

ON THE POSSIBLE CRUSIAN ELEMENTS IN KANT'S THEORY OF MORAL AGENCY

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- (1) Will is “the power of a mind [*Geist*] to act according to its representations” so that “one makes a represented actual or strives to do so” (*Guide* §2).
- (2) [The will] is an overarching concept [*Inbegriff*] of particular foundational powers that one brings together under one name due to their common essence[.] (*Guide* §6)
- (3) That volition, by means of which we try to make something actual that does not yet exist or try to unify ourselves with this thing, insofar as one regards it as an action within the willing spirit, is called a **desire** [*Begehren*]. On the other hand, an **aversion** [*Verabscheuen*] is when we try to prevent the actuality of a thing or, more particularly, when we try to [*in Bemühung sind*] avoid unifying with it. (*Guide* §9)
- (4) [A] **free being** can be nothing other than one that can do or omit something at a single time and in the same circumstances, or can do one thing instead of another, and the power, by means of which one is capable of this, must be called **freedom**. (*Guide* §38)
- (5) [Freedom] is a power to determine oneself to an action [*sich zu einer Handlung selbst zu determinieren*] without being determined by something else, whether within us or outside of us. (*Guide* §39)
- (6) [I]f the freedom of our will were none other than [that of an *automaton spirituale* driven by representations], then it would at bottom be nothing better than the freedom of a turnspit [*Freiheit eines Bratenwenders*], which, when once it is wound up, also accomplishes its movements of itself. (KpV 5:97)
- (7) “[A] perfect, internal activity” requires “that there are efficient causes which can initiate one of their possible activities and which are sufficiently capable of initiating more than one activity at one time” (*Guide* §41).
- (8) In free actions, therefore, a sufficient reason in the sense that I assign to the word finds a place, namely there is merely a *sufficient* cause, but not one that beyond this is also *determined to only a single way of acting*. For a free substance, when it acts freely, is provided with sufficient powers for an action but insofar as it acts freely it is no less provided with powers sufficient to omit that action. (*Dissertation* §XLV)
- (9) Freedom is “the highest degree of activity [*Thätigkeit*] in a will” (§41) to be able to “itself initiate, direct, and also stop being effective, notwithstanding the fact that this is no more than made possible by all the required conditions” (*Guide* §41).
- (10) [F]reedom consists in an internal, perfect activity of the will, which is capable of connecting its efficacy [*Wirksamkeit*] with one of the currently aroused drives [*Trieben*] of the will, or of omitting this connection and remaining inactive, or of connecting [*verbinden*] it with another drive instead of the previous one. (*Guide* §43)
- (11) Perfect freedom, “where the omission of something or the performance of another, with which it is presently compared, would be just as easy [*leicht*] for us” (*Guide* §49), takes place “only in those cases where two objects are indifferent towards an end, at least as far as we know, or when we determine ourselves to one of two ends that we desire with an equal degree of strength” (*Guide* §50).
- (12) Imperfect freedom “obtains where it would not be just as easy for us to choose the alternative” (*Guide* §49).
- (13) If the opposition, which [freedom] must overcome with the election of the opposite amounts to more than the capacity freedom’s activity, and it has no assisting causes whereby its capacity would be strengthened [...], then it cannot make the opposite actual. (*Guide* §53)
- (14) Imperfect freedom is when one must overcome an opposition when resolving to do the alternative (§49). Since the opposition can be greater or smaller, imperfect freedom varies greatly in degree. (*Guide* §51)
- (15) 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, but the desire to remain sleeping is 200, then this person “will be passionately determined to remain sleeping” (§55) 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” (§55). (Walschots 2021, 202)
- (16) If we want to do the alternative [to the strongest desire], it is often necessary that we first think of motives for doing it and that we take control of and utilize all sorts of auxiliary causes, by means of which we can pit the otherwise all too weak power of freedom in the position of being equal to the opposition. [...] When one assists, in this way, one’s all-too impotent resolution to accomplish that which one is not immediately capable of doing through contemplation [*Nachsinnen*], the representa-

- tion of motives, and other means of assistance, then sometimes more and sometimes less time, effort, and prudence [*Klugheit*] are required before one is in a position to actually put the resolution we have made into practice. (*Guide* §51)
- (17) [D]o everything that is in accordance with the perfection of God, the essential perfection of your own nature and that of all other creatures, and finally also the relations of thing to each other that he has established, and omit the opposite, out of obedience to the command of your creator, as you natural and necessary sovereign. (*Guide* §174)
- (18) [A]ll other drives, “even the desire for our advantage and the aversion to our harm,” “should be subordinated [*subordiniret*]” (*Guide* §176) to the drive of conscience.
- (19) [There are] concepts that we cannot at all think in their true constitution [*Beschaffenheit*], but [for which we] must rather rest satisfied with symbolic cognition. In [their] case, namely, the absolute that we attribute to them is only something indeterminate, but we do not know the true constitution of its determination [*Determination*] and, for that reason, represent it as merely relative and negative. [...] In that case, we have a true and usable cognition of the object, yet not an intuitive, but rather merely a symbolic cognition. Its concept can thus be distinct to the extent that it can be distinguished from all others. However, it is only not yet complete, namely, insofar as we are not familiar with everything attributed to it that is positive. (*Sketch* §102)
- (20) [T]he faculty of desire (*Begehrungsvermögen*) “is a being’s faculty to be by means of representations the cause of the objects of these representations” (KpV 5:9n).
- (21) In man the latter is a free choice [*Willkür*]; the will [*Wille*], which is directed to nothing beyond the law itself, cannot be called either free or unfree. [...] Only *choice* can therefore be called *free*. (MS 6:226)
- (22) But this subjective ground [of the exercise of the human being’s freedom in general] must, in turn, itself always be a deed [*Actus*] of freedom (for otherwise the use or abuse of the human being’s power of choice with respect to the moral law could not be imputed to him, nor could the good or evil in him be called “moral”). Hence the ground of evil cannot lie in any object *determining* the power of choice through inclination, not in any natural impulses, but only in a rule that the power of choice itself produces for the exercise of its freedom, i.e., in a maxim. [...] [T]he first ground of the adoption of our maxims [...] must itself again lie in the free power of choice [*Willkür*]. (RGV 6:21–2)
- (23) [Good and evil characters] must be an effect of [the human being’s] free power of choice [*Willkür*], for otherwise they could not be imputed to him and, consequently, he could be neither *morally* good nor evil. [...] [T]he human being [...] brings it about that he becomes either good or evil, according as he either incorporates or does not incorporate into his maxims the incentives contained in that predisposition [for the good] (and this must be left entirely to his free choice [*Wahl*]). (RGV 6:44)
- (24) *Willkür*, “this inscrutable property [*diese unerforschliche Eigenschaft*]” (RGV 6:49n); the depths of [the human being’s] own heart (the subjective ground of his maxims) are to him inscrutable (RGV 6:51).
- (25) “The rational origin, however, of [...] this propensity to evil, remains inexplicable to us” because all of our predispositions are for the good and so “there is no conceivable ground for us, therefore, from which moral evil could first have come in,” which is why “[t]he absolutely *first* beginning of all evil is thereby represented as incomprehensible [*unbegreiflich*] to us” (RGV 6:43–4).
- (26) [T]he *corruption* [*Verderbtheit*] (*corruptio*) of the human heart is the propensity of the power of choice to maxims that subordinate the incentives of the moral law to others (not moral ones). It [...] reverses the ethical order as regards the incentives of a *free* power of choice; and although with this reversal there can still be legally good (*legale*) actions, yet the mind’s attitude is thereby corrupted at its root (so far as the moral disposition is concerned), and hence the human being is designated as evil. (RGV 6:30)
- (27) [W]hatever [the human being’s] previous behavior may have been, *whatever the natural causes influencing him* [...] his action is yet free and not determined through any of these causes; hence the action can and must always be judged as an *original* exercise of his power of choice. He should have refrained from it, *whatever his temporal circumstances and entanglements*; for through no cause in the world can he cease to be a free agent. (RGV 6:41, the first and last emphases added)
- (28) [F]reedom of choice [*Willkür*] has the characteristic [...] that it cannot be determined to action through any incentive *except so far as the human being has incorporated it into his maxim*. (RGV 6:23–4)

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