

From a contemporary perspective, it seems clear that although one can say that everything that is possible is – at least in principle – conceivable by some cognitive subject, it would simply be wrong to claim that everything conceivable is also possible, at least in some sense of the two terms ‘possible’ and ‘conceivable’. In this talk I focus on how Crusius and the pre-critical Kant conceive respectively of the relation of the possible to the conceivable. My assumption is that it partially follows from their notion of God as the ultimate “ground of being” (“Realgrund”) not only of what is actual but also of what is possible, that they – more or less – explicitly equate the possible with the conceivable. For both, God, as a necessary substance, has both a will and an intellect. Now possible things in general are intimately related to God’s intellect insofar as what is possible *is* the content of some divine idea or concept of that very thing. As I see it, it is due to this picture – what is possible is conceived of by God and thus, somehow exists in God’s intellect, if only as the content of some divine idea – that both Crusius and Kant take the conceivable and the possible to be co-extensive.

I shall discuss Kant’s two ways of how something possible is “grounded” in something real (see Kant’s *Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund*, 1763), namely (a) as a determination (property) of something actual, such that it is itself actual, or (b) in the way a consequence is related to its ground. These two ways should be compared to Crusius’s account. I argue that ‘conceivable’ in the end should mean nothing but the contradiction-free combination of simple constituents. The problem, however, is that Crusius does not agree with Kant as to what these constituents amount to. My ultimate goal is to render explicit the consequences of Crusius’ and Kant’s view of seeing God as the ultimate “ground” of everything – possible and actual.