweisen, daß, weil zwischen der Wirkung und der wirkenden Ursache die Action oder Thätigkeit darzwischen seyn muß, welche Reihe aber nicht unendlich fortgehen kan, daß man, sage ich, mithin endlich auf erste Actionen oder Grundthätigkeiten kommen müsse, vor welchen nicht

In the *Entwurf*, Crusius lists two types of »foundational activities [Grundthätigkeiten (actiones primas)]«.⁶¹ First are the foundational activities that »continue incessantly [*beständig fortdauern*]«⁶² and which constitute the inner essence of active substances. These can take two forms, depending on whether the substance is necessary or contingent. A necessary substance, such as God, requires no more distant cause for the foundational activity to be active, and thus simply possesses foundational activities necessarily, which thus continue incessantly or persist necessarily as well. Crusius lists as an example the divine understanding as such a substance.⁶³ Contingent substances, namely all finite substances, also must have an essence that must be preserved in order for them to continue to exist. Examples here are the active powers of elements.⁶⁴ In both these cases such foundational activities arise immediately from the essence of an active foundational power and do so »incessantly« i. e. constantly. The difference is that with contingent substances they need only be established as existing in order for such activities to continue or persist.

The second type of foundational activity is that which does not continue incessantly [*beständig geschehen*],⁶⁵ and these are in turn of two forms. First, there are those activities that *necessarily* take place, but only when their conditions are posited. Thus, the reason why these do not »continue incessantly« and are a distinct kind of foundational activity is that, even if the substance exists, these activities are not active if certain conditions are not in place. Examples Crusius gives are »sensations [*Empfindungen*]«⁶⁶ and the powers of the human understanding.⁶⁷ The second form of foundational activity that requires a condition to be active are those that do not necessarily take place when the conditions are present, but which, when the conditions are in place, either may take place, may not, or may happen in a different way. In this case »the active power determines itself to one among many ways of acting, which are possible for it with the establishment of certain circumstances«.⁶⁸

wiederum eine andere Thätigkeit einer wirkenden Ursache vorhergehen muß, sondern welche unmittelbar aus dem Wesen einerthätigen Grundkraft selbst entspringen«, Anw. §41.

⁶¹ Ent. §81.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ent. §82.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Anw. §41.

⁶⁸ »Alsdenn determiniret sich die thätige Kraft selbst zu einer inter mehreren Arten zu agiren, welche ihr bey Setzung gewisser Umstände allerseits vollkommen möglich sind«, Ent. §82.

This, of course, is the kind of foundational activity that freedom of the will consists in. In each of these various kinds of foundational activities the substance acts of itself, and its activity proceeds from the essence of a foundational power within the substance, not from an effecting cause outside of it. In other words, each kind of foundational activity amounts to a substance being a first cause. The case of the will is such that it has a foundational power of the sort that when certain circumstances are present, it does not necessarily bring about things *on its own*,⁶⁹ but it can choose to act, to not act, or to act in other ways. With this in mind, Crusius offers an additional definition of the freedom of the human will as a foundational power: »freedom is the highest degree of activity in a will, by means of which it can begin, direct, and even cancel a reality, regardless that such a reality is no more than made possible by all the required conditions for the same.«⁷⁰

2.2 The Psychology of Freedom

Thus far we have seen that Crusius understands freedom as self-determination, and as a foundational power that amounts to a human being's capacity to act as an uncaused cause. With this in hand, we can now turn to how Crusius conceives of the ways in which free choices are made. In this respect we turn from a metaphysical to a psychological discussion of freedom. Crusius even offers a new definition of freedom, which he calls the »most complete [*vollständigsten*]« explanation of freedom, when he switches to this focus:

Freedom consists, namely, in an inner, perfect activity of the will, which is capable of connecting its efficacy with one of the currently aroused drives of the will, or to omit this connection and thereby remain inactive, or similarly instead of the former to bind it with another drive.⁷¹

⁶⁹ It might seem paradoxical to assert that a substance acts as an uncaused cause when it *necessarily* brings about a state of affairs when certain conditions are present. Crusius attempts to make sense of this with the notion of a foundational activity as one that proceeds from the essence of a foundational power. Thus, even though a substance necessarily brings about a state of affairs in certain conditions, the substance does so *on its own*, i.e. the causal series begins with the substance and its foundational activity, not with the conditions.

⁷⁰ »die Freyheit sey der höchste Grad der Thätigkeit in einem Willen, vermöge welcher er eine Wirksamkeit selbst anfangen, richten und wiederum abbrechen kan, ungeachtet dieselbe durch all dabey erforderliche Bedingungen nicht mehr als möglich gemacht worden«, Anw. §41.

⁷¹ »Und hiermit entdecken wir den vollständigsten Begriff der Freyheit. Es besteht nemlich die Freyheit in einer innerlichen vollkommenen Thätigkeit des Willens, welche vermögend ist, ihre Wirksamkeit mit einem von denen jetzo

In the first part of this paper I illustrated that Crusius conceives of desires as *internal* endeavours to make something real, or unify ourselves with something that does not yet exist, and the concept of an intention or decision captures the fact that we choose to actually bring about what we endeavour to bring about. As consisting in both a liberty of contradiction and of contrariety, freedom is our ability to decide to will or not will what we desire, as well as our ability to will something in accordance with a different desire altogether. The key point here, of course, is that willing requires the presence of desires in order to be efficacious.

Generally speaking, when we freely will something, we are in a situation where there are many desires aroused in us, and we decide to connect our efficacy with one of these desires and in turn act in accordance with it. An important distinction that Crusius makes in this context is that between complete [*vollkommen*] and incomplete [*unvollkommen*] freedom:

Freedom is either complete or incomplete (*libertas plena vel minus plena*). A *complete freedom* is where refraining from something or the direction of another, with which it [the action] is now compared, would be just as easy for us. An *incomplete freedom* is where it would not be as easy for us to decide for the opposite.⁷²

Complete freedom is called »libertas indifferentiae or aequilibrii«,⁷³ i. e. liberty of indifference or equilibrium. Importantly, this is not the condition we always find ourselves in. Rather, Crusius claims it only takes place »when two objects are indifferent towards ends, at least according to our understanding; or when, among two ends that we desire to the same degree of strength, we determine ourselves to one of the two«. ⁷⁴ Incomplete freedom, on the other hand, is the situation human beings find themselves in most often, and is »by contrast, when one must overcome an opposition in their decision«. ⁷⁵ The opposition we must overcome is presented to us by the strength of our other desires. This opposition can be larger or smaller, and thus these oppositions can vary in strength. Crusius is careful to note that incomplete freedom [*unvollkommene Freiheit*] is not always an

erregten Trieben des Willens zu verknüpfen, oder auch diese Verknüpfung zu unterlassen und unthätig dabey zu verbleiben, oder auch dieselbe an statt des vorigen mit einem anderen Triebe zu verbinden«, Anw. §43.

⁷² »Die Freyheit ist entweder eine vollkommene oder unvollkommene (*Libertas plen vel minus plena*). Eine *vollkommene Freyheit* ist, da uns die Unterlassung der Sache oder die Verrichtung einer andern, mit welcher sie jetzo verfliehen wird, aben so leicht seyn würde«, Anw. §49.

⁷³ Anw. §50.

⁷⁴ »Sie findet aber nicht überall, sondern nur alsdenn statt, wenn zwey Objecte zu den Endzwecken wenigstens nach unserer Einsicht gleichgültig sind; oder wenn wir unter zwey Endzwecken, die wir in gleichem Grade der Stärke begehren, uns zu einem von beyden determiniren sollen«, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ »wenn man bey der Entschliessung zum Gegentheile einen Widerstand überwinden müste«, Anw. § 51.

imperfection [*Unvollkommenheit*] of the substance in which it takes place.⁷⁶ It is only an imperfection when the end of freedom is contradicted, i. e. »when one does not find oneself in the position to be able to choose the good or the better.«⁷⁷ I return to a discussion of this imperfection when I discuss Crusius' distinction between three types of freedom. First, let us take a closer look at how he conceives of the opposition that desires can present to free choice.

Crusius does not say much directly about how free choice is affected by the strength of our desires. What he does offer are some examples wherein the strength of our desires is assigned a number to reflect their strength. It is important to note that Crusius acknowledges that »the activities of the soul cannot be calculated according to numbers.«⁷⁸ At the same time, he believes that they nonetheless must have »the same relation as numbers to one another«,⁷⁹ despite the fact that we do not know the true unit of measurement for them. With this provision in mind, Crusius offers his examples. The first is of a person who wakes up in the morning and considers that it would be much better to get up and do their chores than to continue sleeping. If we posit that the strength of this person's desire to do their chores is 100, the strength of freedom is 20,⁸⁰ but the desire to remain sleeping is 200, then this person »will be passionately determined to remain sleeping«⁸¹ despite the fact that they would regret this given they think it better to get up and do their chores. The reason for their being determined is that the strength of the desire to remain sleeping (200) far outweighs the *combination* of the desire to do one's chores and the power of freedom (120). In a variation of this example, if we assume that the desire to remain sleeping is 80, the desire to do one's chores is 100, and the capacity of freedom is still 20, then this person »can also freely decide to remain sleeping.«⁸² In this case, both options are open to the person, since the combination of the capacity of freedom and the desire to remain sleeping (100) is equal to the opposing desire to do one's chores (100) and thus we are not passionately determined in one direction.

⁷⁶ Anw. § 52.

⁷⁷ »Sie ist es nur alsdenn, wenn dadurch dem Endzwecke der Freyheit widerstritten wird, nemlich wenn man sich ausser Stande befindet, das gute oder das bessere erwehlen zu können«, Anw. §52.

⁷⁸ »Ich weiß zwar, daß die Thätigkeiten der Seele sich nach Zahlen nicht ausrechnen lassen.« Anw. § 55.

⁷⁹ »sie doch eben dergleichen Verhältniß wie de Zahlen unter einander haben müssen«, *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Crusius is extremely unclear how freedom itself can have a strength and thus contribute to decision making in such a way that assigning it a quantitative value, like 20, makes sense. I discuss this idea again below, but it should be noted that I have not attempted to make sense of how exactly this works.

⁸¹ »so wird er leidend determiniret werden, lieber liegen zu bleiben«, *ibid.*

⁸² »so wird er sich auch frey entschliessen können liegen zu bleiben«, *ibid.*

There are a number of important points to note about the above examples. First, it is unclear just how far the strength of a desire needs to outweigh another in order for it to ›win‹ the battle of forces taking place. Although Crusius suggests in one of the above examples that action is possible as soon as the strength of freedom plus another desire is equal to an opposing desire, Crusius gives no indication as to what the threshold might be. Second, the main point Crusius wishes to make with them is that the strength of our desires can determine us to act in certain ways:

If therefore the opposition, which it [freedom] must overcome with the election of the opposite, amounts to more than the capacity of its [freedom's] activity, and it has no assisting causes, whereby its capacity would be strengthened in this case, or it does not avail itself of any; then it cannot make the opposite actual.⁸³

In other words, freedom is what Crusius calls a ›finite power [*endliche Kraft*]‹,⁸⁴ meaning we are not in complete control of all of our actions. On the contrary, the strength of our passions can determine us to certain actions, and in his examples Crusius assigns freedom the strength of 20, which appears to be no accident. Freedom itself, as a ›finite‹ power, does not make us capable of choosing any option whatsoever, and therefore must have a relatively low strength. The strength of 20 seems somewhat arbitrary, but Crusius' point is simply that freedom is an ›all too weak power [*die sonst allzuschwache Kraft*]‹⁸⁵ on its own, and is therefore limited in the sense that it is incapable of overcoming desires when they have a sufficient strength. If freedom were an ›infinite power, we would always be in a position to either do or not do a given action, or to do one action rather than another. Only God possess such an infinite power, which means only He is capable of willing all possible actions.⁸⁶ Crusius is clear, however, that even though finite spirits like human beings possess freedom as a finite power, they can still be called free: ›because the essence of the power of freedom still befits it [a rational spirit], even if not all of its acts are free or not completely free, because one is

⁸³ »Wenn also der Widerstand, welchen sie bey Erwehlung des Gegentheils überwinden muß, mehr beträgt, als das Vermögen ihrer Thätigkeit, und sie hat keine beyhelffenden Ursachen §51, dadurch ihr Vermögen in diesem Falle verstärkt würde, oder sie bedienet sich derselbigen nicht; so kan sie auch das Gegentheil nicht wircklich machen«, Anw. § 53.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Anw. §51.

⁸⁶ See Anw. §6.

not allowed to extend the ability of freedom further than its essence and the limits of its power allows«. ⁸⁷

A second point illustrated by the above examples is that the essence of the human will cannot be described as »a power to will the good«. ⁸⁸ Although we may think it better to do our chores, depending on the strength of our desires we might be passionately determined to continue lying in bed. As such, Crusius does not hold an intellectualist conception of motivation like Wolff, according to which we necessarily will in accordance with our representation of the good. ⁸⁹ This is further illustrated if we return to Crusius' three kinds of goodness discussed in the previous section. We saw there that goodness consists in the relationship between an object and the will of a being, whether a human being or God. Although it is true that a thing is physically good »because we will it«, moral good is not something we necessarily will, »rather we ought to will it«. ⁹⁰ Thus Crusius denies that we only ever will what is physically good. We can also will what we hold to be *morally* good. We do not *necessarily* will what we take to be morally good, rather we *ought* to will it.

If the will is not to be understood as a power to will the good, Crusius leaves room for genuine weakness of will, where we recognize what is morally good but will something else instead, perhaps even what is morally evil. This of course can happen in two ways. First, we can will what is evil against our own will. In such a case, we have, for example, the intention to *not* do something (e. g. what is morally evil), but the drives or desires urging us to do that same thing are so strong that they cannot be overcome by freedom. ⁹¹ Alternatively, we might will what is evil by freely choosing to do what the understanding represents as evil.

Crusius claims that we are capable of freely deciding to do what we represent as evil by imagining that the good or better alternative is more difficult, thereby pairing freedom with our natural aversion to things that are difficult, and allowing us to choose the more evil, i. e. less difficult option. ⁹² Indeed, an important aspect of freedom that is implied by Crusius' examples above is that

⁸⁷ »weil ihm das Wesen der Kraft der Freyhet zukömmt, obgleich nicht alle seine Thaten frey oder nicht völlig frey sind, weil man das Vermögen der Freyheit nicht weiter ausdehnen darf, als ihr Wesen und die Schranken ihrer Kraft zulassen«, Anw. §53.

⁸⁸ »eine Kraft sey allezeit das Gute zu wollen«, Anw. §27.

⁸⁹ See Wolff: Vernünfftige Gedanken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, §520 ff.

⁹⁰ »Denn das physicalische Gute heißt allererst deswegen gut, weil wir es wollen. Das moralische Gute aber wollen wir auch nicht nothwendig, sondern wir sollen es nur wollen«, Anw. §27.

⁹¹ Anw. §54.

⁹² Anw. §55.

freedom can have »assisting causes [*beyhelffenden Ursachen*]«,⁹³ i. e. our »all too weak« power of freedom can be tied to other, stronger desires so that we may overcome the strength of distinct, opposing desires. For example, we can undertake to do things we have an aversion to, such as eat something we know to be sour. In order to assist ourselves, we can think of reasons to do what we wish to do, e. g. that it would be healthy to eat the sour object, and avail ourselves of other desires, e. g. the desire to be healthy, that help us bring the freely willed object about. In this way we need to make use of »reflection [*Nachsinnen*]« and »intelligence [*Klugheit*]«⁹⁴ to find reasons for doing such things. Freely choosing to do the less good or even evil option is thereby possible in that we are capable of using reflection and intelligence to link our freedom with desires that are capable of overcoming the desires that speak in favour of the morally better option.

If it is possible for us to freely choose evil as well as the good, we must be capable of moving between the two states. Crusius illustrates this with his distinction between three types of freedom. First, there is a freedom only for the good, whereby one can only choose among the possible good actions.⁹⁵ Second, there is a freedom only for the morally evil, whereby one can only choose among possible evil actions, which is also called »slavery of the free will [*die Slavery des freyen Willens*]«.⁹⁶ Third, there is a freedom for the morally good and evil, whereby one can determine oneself to good as well as evil actions, because they are both possible. Crusius claims that a finite spirit must be placed in the position of the third scenario at least once, if it is to be capable of a true moral virtue.⁹⁷ The second option, i. e. slavery of the will, is a despicable corruption of a free spirit.⁹⁸ But the first scenario, i.e. a freedom to only choose the good, is the final end of a finite spirit and is therefore the reason why freedom has been given to it, and to which it ought to strive through the correct use of freedom.⁹⁹ Again, freedom is not necessarily a power to act according to the understanding's representation of the good. Rather, wherever there really are one or many morally good options among the actions we represent to ourselves as possible, freedom *should* be the power of being able to choose only among those morally better options. Although Crusius does not specify

⁹³ Anw. §53.

⁹⁴ Anw. 51.

⁹⁵ Anw. §54.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ See Anw. §46.

when this would take place, presumably it would be when our desires that speak in favour of the morally good options are all stronger than the desires that oppose them. Similarly, »slavery of the will« or the freedom to only do the morally evil would consist in our desires for morally evil actions to be so strong that we only have the freedom to choose among them.

2.3 Moral Progress

The above picture raises the question of how Crusius conceives of moral progress and degradation, i. e. movement from one kind of freedom to another. This is a topic, however, on which Crusius intentionally remains silent. In the preface, for example, he says that his ethics contains no separate »science [*Wissenschaft*]« of »the means of virtue [*die Mittel der Tugend*]« because »[t]he ethical virtues are at all times also the means to virtue itself.«¹⁰⁰ A separate science of the means to virtue would therefore be »a superfluous repetition«¹⁰¹ that ought to be avoided. At the same time, Crusius gives some indication as to how moral progress might proceed.

Moral progress happens in two ways. First, if the ethical virtues are the means to virtue itself, then perhaps Crusius believes that moral progress takes place via habit. This would fit well with the importance he ascribes to the strength of desires in his account of choice, and how free choice can be limited and even denied if certain desires become too strong. In order to improve morally, what we would want to do is strengthen the desires for the morally good, and weaken those for the morally bad. An obvious way in which the strengthening of desires takes place is by continually acting on and satisfying them.

A second way in which moral progress might take place is via »reflection« and »intelligence«, whereby we link additional desires to the things that we freely will.¹⁰² For example, towards the end of the chapter of freedom, Crusius suggests that it is by linking other drives to our »drive for perfection [*Vollkommenheitstrieb*]«¹⁰³ that we are capable of overcoming drives that oppose what is morally good. Doing so would indeed improve our moral condition, but reflection, intelligence, and above all the understanding are required for this:

¹⁰⁰ »Die Ethischen Tugenden sind allerseits auch selbst Mittel zur Tugend« Anw. Preface.

¹⁰¹ »eine überflüssige Wiederholung«, *ibid.*

¹⁰² See Anw. §51.

¹⁰³ Anw. §56.

If I now suppose, that the intention to do the thing will nevertheless proceed, there necessarily arises from this an endeavor, whereby we drive the understanding to search for reasons that excuse our present intention, and can defend it as just as good, or even better, or as not much worse. We therefore direct our understanding towards that which we regard as in service of our inclinations.¹⁰⁴

This can, of course, work both ways; we can also direct the understanding to justify our intention to do what is morally bad. The point, however, is that the mere intention to do good (or evil) is not sufficient, and that the understanding is required for moral improvement (and degradation). What is essential is that we have the will to improve, or that our ›drive for perfection‹ is at least strong enough to encourage the understanding to think of ways to help strengthen it. The position we want to avoid is the one where we can only choose among morally evil options. Again, this presumably takes place if we allow the drives to evil action to become so strong that they cannot be overcome. It may also arise if the drive for perfection becomes too weak. If this is correct, then so long as our drive for perfection is relatively strong, there is hope for our own moral progress. Moral progress thus seems possible if we sufficiently strengthen our morally good desires via habit, and if we utilize our understanding to help strengthen them by searching for ›assisting causes‹ in other desires. This will prevent us from reaching the condition Crusius calls ›slavery of the will‹, where we risk being beyond the hope of saving.

Conclusion

My aim in this paper has been to give an account of the way in which Crusius conceives of freedom, as he presents it in the third chapter of his ›science of the will‹. After summarizing some key concepts of this science of the will more generally, I illustrated that freedom, for Crusius, is a foundational power of the will that makes us capable of self-determination in the sense of acting as an uncaused cause. Furthermore, and contrary to what is suggested in the literature on the topic, I illustrated that Crusius' understanding of freedom is not best described as merely the capacity to choose otherwise. On a basic level, freedom consists in both the freedom of contradiction and the

¹⁰⁴ »Wenn ich nun setze, daß der Vorsatz die Sache zu thun, dennoch fortgesetzt wird, so entsteht daraus nothwendig eine Bemühung, wodurch wir den Verstand antreiben, auf Gründe herum zu sinnen, wodurch sich unser jetziger Vorsatz entschuldigen, und als eben so gut, oder gar besser, oder doch als nicht viel schlechter vertheidigen lasse. Wir richten daher unsern Verstand auf dasjenige, was uns zum Behuf unserer Reigungen einfällt«, *ibid.*

freedom of contrariety. I also showed that his conception of freedom is not to be described as liberty of indifference. Rather, indifference or ›complete freedom‹ is only a very unique situation that the human will might find itself in. More often than not, the human will is in the situation of having ›incomplete freedom‹, where our choices must overcome the opposing strength of conflicting desires. Freedom is also a ›finite power‹ in the sense that we are often determined to act because of the strength of our desires. I concluded with a brief discussion of how moral progress might work, on Crusius' account. Many further questions could be raised concerning the topics discussed in this paper. It is my hope that the reconstruction of Crusius' conception of freedom of the will that I have offered will inspire further research on a number of these questions. Above all, with the above in hand I hope that Crusius' conception of freedom can more meaningfully be compared to Wolff and Kant, and that his position between these two figures can be better appreciated as a result.