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Gefühl in Kant's Gefühl eines Daseins:

Clues from Tetens and Feder

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Abstract: Kant claims that the transcendental self can be represented as a “feeling of existence” (Gefühl eines Daseins). Some interpreters take this claim to be inconsistent with Kant’s larger theory of self-consciousness. I consider the extent to which two eighteenth-century philosophy texts that Kant knew well—Tetens’ *Philosophische Versuche über die menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung* and Feder’s *Logik und Metaphysik*—can contribute to our understanding of Gefühl eines Daseins. I point to some continuities between Kant’s characterization of “Gefühl” in Gefühl eines Daseins, and Tetens’ and Feder’s conceptualizations of Selbstgefühl. I show that Gefühl eines Daseins is prima facie consistent with Feder’s clear “I” (or Selbstgefühl) and Tetens’ clear Selbstgefühl; and both Gefühl eines Daseins and clear Selbstgefühl relate to higher cognition. Finally, I discuss whether the notion of Selbstgefühl is compatible with key aspects of Kant’s conceptualization of the self—the transcendental-empirical distinction, and the atemporality of the self.

1 Introduction

Kant says that the transcendental self can be represented as a “feeling of existence” (Gefühl eines Daseins) (*Prol* 4: 334n).¹ Some Kant interpreters take such a description of the transcendental self to be in conflict with Kant’s overall theory of self.² In this essay, I contribute to this larger question of whether the notion of Gefühl eines Daseins can indeed form part of Kant’s account

¹ All translations from the German are my own. I have used neither italics nor quote marks in the case of German words that I have used often in this essay—Gefühl eines Daseins, Gefühl, Selbstgefühl, Empfindung, Selbstthätigkeit, and Kraft. Citations from the *Akademie* edition of Kant’s writings is by volume: page, and those from the *Critique of Pure Reason* are in accordance with the standard A/B method. I have used the following abbreviations:

<i>PV I</i>	Philosophische Versuche über die menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung, Volume 1
<i>PV II</i>	Philosophische Versuche über die menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung, Volume 2
<i>SP</i>	Über die allgemeine speculativische Philosophie
<i>LM</i>	Logik und Metaphysik
<i>KrV</i>	Kritik der reinen Vernunft
<i>Anth</i>	Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht
<i>Fortschritte</i>	Welches sind die wirklichen Fortschritte, die die Metaphysik seit Leibnizens und Wolffs Zeiten in Deutschland gemacht hat?
<i>Prol</i>	Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können.
<i>Refl</i>	Reflexionen

² Sturma (1985: 116-17).

of the transcendental self.³ Specifically, I inquire into the extent to which we can make better sense of Gefühl eines Daseins if we draw on two eighteenth century philosophy texts that Kant knew well—J. N. Tetens’ *Philosophische Versuche über die menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung*, and J. G. H. Feder’s *Logik und Metaphysik*.

Prima facie, there are good reasons to adopt such a strategy. First, both Tetens and Feder employ the notion of Selbstgefühl (feeling of self) in a way that appears to be in accordance with Kant’s statement that the transcendental self can be represented as Gefühl eines Daseins. Feder characterizes Selbstgefühl as the immediate perception of one’s existence (“unmittelbare Gewahrnehmung seiner Existenz” *LM* 1778, 33; *LM* 1771, 32).⁴ Tetens says that Selbstgefühl is the feeling of one’s own activities like the imagination and power of thinking, etc. (“innere Selbstgefühl, das Gefuehl eigener Thätigkeiten, der Phantasie, der Denkkraft, des Herzens u.s.f. [...], *PVI*, 232). Second, Kant knew the texts in which Feder and Tetens speak of the notion of

³ At the title suggests, I am concerned here only with the Gefühl and not the “Dasein” part of the formulation Gefühl eines Daseins. For the sake of brevity, however, I will use “Gefühl eines Daseins” rather than “Gefühl in Gefühl eines Daseins” throughout this essay.

⁴ Feder revised *Logik und Metaphysik* several times. I cite two different editions of Feder’s text—the third edition (1771), and the fifth edition (1778). Since I am concerned with the concept of Gefühl eines Daseins which Kant introduces only in the *Prolegomena* (1783), I cite the 1771 and 1778 editions on the basis of the assumption that if Kant would have wanted to refer to *LM* in the 1780s, he would probably have used one of the later editions. According to Motta (2018: 106), Kant possessed a copy of the 1778 edition.

Selbstgefühl. Kant arguably used Feder's *Logik und Metaphysik* for his course "Vorlesungen über Philosophische Enzyklopädie" (Zammito 2002: 286-87).⁵ In Tetens' case, apart from the fact that Kant himself refers to Tetens (e.g., *Refl* 18: 4901), we have Hamann's testimony that Kant had Tetens' *Philosophische Versuche* lying open on his desk while he was writing the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Hamann's letter to Herder, May 17, 1779; see Kuehn 1987: 143). Therefore, it is safe to assume that Kant was familiar with the concept of Selbstgefühl.

Yet it is also true that Kant does not employ the term Selbstgefühl in his own writings. Furthermore, he does not cite either Tetens or Feder in connection with Gefühl eines Daseins, or discuss these philosophers while presenting his general theory of self. Consequently, there is no direct evidence that the discussion of Selbstgefühl in Tetens and Feder had any impact on Kant. For this reason, it would be foolhardy to claim in any straightforward way that Tetens and Feder were in fact sources for Kant's concept of Gefühl eines Daseins. Nevertheless, I argue that there are conceptual and argumentative continuities between Kant's concept of Gefühl eines Daseins and the notion of Selbstgefühl in Tetens and Feder. To begin, some aspects of the concepts of Gefühl eines Daseins and Selbstgefühl can be shown to overlap. Further, Kant, Tetens and Feder all hold the view that something can be both an active power (Kraft) and a feeling (Gefühl). Finally, the role which Tetens and Feder assign to Selbstgefühl in the cognitive process is similar to the part that the transcendental self—and therefore Gefühl eines Daseins—plays in Kantian

⁵ Kant first offered this course in 1767-68, and continued to teach the course until 1781-82 (Zammito 2002: 286). Thiel (2014: 90-91) suggests that the 1769 edition of Feder's *Logik und Metaphysik* led to the popularity of the concept of Selbstgefühl.

cognition. The presence of these continuities serves to establish the relevance of Tetens' and Feder's discussions of Selbstgefühl for understanding Kant's Gefühl eines Daseins. This in turn engenders, as I will show, new interpretative questions, and therefore new ways of exploring what Gefühl eines Daseins might mean for Kant, and whether it can be consistently accommodated in Kant's theory of self.

In what follows, in §2, I make explicit why Kant's assertion that the transcendental self can be represented as Gefühl eines Daseins might be considered problematic. In §§3-4, I delineate the views of Feder and Tetens on the concept of Selbstgefühl. In these sections, I will show how their views are similar to that of Kant, and the extent to which their writings might help make sense of Gefühl eines Daseins. Finally, drawing on the conclusions of sections 3 and 4, I raise a set of questions in §5 that can help us interpret Kant on Gefühl eines Daseins.

2 Gefühl eines Daseins: A Problem for Kant?

In §2.1, I delineate and analyze the passages in which Kant speaks of Gefühl eines Daseins. Subsequently, in §2.2, I show why this notion might be considered problematic in the context of Kant's system.

2.1

Kant describes the representation of the transcendental "I" as Gefühl eines Daseins only once in his published writings, and in a text meant to popularize the *Critique of Pure Reason*. He says:

Wäre die Vorstellung der Apperception, das Ich, ein Begriff, wodurch irgend etwas gedacht würde, so würde es auch als Prädicat von andern Dingen gebraucht werden können, oder solche Prädicate in sich enthalten. Nun ist es nichts mehr als Gefühl eines Daseins ohne den mindesten Begriff und nur Vorstellung desjenigen, worauf alles Denken in Beziehung (relatione accidentis) steht (*Prolog* 4: 334n).⁶

Bracketing the denial that the “I” or apperception can be a concept, Kant makes two claims here:

(a) The representation of the “I” or transcendental apperception can be described as a “feeling of existence” (call this the “feeling claim”)

(b) The transcendental “I” is a representation in relation to which all thinking stands (henceforth the “relationality claim”)

2.2

The fact that Kant combines the transcendental “I” and feeling is puzzling in light of his distinction between inner sense (or empirical apperception) and pure apperception. On the standard interpretation, inner sense accompanies (begleitet) our representations to the extent we

⁶ Kant does not employ the terms transcendental apperception or pure “I” in this passage.

However, it is fairly clear that the “Vorstellung der Apperception” refers to the transcendental self. This is because Kant says here that all thinking stands under the “I,” which he also says elsewhere with regard to the transcendental self (e.g., *KrV* B135, A110).

are conscious of them (*KrV* B133; A107). Or, as Allison (2004: 277) puts it, inner sense is a “sensory self-awareness, through which the mind intuitively itself and its states.” Inner sense however remains scattered (*zerstreut*), because it does not relate to the identity of the subject, which Kant associates with pure apperception (*KrV* B133, A107). As opposed to inner sense, pure apperception, or the representation “I think,” should be able to accompany all my representations (“alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können” *KrV* B131-2). It is an act of spontaneity (“Actus der Spontaneität”) that is prior to all thinking, can never belong to sensibility, and must remain one and the same in all conscious representations (*KrV* B132). Allison (2004: 277), citing from Kant’s anthropology lectures, concludes that pure apperception is an “‘intellectual consciousness’ of the act of thinking (a consciousness of spontaneity),” and is to be distinguished from inner sense which is the “sensory consciousness of the contents of thought.”

Given this standard interpretation of Kant’s theory of self, the notion of *Gefühl eines Daseins* seems problematic or puzzling for the following reasons.

First, Kant’s description of the representation of the transcendental self as a feeling seems to violate his own distinction between the transcendental and the empirical. The main feature of transcendental philosophy, Kant says, is that it excludes all empirical concepts, and includes only pure concepts (*KrV* B28). A concept is empirical when it contains a sensation (*Empfindung*) which presupposes the actual presence of an object, while a pure concept is a representation unmixed with *Empfindung* (*KrV* A50/B74). All concepts of pleasure and displeasure, desire, and inclination, etc. have an empirical origin (*KrV* B28-29). On this basis, Kant concludes that

transcendental philosophy relates to pure speculative reason, while everything practical insofar as it contains an incentive (Triebfeder) relates to feelings which belong to empirical sources of cognition (“Gefühle, welche zu empirischen Erkenntnisquellen gehören” *KrV* B29). Thus, feelings are supposed to be empirical, and transcendental (or pure) representations must exclude feelings.

If feelings are empirical while the transcendental self is non-empirical or pure, then feelings should be associated with inner sense, and Kant should have never insisted on describing the representation of the transcendental self as a feeling. However, the fact that Kant does describe it in this manner, even if fleetingly, opens up the question of how this claim might be accommodated in Kant’s theory of self.

Second, Kant describes the transcendental self as both feeling and activity (Actus, Kraft).⁷ This is a puzzling claim. The fact that there is an immediacy to feeling something appears to make feeling more like inner sense rather than pure apperception. Inner sense, as I have indicated, is the immediate sensory consciousness accompanying all our conscious representations, while pure intellectual consciousness (or pure apperception) is active in that it is the “consciousness of what a human being does [thut]” (*Anth* 7: 161). Therefore, Kant’s characterization of pure apperception as both a feeling and an activity requires further justification.

⁷ For Kant, the terms “Handlung,” “Kraft,” and “Actus” are interchangeable. In a Reflexion, Kant says that the “Kraft handelt” (*Refl* 3584, 17: 72, late 1770s/early 1780s), and he employs “Actus” and “Handlung” interchangeably (*KrV* A102-03).

Third, for Kant, we are able to cognize objects when our understanding combines with pure apperception to give form to the material which we have gained through our senses.⁸ If the representation of pure apperception is a feeling of existence, and since pure apperception must be involved in cognition for Kant, then any interpretation of Gefühl eines Daseins would require explicating the sort of role that the representation of the “I” as Gefühl eines Daseins might play in the cognitive process. Kant of course does not provide such an account.

2.3

In sum, I have argued that Kant characterizes the representation of the transcendental self as a feeling of existence (= feeling claim), which must relate to all thinking (= relationality claim). This characterization of the transcendental self seems to be at odds with Kant’s own distinction between pure apperception and inner sense. It also leaves unexplained how the transcendental self can be both a feeling and an activity, and what role it might play in the process of cognition. In the following sections, §§3-4, I explore the extent to which Tetens’ *Philosophische Versuche* and Feder’s *Logik und Metaphysik* can help address these questions.

3 Feder

I discuss a set of similarities between some key aspects of Feder’s conceptualization of Selbstgefühl and elements of Kant’s theory of the transcendental self. In §3.1, I provide a reading

⁸ Kant explicates his theory of cognition in *KrV*. For a brief summary, see *Fortschritte*, 20: 276.

of Feder on the concepts of Selbstgefühl and inner sense, and the role these concepts play in his theory of cognition. Subsequently, in §3.2, I show how his view compares with that of Kant.

3.1

Feder provides a somewhat condensed treatment of the concept of Selbstgefühl and related concepts in four key passages, which I will now discuss [(a)-(d)].

(a) Feder first introduces the concept of Selbstgefühl in the context of characterizing the notion of inner sense. He says:

“Was unter dem innern Sinn und den innern Empfindungen zu verstehen sei, kann man theils daraus abnehmen, daß diese Erkenntnisart sowohl der äussern Empfindung, als auch der sogenannten höhern, auf Räsonnement und allgemeine Begriffe sich gründenden, Erkenntniß, und der ihr eigenen Deutlichkeit, entgegengesetzt wird; theils aus den besonderen Arten der innern Empfindung, und der darauf sich beziehenden Fähigkeiten des innern Sinns. Dieses sind nemlich, ausser dem Selbstgeföhle, das Gefühl des Wahren, des Schönen und des Moralischguten” (*LM* 1778, 32-33; *LM* 1771, 31).

Feder makes two points here. First, inner sense differs from both sensations that we receive from objects outside us, and the process of higher order cognition that requires reasoning and the formation of general concepts. Second, an understanding of inner sense requires grasping “particular sorts of inner sensation” (besonderen Arten der innern Empfindung), and the abilities of inner sense relating to these. Selbstgefühl is one of these particular sorts of inner sensation

(Empfindung). In other words, inner sense consists in a set of abilities, and these abilities are said to relate to Selbstgefühl as a particular sort of inner sensation (Empfindung). While the nature of these abilities and how they might relate to Selbstgefühl remains vague, it can be said that inner sense and Selbstgefühl are conceptually different. If a set of abilities of inner sense must somehow relate to Selbstgefühl, then it is unlikely that Feder would consider the concepts of inner sense and Selbstgefühl as co-extensive (also see §3.1[c]).

This interpretation departs from Manfred Frank's contention that Feder equates Selbstgefühl with inner sense ("setzt 'inneren Sinn' dann mit 'Selbstgefühl' gleich). Frank (2002: 110n) justifies this claim by juxtaposing two of Feder's claims—that Selbstgefühl is the immediate perception of one's existence and states (§3.1[b]), and the claim that inner sense is the ability of the soul to cognize indistinctly both its states and the relationships of its representations (cf. *LM* 1778, 33, cited below). However, this view does not take into account the fact that inner sense relates to Selbstgefühl, as I have pointed out, and therefore must be conceptually distinct from it. Thiel (2014: 91) remarks that, for Feder, Selbstgefühl is not identical with inner sense, but is a particular sort of inner sense. Thiel's non-identity claim is more in line with my interpretation here.

In sum, inner sense differs from outer sensation and higher reasoning. Since inner sense somehow relates to Selbstgefühl, these concepts cannot be considered identical.

(b) Following upon this passage on inner sense, Feder then delineates the concept of Selbstgefühl.

“Unter dem Selbstgefühl versteht man die unmittelbare Gewahrnehmung seiner Existenz, seiner innersten Zustände und Eigenschaften. Vermöge dieses Selbstgefühls liegt in jedweder Empfindung oder Vorstellung, die wir bekommen, zugleich das Bewußtsein, daß wir diese Empfindung oder Vorstellung haben. Aus demselben entsteht der durch die Absonderung deutlich gewordene Gedanke von unserer Person (unserem Ich)” (*LM* 1778, 33 ; *LM* 1771, 32).

In this passage, Selbstgefühl is characterized as the immediate perception of one’s existence, and one’s innermost states and characteristics. This Selbstgefühl enables us to be conscious of our sensations or representations. The clear thought of our “I” is isolated (Absonderung) from out of Selbstgefühl.

(c) Selbstgefühl plays a role in the cognitive process for Feder. In a section devoted to a “more exact” (genauere) comparison of the lower with the higher cognitive ability (Erkenntnisvermögen), Feder says,

“[D]ie Furcht der höhern Erkenntnißkräfte sind die durch Zeichen deutlich abgesonderten Begriffe und genauern Bemerkungen und die daraus entstehende Aufklärung und mannichfaltige Bearbeitung des durch die Empfindung in uns kommenden Vorrathes von Erkenntniß....Bey dieser Erkenntniß ist ein weit stärkeres Bewußtsein seiner selbst, als des leidenden und wirkenden Subjectes; in dem die Vorstellung von seinem Ich dem

Menschen schon zum eigenen unterschiedenen Gedanken geworden ist” (*LM* 1778, 44; *LM* 1771, 43).⁹

The higher cognitive abilities process (bearbeiten) whatever the subject receives in the form of sensations (Empfindung). This is accomplished through the employment of signs, leading to the separation of concepts from one another and exactitude in assertion. As compared to the passive (leidend) and acting (wirkend) subject, a far stronger (stärkeres) consciousness of the self is associated with higher cognition. This stronger self-consciousness consists in the representation of the “I” as thought (Gedanke) in its own right (eigen), and differentiated from other thoughts.

In contrast to the higher cognitive ability, the lower cognitive ability, which is presumably associated with the passive subject, relates to inner sense (innern Sinn), which Feder takes to be an ability lacking in reflection and distinct consciousness. He says:

“[B]ey der niedrigern Erkenntniß, vermöge der Wirkungen der Einbildungskraft und des innern Sinnes, eben solche Folgen und Verbindungen der Vorstellungen, wie bey dem Gebrauche der Vernunft. Darauf bezieht sich denn auch der Name der vernünftähnlichen Fähigkeit (Analogon rationis) worunter man das Vermögen versteht, ohne Ueberlegung und deutliches Bewußtsein, durch die Verknüpfung einer gegenwärtigen Vorstellung mit ehemaligen, auf eine Empfindung zu kommen, aus welcher handlungen entstehen, die den vernünftigen handlungen ähnlich sind” (*LM* 1778, 44-45; *LM* 1771, 43-44).

⁹ Feder uses “mannichfaltige” in *LM* 1778, but “ergiebig” in *LM* 1771.

In this passage, speaking of lower cognition (niedrigen Erkenntnis) which requires the activities of the imagination and inner sense, Feder says that representations can be combined in a way that is similar to the way reason—which is a higher cognitive ability—combines them. Yet these lower cognitive combinations lack reflection and distinct consciousness (“ohne Ueberlegung und deutliches Bewußtsein”).

Hence, the “I” is represented as a thought in its own right in the higher-order rational processing of sensations. On the other hand, cognition at the lower level includes the activities of inner sense lacking in reflection and distinct consciousness, and presumably relates to the passive subject.

(d) In the section “Von der Kraft. Aufklärung des Begriffes,” Feder says, “Nach der gewöhnlichen Worterklärung heißt Kraft so viel, als, Vermögen zu wirken; and wirken so viel, als, etwas hervorbringen, oder den Grund in sich enthalten davon, daß etwas anders ist...” (*LM* 1778, 274; *LM* 1771, 273-74). Here, Kraft is characterized as the “Vermögen zu wirken,” or the ability to make an effect such that it contains the ground of the change that it produces in another thing.

In addition, Feder provides the following account of how our concept of Kraft originates (Ursprung) (*LM* 1778, 274ff ; *LM* 1771, 274ff). When we sense (empfinden) something (etwas) in ourselves, and if this something must express itself (äußern sich) in the form of a desire in us to effect a happening, then this is our Kraft. We must also passively (leiden) suffer the powers of

things outside of us (Kräfte anderer Dinge). On the basis of these observations (Beobachtungen), we arrive at our concept of Kraft. The original constitution of this concept includes in part the feeling of something in us, and in part the experience of the constant conjunction of effects with other things and circumstances (“der vollständige Begriff von der Kraft...dessen ursprüngliche Bestandtheile also theils das Gefühl von einem Etwas in uns, theils die Erfahrung von der beständigen Verknüpfung der Erfolge mit gewissen andern Dingen und Umständen sind” *LM* 1778, 275; *LM* 1771, 275).

Thus, in Feder’s view, feeling forms, at least in part, a constitutive aspect of our active power (Kraft).

(e) From (a)-(d): Selbstgefühl is not co-extensive with inner sense (§3.1[a]); and it enables the immediate consciousness or perception of our sensations and representations, including that of our own existence (§3.1[b]). The clear or distinctive thought of the “I” emerges out of this Selbstgefühl (§3.1[b]). This “I” goes together with higher order reasoning and concept-formation (§3.1[c]). Lower cognition, in contrast, relates to inner sense which lacks reflection and distinct consciousness (§3.1[a]; §3.1[c]), and does not relate to the clear “I” (§3.1[c]). Finally, feeling can form a constitutive part of an active power (Kraft) (§3.1 [d]).

3.2

I point to those aspects of Feder’s conceptualization of Selbstgefühl that seem consistent with the feeling and relationality claims at *Prol* 4: 334n, bracketing for the moment the fact that Feder

does not distinguish between the transcendental and the empirical like Kant does. In (a), I discuss the feeling claim, and then the relationality claim in (b).

(a) Kant's feeling claim is that the transcendental "I" can be represented as a "feeling of existence" (§2.1). In my view, we can argue that Feder makes a similar claim albeit not explicitly ([i]-[iv]).

(i) Feder says that inner sense belongs to lower cognition, while the clear thought (Gedanke) of the "I" goes together with higher cognition (§3.1). This seems analogous to Kant's distinction between empirical consciousness and the "thought" (Gedanke) of the "I" or self-consciousness (Selbstbewußtsein) (*KrV* B133-34). Empirical consciousness "accompanies" (begleitet) various representations, but is "in itself scattered and without relation to the identity of the subject" ("an sich zerstreut und ohne Beziehung auf die Identität des Subjekts" *KrV* B133). Kant also calls this state "inner sense or empirical apperception" (*KrV* A107). To this Kant opposes the "thought" (Gedanke) that the representations of empirical consciousness "belong to me" (gehören mir insgesamt zu), i.e., I unite them into one self-consciousness ("ich vereinige sie in einem Selbstbewußsein" *KrV* B133-34). This is the representation "I think" that Kant famously says must be able to accompany all my possible representations (*KrV* B131-2). Since this representation "I think" involves conscious unification, it must be a clear representation of the "I," and therefore comparable, at least broadly, to Feder's clear thought of the "I."¹⁰ Further, like

¹⁰ In the A-deduction, Kant says that the consciousness that I have united the manifold can often be weak ("oft nur schwach sein"), but there must always be such a consciousness even if it lacks

Feder, Kant associates the “I think” with higher cognition. He says that the transcendental unity of apperception unites the manifold of intuitions into the concept of an object, and therefore differs from the subjective unity of consciousness which relates to the manifold of intuitions in empirical consciousness (*KrV* B139).

(ii) Feder never explicitly employs the term *Selbstgefühl* to describe the clear thought of the “I” which is related to higher cognition. However, one can argue that Feder would not have been averse to doing this for the following reason. The clear or distinctive thought of the “I” is supposed to be isolated (*absondern*) from out of *Selbstgefühl* construed as the immediate conscious perception of our existence and our representational states (§3.1[b]). If the clear “I” emerges out of *Selbstgefühl*, and *Selbstgefühl* means, however minimally, feeling of self or the “I,”¹¹ then it is plausible to claim that it is the same “I” that goes from being a *Selbstgefühl* at the

in “noticeable clarity” (*hervorstechende Klarheit*) (*KrV* A103-04). This assertion makes it seem that the transcendental “I” is not clearly conscious, as I have claimed here, and therefore not comparable to Feder’s clear “I.” But this is not the case. Kant says that some consciousness of the “I,” however weak, must always accompany the unification of the manifold. This sort of weak clarity is consistent with Feder’s notion of the clear “I,” because for Feder clarity of the “I” merely means that the “I” is distinguishable *vis-à-vis* other thoughts. Thus, as in Kant’s case, Feder’s clear “I” can be considered weakly clear without possessing “noticeable clarity.” Of course, similar to Kant, Feder’s “I” can also gain noticeable clarity.

¹¹ “*Selbstgefühl [ist] [...] unmittelbare Gewahrnehmung seiner Existenz*”, *LM* 1778: 33; *LM* 1771: 32.

lower level of cognition to the clear “I” at the level of higher cognition. This is because, for Feder, something is clear when it can be distinguished from other things (*LM* 1778, 56; *LM* 1771, 56).¹² In essence, moving from lower to higher cognition, the Selbstgefühl, or feeling of self, becomes clearer in that it is differentiated from other representations. Since the clear “I” emerges out of non-clear Selbstgefühl, this implies that the clear “I” at the higher level of cognition can also be taken as Selbstgefühl.

(iii) Feder’s distinction between Selbstgefühl and the clear thought of the I structurally mirrors the distinction between empirical consciousness and the representation “I think” that belongs to the transcendental unity of apperception (= [i]). Feder’s clear thought of the “I” can also be viewed as Selbstgefühl (= [ii]). Therefore, from (i) and (ii), one can argue that, at the very least, it is possible that following Feder (and, as I will argue in §4, Tetens), Kant may have found it natural to speak of the transcendental self as both the thought “I think” and the feeling of existence. This is because, according to Feder, Selbstgefühl can be said to be the immediate conscious perception of one’s existence (and one’s representational states) on both the higher and lower levels of cognition. So if Kant was indeed influenced by Feder on these issues, he would think it acceptable to speak of the representation of the “I” at the higher cognitional level (= the transcendental self) as a feeling of existence.

¹² Feder of course makes this point while speaking of the clarity of concepts. He says that clear concepts allow us sufficiently (*hinlänglich*) to differentiate objects from one another. Here I am drawing upon the idea that clarity implies differentiation for Feder.

This argument is further bolstered by the claim that Feder takes feeling (Gefühl) to be a constitutive part of Kraft (§3.1[d]). Kant characterizes the representation of the transcendental unity of apperception, the “I think,” as an act of spontaneity (*KrV* B132). Actus and Kraft are interchangeable for Kant (§2.2). Therefore, if Kant were influenced by Feder, then it would not have seemed unnatural to him to describe the representation of the transcendental self as both Kraft and Gefühl eines Daseins. Here it could be objected that this argument does not work, because Feder speaks of Kraft in the context of desires and the empirical experience of objects outside us (§3.1[d]). Kant, in contrast, characterizes the Kraft related to the “I think” as an active power that is arguably not limited either by the objects outside the subject or the emotions and desires of the subject (*KrV* B129-30). However, this objection misses the point. In showing that for Feder something can be both Kraft and Gefühl, I have merely indicated that the philosophical tradition to which Kant belonged makes it possible for something to be both Kraft and Gefühl. This then opens up the possibility that Kant, perhaps due to his acquaintance with Feder’s *Logik und Metaphysik*, may have incorporated this claim in his theory of self-consciousness.

(iv) From (i)-(iii): I have suggested that the feeling claim in Kant need not seem entirely unprecedented if we take account of the similarities between Feder’s notion of Selbstgefühl and Kant’s Gefühl eines Daseins.

(b) The relationality claim states that the transcendental “I” is a representation in relation to which all thinking stands (§2.1). This claim can be seen to be consistent with Feder’s less than systematic account of Selbstgefühl, because Feder’s notion of Selbstgefühl seems closer to the relational aspect of Kant’s transcendental “I” rather than Kantian inner sense.

Feder says that it is owing to Selbstgefühl that we are conscious that we are receiving a particular sensation or representation (§3.1[b]). In other words, Selbstgefühl allows us to be conscious of our representations, including our own existence. At first sight, this characterization of Selbstgefühl seems similar to Kant's characterization of inner sense. Inner sense for Kant is the sensory consciousness by means of which we are conscious of ourselves, but this consciousness is scattered because it does not relate to the unity of the self (§2.2). However, as I now argue, it is not obvious that Feder's notion of Selbstgefühl should be identified with Kant's concept of inner sense. First, Selbstgefühl is not co-extensive with inner sense in Feder's philosophy (§3.1[a]). Therefore, at the very least, we cannot presume that Selbstgefühl in Feder is conceptually speaking the same as Kant's notion of inner sense. Second, one could in fact make the case that Kantian inner sense differs from Feder's notion of Selbstgefühl, at least in one aspect. Selbstgefühl entails feeling of the "I," which Feder glosses as the immediate perception of one's own existence ("die unmittelbare Gewahrnehmung seiner Existenz" §3.1[b]). For Kant, while inner sense is indeed empirical apperception (or the empirical "I"), it does not relate to the unity of the "I" (§2.2). Kant also does not employ the term Selbstgefühl in relation to inner sense. Taken together, these claims suggest that although the "I" is somehow involved in Kantian inner sense, it is unclear whether Kant would connect the notion of Selbstgefühl (feeling of the "I") with inner sense. Feder, on the other hand, employs the notion of Selbstgefühl, and says that Selbstgefühl relates in some way to the abilities of inner sense (§3.1[a]). Thus, it can be argued that both Kantian inner sense and Feder's Selbstgefühl make our representations conscious to ourselves. However, in Feder's case, this consciousness relates to the feeling of the "I" construed as the immediate perception of one's existence and to the clear "I" (Selbstgefühl) to the extent it

is related to higher cognition (§3.2[a]), while it remains uncertain if Selbstgefühl can be considered part of the concept of inner sense for Kant.

If Feder's Selbstgefühl cannot be considered the same as Kantian inner sense, then this would clear the way for interpreting Feder's characterization of Selbstgefühl as similar to Kant's relationality claim. Feder says that Selbstgefühl makes possible the consciousness of all our representations including that of our own existence (§3.1[b]). If Feder's Selbstgefühl is the condition for the possibility of the consciousness of our representations, i.e., the feeling of the self must relate to all possible representations—including that of ourselves—if these representations are to be representations for us, then Feder's characterization of Selbstgefühl seems to be consistent with Kant's relationality claim, at least in broad outline. This is because, on the relationality claim, the transcendental "I" too must relate to all possible thinking. A closer comparison between Kant and Feder on this issue would naturally reveal differences—for instance, the transcendental-empirical distinction, and the question of whether the "thinking" in the relationality claim could be viewed as similar to the term "representing" in Feder's assertion that Selbstgefühl is required for consciousness of all representations. Yet, it can be said that, at least in broad structure, Feder's characterization of Selbstgefühl need not be inconsistent with Kant's relationality claim.

(c) On the basis of (a)-(b), I have argued that Kant and Feder can be seen to converge to some extent on the feeling and relationality claims. This does not obviously mean that their theories are identical. It merely allows us to employ Feder's *Logik und Metaphysik* as a lens through which we can re-examine Kant's theory of self (see §5 below).

4 Tetens

I argue that some elements in Tetens' *Philosophische Versuche* resonate with the feeling and relationality claims. I begin with Tetens and the feeling claim (§4.1). I show that Tetens' theory of cognition is structurally similar to that of Kant. Unlike Kant, however, Selbstgefühl plays a role in Tetens' theory of cognition. On this basis, I argue that if the notion of Selbstgefühl can be woven into the Tetensian theory of cognition, which is similar to Kant's theory of cognition, and given that Kant says that the transcendental I can be represented as a feeling of existence, then this opens up new avenues for exploring the possibility of reconciling the feeling claim vis-à-vis Kant's concept of the self as it is located in his overall theory of cognition. In §4.2, I suggest that Tetens' notion of Selbstthätigkeit can be said to contain the relationality claim in rudimentary form.

4.1

(a) Tetens connects the notion of Selbstgefühl to both perception (Gewahrnehmen) construed as the lower part of thinking, and the higher cognitive process. (b) Tetens' metaphysics includes the claim that something can be both a Kraft and a Gefühl (feeling). (c) On the basis of (a)-(b), one can argue that Tetens' notion of Selbstgefühl and its relationship to cognition is similar to the way Kant relates the transcendental "I" and cognition. This similarity can be considered sufficient to warrant an attempt to interpret Kant's feeling of existence in light of aspects drawn from Tetens' concept of Selbstgefühl. I now discuss each of these points.

(a) According to Tetens, the essence of thinking (Wesen des Denkens) consists in relation (Beziehen), and in perception (Gewahrnehmen). Perception combines with apperception (apperzipieren), reflection (Reflexion) and Selbstgefühl. Obscure Selbstgefühl is associated with the lower level of cognition, while clear Selbstgefühl and a “fine and sharp” Selbstgefühl are related to higher levels of cognition. In the following, I further delineate these claims.

The nature of thinking (Wesen des Denkens) consists in relation (Beziehen) and perception (Gewahrnehmen) (*PVI*, 346). Tetens characterizes perception as follows:

“Gewahrnehmen ist eine eigene Thätigkeit unsrer Seele und ihrer Gewahrnehmungskraft, welche alsdenn gleichsam auf uns selbst zurückgebogen wird, und in ein Selbstgefühl übergeht. Es ist anders, die Vorstellung einer Sache in sich aufnehmen, die Sache nachbilden, die Nachbildung in sich aufbehalten, sie wieder hervorziehen; und ein anders, die Vorstellung und diese Thätigkeiten und deren Wirkungen in sich fühlen, und beobachten” (*PVI*, 22).

Tetens says here that perception is a distinct activity (Thätigkeit) of the soul. It involves our being bent back upon ourselves, and it goes over into Selbstgefühl. It is one thing to take up the representation of a thing into ourselves, but another thing to perceive it, i.e., to feel and observe this representation. In this passage, while it is unclear how perception “goes over into” (übergeht...in) Selbstgefühl, it can be said that perception is a second-order activity in that it involves feeling and observing a representation, and that it relates to Selbstgefühl in some fashion.

Perception consists in two acts—separation (*absondern*) of representations from other representations, and cognition (*Erkennen*). Cognition makes the relations between thoughts (*Verhältnißgedanken*) possible, but it presupposes the separation (*absondern*) of representations, and the relationship between these representations (*PVI*, 346-47).¹³ Tetens, as I now show, characterizes this act of separating and relating (*beziehen*) representations as “simple perception” and as “*Gewahrwerden*,” and he takes the act of cognition to be “*Gewahrnehmen*.” He says:

“Wir nehmen es, wie wir sagen, gewahr, wenn sich der gesuchte Gegenstand und das Verhältniß der Ideen, das wir erkennen wollen, uns darstellt. Wir werden gewahr da, wo uns etwas auffällt, das wir nicht gesucht haben, wie etwann ein Freund, der unvermuthet uns vor den Augen tritt” (*PVI*, 279).

Here, Tetens says that if we wish to know and differentiate a thing assiduously, i.e., if we seek to cognize the relationship of the thing to our ideas via comparison and reflection, then our perception is *Gewahrnehmen*. We “*gewahrwerden*” when something strikes us without our

¹³ “Also bestehet das Wesen des Denkens in dem *Beziehen* und in dem *Gewahrnehmen*. Zu dem *Gewahrnehmen* gehören aber auch zwei *Aktus*, das *Absondern* nemlich und das eigentliche *Erkennen*. Das letztere bringet den *Verhältnißgedanken* hervor. Und eben dieser *Aktus* ist es, was Denken zum Denken macht, das geistige *Ingrediens* des Gedankens; aber das *Absondern* der *Vorstellungen*, und das *Beziehen* derselben auf einander muß vorhergehen, und ist in so weit das zweyte wesentliche Stück zum Denken” (*PVI*, 347).

having sought it out—for instance, a friend unexpectedly steps in front of our eyes. Tetens exemplifies this distinction as follows. In the case of *Gewahrnehmen*, the insight emerges gradually. One surmises something about an object that one is seeing obscurely, and perception as *Gewahrnehmen* is complete when one “senses” (*wittern*) the object as that object (*PV I*, 280). On the other hand, in the case of *Gewahrwerden*, it costs us no effort to observe objects—we only have to turn our eyes to observe, say, a horse. Here things simply fall into our senses, like the sound of the drum that strikes our ears (*PV I*, 280).¹⁴ The difference can be attributed to attention, as Tetens points out elsewhere in the text. *Gewahrnehmen* requires attention in a way that *Gewahrwerden* does not. *Gewahrnehmen* costs effort. Tetens says: “Aufmerken ist thätig seyn; und ohne einen Grad von Aufmerksamkeit nimmt man nichts gewahr” (*PV I*, 170-71). To attend to something is to be active (*thätig*); there can be no *Gewahrnehmen* without a degree of attention.

In another passage, Tetens makes the same distinction between *Gewahrwerden* and *Gewahrnehmen*. Here he glosses the expression “simple perception” (*simpeln* *Gewahrnehmen*) in the same way as *Gewahrwerden* although he also uses *Gewahrwerden* (“Ich werde einen Thurm gewahr...”, *PV I*: 344). In having a simple perception, I perceive a tower as different

¹⁴ “Diese Einsicht entstehet oft nur nach und nach. Man muthmaßet sie vorher, siehet sie in der Ferne noch dunkel, wittert sie, so zu sagen, ehe das *Gewahrnehmen* vollständig wird. Dagagen kostet es nichts als eine Wendung der Augen, um einen Marktschreyer zu bemerken, der sich zu Pferde sehen und hören läßt. Wir müssen Sache *gewahrwerden*, die uns in die Sinne fallen, wie den Ton der Trummel, die vor unsern Ohren geschlagen wird” (*PV I*, 280).

from say another tower in its vicinity. This difference simply strikes my senses. On the other hand, if I had to differentiate these two towers, i.e., if I were to say that one is not the other, then I must cognize and perceive the relationship between the towers. I must be able to say that I differentiate it. This is *Gewahrnehmen* (*PVI*, 344). Further, in a simple perception (or *Gewahrwerden*) of a tower, one separates out representations (*Sonderung der Vorstellung*)—e.g. the differentiation between the two towers. But in the case of *Gewahrnehmen*, or stating that I differentiate between the two towers, the two towers construed as separated representations are posited in relation to each other in thought (*Gedanken*) (*PVI*, 345).¹⁵

Next, Tetens takes it that perception goes together with apperception, reflection, and *Selbstgefühl*. To begin with, obscure (*dunkles*) *Selbstgefühl* is to be distinguished from clear (*klares*) *Selbstgefühl*. Tetens says that it is “highly probable” (*große Wahrscheinlichkeit*) that an obscure *Selbstgefühl* accompanies all passive states (*Zustand*), qualities (*Bechaffenheiten*), and alterations (*Veränderungen*) of the soul (*PVI*, 253-54). The obscurity lies in the fact that a stronger (*stärkeres*) feeling suppresses (*unterdrückt*) it (*PVI*, 254). For instance, Tetens says that one can get into (*hineingehen*) outer representations in such a lively manner that the feeling of our self is obscured (“Man kann so weit und so lebhaft in die Vorstellungen äußerer Objekte

¹⁵ “Vergleichen wir also das simple *Gewahrnehmen* eines Thurms mit dem *Gedanken*, ‘daß dieser Thurm von einem andern unterschieden sey’, so findet man 1) sie darinn verschieden, dass in dem simplen *Gewahrnehmen* einer Sache eine *Sonderung der Vorstellung* erfordert wird; bey dem Unterscheiden aber werden die schon gesonderten *Vorstellungen* der Sache gegeneinander gestellt, es wird von dem einen zum andern übergegangen” (*PVI* 345).

hineingehen [...] daß das Gefühl unserer Selbst unter dem Grad verdunkelt wird, der zum klaren Bewußtseyn erfordert wird" *PV I*, 406-07).

Clear Selbstgefühl is associated with the higher faculties. All impressions (Eindrücke) cease to be mere impressions if they are taken up (aufgenommen) and differentiated (unterschieden). This requires that the impressions must be processed (bearbeiten) by all the three fundamental capacities (Grundvermögen) of the soul—Gefühl, Vorstellungskraft and Denkkraft (in order from the lower to the higher faculties). This processing helps transmute impressions into “perceived and differentiated impressions” (gewahrgenommene unterschiedene Eindrücke) (*PV I*, 290). In this context, Tetens says:

Es sind alsdenn klare Empfindungen und klare Empfindungsideen, Wirkungen aus Perception, Gefühl und Apperception zusammengesetzt, so wie das vorzüglich starke Gefühl unserer Selbst nicht mehr ein bloßes Gefühl, sondern ein klares Gefühl unserer Selbst, eine Empfindung, ein Bewußtseyn unsers Selbst ist. Denn es vereinigt sich mit dem Gefühl das Unterscheiden der gefühlten Modification und des fühlenden Subjekts, und die Beziehung jener Modifikation auf das Subjekt, worinn sie ist (*PV I*, 290-91).

In perceived and differentiated impressions, clear sensations and clear ideas of sensations, effects out of perception, feeling and apperception all go together. If this occurs, then the feeling of our self is not merely a feeling, but a “clear feeling of our self, a sensation [Empfindung], a consciousness of our self.” This is because the clear Selbstgefühl unites the differentiating aspect

(Unterscheiden) of the felt modification and the feeling subject, and the relation of this modification to the subject in which it is present.

Further, in the passage under consideration, clear Selbstgefühl goes together with apperception. Apperception, Tetens says, comes with reflection. If the parts of a representation are not apperceived (appercipirt), this implies that these parts are not connected to the act of reflection (Aktus der Reflexion) (*PV I*, 98).¹⁶ In addition, apperception relates both to representations (Vorstellungen) and ideas (Idee). If a representation lacks the necessary clarity, then the idea must also lack this clarity. The clarity of representation requires apperceptibility (Apperceptibilität), i.e., a cognizability, while the clarity of the idea is the “actual apperception” (wirkliche Apperception) (*PV I*, 96).¹⁷ Perception requires apperception or the thought (Gedanke) that this object is something different, that it is a particular modification, a particular object (“Die Perception ist es, zu der sich die Apperception, das Unterscheiden, oder der Gedanke: dieß ist etwas unterschiedenes; es ist eine besondere Modifikation; es ist ein besonderes Objekt, hinzugesellet,” *PV I*, 162). Thus, perception requires apperception if objects

¹⁶ “So ferne die Vorstellung und ihre Züge nicht appercipirt werden, in so ferne ist mit ihnen kein Aktus der Reflexion verbunden [...]” (*PV I*, 98).

¹⁷ “Wo es an der nöthigen Helligkeit in der Vorstellung fehlet, da muß es auch in der Idee daran fehlen. Die Klarheit in jener erfordert eine Apperceptibilität, eine Erkennbarkeit; es muß die Vorstellung zur Idee gemacht werden können. Die letztere Klarheit der Idee ist die wirkliche Apperception” (*PV I*, 96).

are to be cognized as particular objects different from other objects. Clear Selbstgefühl belongs to this constitutive structure.

Finally, on Tetens' view, perception is the lower part of the ability to think (Denkkraft) (*PVI*, 338). The higher part of Denkkraft relates to the understanding, judgment and higher reasoning. If one compares sensible thinking (sinnlichen Denkkraft) and higher reasoning, one finds that there is a higher degree of effect (Wirksamkeit) associated with higher reasoning, and also a "finer feeling" (feineres Gefühl) (*PVI*, 586).¹⁸ Although Tetens does not mention Selbstgefühl in this passage, he does employ this term soon after. He says: "Ein feines und schärferes Selbstgefühl bey den Vorstellungen, ist ein wesentliches Erforderniß zur Scharfsinnigkeit des Verstandes" (*PVI*, 587). In other words, a fine and sharp Selbstgefühl in representations is a requirement for the acuteness of the understanding.

Hence, obscure Selbstgefühl relates to the passive states of the soul. In contrast, clear Selbstgefühl forms part of the process of consciously perceiving objects, or differentiating them as particular objects as opposed to other objects. This process involves apperception and reflection. Finally, a fine and sharp Selbstgefühl is part of the process of higher level thinking which includes the understanding, judgment and inferential reasoning.

¹⁸ "Wenn die höhere Vernunft mit der sinnlichen Denkkraft verglichen wird, so findet man bey jener, als einer höhern Wirksamkeit der Denkkraft, zugleich auch ein feineres Gefühl der allgemeinen Vorstellungen..." (*PVI*, 586).

(b) Tetens' metaphysics allows for something to be both a Kraft and a Gefühl at the same time. This can be seen in general in a passage in which Tetens says that, even though we do not know the most basic power of the soul (Grundkraft der Seele), the operations associated with this Grundkraft contain, in a constitutive sense, feeling (Gefühl) in kernel ("Grundkraft den Keim des Fühlens doch in sich enthalte," *PV I*, 723-24). Further, on the basis of the following passages, one can infer that Tetens appears to view Selbstgefühl as both Kraft and feeling. First, Tetens remarks that the feeling related to the "I," to the extent it can be known, is the "feeling of a simple nature" ("[U]nter Gefühl, das, was mein Ich äußert, insofern ichs kenne, ist das Gefühl eines einfachen Wesen" *PV II*, 209). Second, in a passage devoted to the nature of Selbstgefühl, Tetens speaks of the "I" as an action (Aktion) of a simple nature ("Aktion des Ichs, das ist, eines einfachen Wesens," *PV II*, 212). Together these passages suggest that the "I" as Selbstgefühl can be both feeling and action for Tetens.

Thus, Tetens, like Feder, permits something to be both Kraft and Gefühl. As with Feder, this does not mean that Kant is necessarily borrowing this claim from Tetens. It does, however, make it possible to ask if Kant might be drawing on Tetens and Feder in characterizing the transcendental "I" as both Actus/Kraft and Gefühl.

(c) Tetens' conceptualization of Selbstgefühl and its place in the cognitive process [(a)-(b)] seems similar enough to Kant's statements regarding the self and cognition. This in turn warrants the view that Kant may have had in mind some aspects of Tetensian Selbstgefühl in making the feeling claim—that the transcendental "I" can be represented as the feeling of existence.

First of all, Kant and Tetens have broadly similar theories of cognition. In both instances, lower cognitive ability relates to external data, while the higher cognitive abilities, which ultimately includes inferential reasoning, is responsible for differentiating between objects, and relating them to each other (§4.1[a]; §2.2).

Second, Tetens' notion of clear Selbstgefühl, or the consciousness of the self (*PV* I, 290-91), must be attendant upon the apperceptive "I differentiate it" (§4.1[a]), which seems minimally continuous with Kant's claim that the subject must necessarily be aware of itself (= the "I") in combining representations in the process of higher level cognition—the awareness or thought that I have combined the representations ("nach und nach zu einander von mir hinzugetan worden sind" *KrV* A103ff). Similarly, in the B deduction, Kant speaks of the "thought" (Gedanke) that representations in an intuition together belong to me (*KrV* B134). Additionally, the way Tetens relates clear Selbstgefühl and cognition is structurally similar to the relationship between the transcendental "I" and higher cognition in Kant's system (§4.1[a]; §2.2). This minimal convergence can underwrite a more detailed investigation into whether Tetens' concept of Selbstgefühl, taken in all its aspects, can help further illuminate the concept of Gefühl eines Daseins which Kant mentions merely in passing. The viability of such an endeavor is further bolstered by the fact that Tetens also relates Kraft and Gefühl in a way that, at least prima facie, Kant can be seen to presuppose in the first *Critique* (§2.2).

4.2

Having shown that aspects of Tetens' theory of Selbstgefühl can help illuminate the feeling claim, I turn to the relationality claim. I argue that while Tetens does not hold the Kantian view

that the identity of the “I” (or self-consciousness) is the necessary condition for the possibility of unified cognition, his notion of Selbstthätigkeit could be seen to be consistent with the relationality claim [(a)-(c)].

(a) In Tetens’ view, Selbstthätigkeit is a particular way of fastening upon and grasping something. Selbstthätigkeit of the human sort distinguishes humans from all other beings. A dog, Tetens says, cannot take up (aufnehmen) impressions like human beings. This is because all impressions (Eindrücke) relating to the human soul are “impressions on a perfectible self-active power [selbstthätige Kraft]” (“So verhält es sich auch bey der menschlichen Seele. Jeder Eindruck auf sie ist eine Impreßion auf eine perfectible selbstthätige Kraft” *PV I*, 159). Starting with the first modifications of the human soul, this Kraft is already “selbstthätig” in the sense of being equipped (Anlage) for the human sort of taking up of impressions. Or, as Tetens puts it, it is “mitthätig,” which means that it fastens upon (fassen) and grasps (ergreifen) instead of merely letting something occur in itself (*PV I*, 160). Thus, for Tetens, a perfectible and self-employed activity demarcates the range and sort of impressions that are permitted to human beings as opposed to other animals.

(b) Selbstthätigkeit, for Tetens, is a continuum, as is evident from the following passage:

“Fühlen, Vorstellungen haben und denken, sind Fähigkeiten Eines und desselbigen Grundvermögens, und nur von einander darinn unterschieden, daß das nämliche Princip in verschiedenen Richtungen auf verschiedene Gegenstände, und mit größerer oder

geringerer Selbstthätigkeit wirkt, wenn es bald wie ein fühlendes, bald wie ein vorstellendes, und bald mehr als ein denkendes Wesen sich offenbart” (*PV I*, 603).

Feeling, having representations, and thinking are abilities of one and the same basic faculty (*Grundvermögen*). These abilities differ from one another in relating differently to different objects, and in terms of the degree of *Selbstthätigkeit* they might possess. Moving from feeling to representing to thinking is also a move from a lower to a higher degree of *Selbstthätigkeit*—a claim which Tetens elaborates in several different passages, as I indicate next.

Tetens describes human nature (*Wesen*) as first having a body which outer things can alter, and as capable of feeling. At the same time, it “self-actively” (*selbstthätig*) brings forth something in itself and out of itself, the traces of which it keeps for itself, and which it can pull out and process (*PV I*, 716).¹⁹ This characterization of human nature makes it more than merely a body. A body may passively receive, and take up impressions; it is modified, moves, and reacts. However, it lacks any trace of feeling, apperception, pleasure and displeasure, desire, and self-

¹⁹ Tetens characterizes what he calls the “*Entelechia des Menschen*” as a “*Wesen, welches mittelst gewisser Werkzeuge in dem Körper von andern Dingen verändert wird, fühlet, dann selbstthätig etwas in sich und außer sich hervorbringt, und von dem, was sie leidet und thut, Spuren in sich aufbehält, die sie hervorziehet, und bearbeitet*” (*PV I*, 716).

determination.²⁰ Human beings are constituted of a body that can be modified to a high degree (“hohen Grade modifikables Wesen” *PVI*, 717). They also possess *Selbstthätigkeit* which makes them feeling and representing souls. Finally, an addition of more intensity (*Stärke*) and fine-ness (*Feinheit*) to this sort of soul enables human beings to have a thinking soul (“als ein mit der vor erwähnten *Selbstthätigkeit* versehenes Wesen ist sie eine fühlende vorstellende Seele, und bey noch etwas mehrerer *Stärke* und *Feinheit* in diesem Vermögen ist sie eine denkende Seele,” *PVI*, 717). This passage already shows that *Selbstthätigkeit* is a continuum: more abilities are acquired in going from a lower degree of *Selbstthätigkeit* to a higher degree of intensity and fineness. Tetens makes this point even more explicitly in another passage. He says that a nature (*Wesen*) capable of feeling can acquire the abilities of representation and thinking only if a natural receptivity in its “innerer *Selbstthätigkeit*” can expand (*Vergrößerung*) to a level at which it can represent or think (“Ein *Wesen* blos zum Fühlen aufgeleget, würde auch der Vorstellungen und Gedanken fähig werden, woferne eine natürliche Receptivität an innerer *Selbstthätigkeit* eine Vergrößerung bis zu einer gewissen Stufe annehmen könnte” *PVI*, 721).²¹ So, for instance, rational thinking emerges out of a higher degree of inner modifiability and *Selbstthätigkeit*, and this feature of *Selbstthätigkeit* belongs to the basic features of humanity (*PVI*, 738).²²

²⁰ “Der Körper leidet, nimmt auf, wird modificirt, bewegt und wirkt zurück; aber keine Spur vom Gefühl, von Apperception, Vergnügen und Verdruß, vom Wollen, vom Selbstbestimmen liegt in allen Eindrücken, die wir von ihm erhalten” (*PV II*, 178).

²¹ Also see *PVI*, 742 (*Selbstmacht*) and *PVI*, 745 (*Perfectibility* and *Selbstthätigkeit*).

²² “Das vernünftige Denken entspringt aus einem höhern Grade der innern Modifikabilität und der *Selbstthätigkeit*” (*PVI*, 738).

(c) From (a)-(b): It appears that Selbstthätigkeit for Tetens characterizes the limits of the abilities of a nature (Wesen), whether it is able merely to feel, or also to represent and to think. As a concept, Selbstthätigkeit is conceived of as a continuum. Irrespective of how Kant may have thought of Tetens' continuum theory of Selbstthätigkeit, Kant's employment of the term Selbstthätigkeit in the *Critique of Pure Reason* seems to resonate, to some extent, with Tetens' claim that higher reasoning and thinking is to be associated with a particular sort of Selbstthätigkeit (§4.2[b]).

Kant says that the combination of representations cannot be found in the object of cognition, but in the subject and its "act of Selbstthätigkeit" (Actus seiner Selbstthätigkeit) (*KrV* B132). In another passage, he speaks of our existence (Dasein) as a "selbstthätiges Wesen" (*KrV* B158n). In these passages, Kant seems to use the term "Selbstthätigkeit" as signaling a particular sort of active employment—which does not seem inconsistent with Tetens' use of Selbstthätigkeit. In addition, at *KrV* B131-32, Kant says that the "I think must be able to accompany all my representations, and if this is not the case, then the representation is either "impossible, or at least nothing for me" ("die Vorstellung würde entweder unmöglich, oder wenigstens für mich nichts sein"). If we combine this claim with Kant's description of the "I think" as the "Actus der Selbstthätigkeit" (*KrV* B132), then, at least at the higher level of thinking/cognizing, Kant could be said to employ the term "Selbstthätigkeit" as demarcating the horizon of cognitive synthesis in a discursive intellect. This entails that all cognitive synthesis requires the Selbstthätigkeit of the "I think," and nothing can be part of the cognitive synthesis without this sort of Selbstthätigkeit. This is Kant's relationality claim, now articulated in terms of the notion of

Selbstthätigkeit. More importantly, the way Kant seems to employ the term Selbstthätigkeit here is similar to Tetens' characterization of Selbstthätigkeit (§4.2 [a]-[b]).

Further, this similarity between Kant and Tetens makes it plausible to claim that Kant could be drawing on Tetens' notion of Selbstthätigkeit. Of course, in the passages cited here, Kant employs the term Selbstthätigkeit in relation to self-consciousness and the role it plays in cognition. How this compares with Tetens who, as I have indicated in §4.2(b), takes Selbstthätigkeit to be a continuum needs further investigation.

4.3

In §§4.1-4.2, I have argued that aspects of Tetens' concepts of Selbstgefühl and Selbstthätigkeit are analogous to Kant's feeling and relationality claims respectively. The existence of these similarities make these Tetensian concepts relevant for interpreting Kant on Gefühl eines Daseins.

Contra this view, it might be objected that even if Kant's feeling- and relationality-claims can be found in Tetens' *Philosophische Versuche*, this does not establish the relevance of Tetens' work for Kant interpretation. This is because Tetensian Selbstgefühl is at best comparable to empirical apperception in Kant's system. Consequently, Tetens' notion of Selbstgefühl cannot help explicate why Kant describes the representation of the transcendental self as Gefühl eines Daseins.

Such an objection may be unwarranted in the present context. First, in this essay, I am not committed to the view that Tetens' theory of Selbstgefühl can necessarily help explain why Kant thinks that the transcendental self can be represented as Gefühl eines Daseins. I have merely suggested that similarities between Tetens' characterization of Selbstgefühl and Kant's feeling claim legitimize an inquiry into the extent to which Kant might have modeled—or, given the contours of his system, could consistently model—the notion of Gefühl eines Daseins on Tetensian Selbstgefühl.

Second, while it could be the case that Tetens' conceptualization of Selbstgefühl is akin to Kantian empirical apperception, this proposition might not be as straightforward as Frank (2002: 219) suggests. There are of course good reasons to support Frank's view. Tetens' philosophical system seems to fall squarely on the empirical side of Kant's transcendental-empirical divide.²³ This is because, in Tetens' view, the "I" or Selbstgefühl is felt by human beings (*PV II*, 173), while Kant's transcendental self relates to all rational beings. Further, Kant remarks on how his method differs from that of Tetens. In a *Reflexion*, he says, "Tetens investigates the concepts of pure reason merely subjectively (human nature), I objectively. The former is empirical, the latter is transcendental" (*Refl* 4901, 18: 23, 1780s; also see *Refl* 4900, 18: 23, 1780s). Tetens himself says that he is following the Lockean method of observation (*PV I*, Preface, III-IV), while Kant famously distinguished his transcendental method from Locke's empiricism. Finally, it is obviously true that Tetens does not share Kant's presupposition that the subject constitutes the object.

²³ Thiel (2014) challenges this view.

Yet an easy identification of Kantian empirical apperception and Tetensian Selbstgefühl may not be warranted. Kant characterizes empirical apperception as the “consciousness of our self in accordance with the determination of our state in inner perception...[and therefore as] forever changeable” (“Das Bewußtsein seiner selbst, nach den Bestimmungen unseres Zustandes, bei der innern Wahrnehmung ist bloß empirisch, jederzeit wandelbar...” *KrV* A107). In contrast, he says that the “that I am” (daß ich bin) relating to the transcendental self is empty (*KrV*, B157-58). It contains no manifold (*KrV* B138); and as a numerical identity, it cannot be thought (gedacht) by means of empirical data (*KrV* A107). If we take these passages from Kant into consideration, Tetens’ notion of Selbstgefühl seems more like Kant’s transcendental self rather than his empirical self. This is because, for Tetens, Selbstgefühl is also empty of empirical content, and therefore seemingly similar to Kant’s transcendental self in this respect. Tetens says: If the soul feels its striving (Bestreben) without the effect of the representation, then this feeling is united with the inner Selbstgefühl (“Fühlt die Seele ihr Bestreben, ohne die Wirkung desselben, nemlich die abgesondert dastehende Vorstellung, so ist dieß Gefühl mit dem innern Selbstgefühl vereinigt” *PVI*, 99). In this passage, Tetens does not directly say that Selbstgefühl is empty, but he does speak of it as empty of any other representation—so empirical representation in Kant’s terms—except the feeling of striving.²⁴

5 Kant on Gefühl eines Daseins: Interpretative Directions

²⁴ In this context, one must explore the relationship between Kant’s notion of the transcendental and Tetens’ concept of transcendent philosophy. See §5(d) below.

I have argued, in §1-4, that the feeling and relationality claims at *Prolog* 4: 334n can be detected in Tetens' *Philosophische Versuche* and Feder's *Logik und Metaphysik*. The feeling claim resonates, at least in some aspects, with the notion of Selbstgefühl in Feder and Tetens. Kant's concept of Gefühl eines Daseins is similar to Feder's clear "I" (or Selbstgefühl), and Tetens' clear Selbstgefühl. Selbstgefühl in both Tetens and Feder and Kant's Gefühl eines Daseins all relate to higher level cognition, and each of these philosophers conceives of higher level cognition in broadly similar vein. Kant's implicit presupposition in describing the self as both Kraft and Gefühl can be found more explicitly in Tetens and Feder. Finally, the relationality claim accords, to some degree, with Feder's notion of Selbstgefühl and Tetens' concept of Selbstthätigkeit.

Such an argument does not entail that the concept of Selbstgefühl in Tetens and Feder can be employed in any direct manner to interpret the significance of Gefühl eines Daseins in Kant's theory of self. Yet it can serve to raise new questions that can aid in this task of interpretation. I now delineate, from (a)-(d), some of these questions.

(a) Kant says that the transcendental self must be construed as atemporal. If the transcendental self can be represented as Gefühl eines Daseins (§2), then Gefühl eines Daseins must also be atemporal. Since neither Tetens nor Feder explicitly takes Selbstgefühl to be atemporal, it could be said that Selbstgefühl is not a good model for understanding Gefühl eines Daseins. However, there is at least one passage in *Philosophische Versuche* that might help with this issue. Tetens says: "Das innere Selbstgefühl, das Gefühl eigener Thätigkeiten, der Phantasie, der Denkkraft, des Herzens u. s. f. entwickelt sich zwar zwischendurch mit den äußern Sinnen, aber es ist doch

immer, so zu sagen, um einen Schritt zurück” (*PVI*, 232). In other words, Selbstgefühl, as it relates to any ability of the soul, requires representations from outside itself, but always remains “one step back” from these representations. It is not entirely clear what “one step back” means, and whether it can establish the atemporality of Selbstgefühl. Nevertheless, the fact that the inner Selbstgefühl is, as it were, never in the moment, does seem relevant for unpacking the relationship between Selbstgefühl and temporality in Tetens.²⁵

(b) In Tetens’ view, the Selbstthätigkeit that defines human beings can be explicated in the form of a continuum. In moving from lower to higher Selbstthätigkeit, one acquires more abilities. Abilities, like the representational ability, can be gained only if there is a “natural receptivity” to them in the inner Selbstthätigkeit of a nature (Wesen) (§4.2[b]). In addition, in §§3-4, I argued that Tetens and Feder connect Selbstgefühl with both the lower and higher faculties. In Feder’s case, Selbstgefühl at the lower cognitive level is analogous to Kantian inner sense, while at the higher cognitive level, Selbstgefühl involves a clear and stronger (stärke) representation of the “I” (§3.2). For Tetens, too, in comparison with the lower cognitive level, Selbstgefühl at the higher cognitive level becomes “finer and sharper” in that the thinking soul acquires more intensity (Stärke) and fine-ness (§4.1). Taken together, these propositions generate new questions that can potentially aid in interpreting Gefühl eines Daseins, and its place in Kant’s theoretical philosophy.

²⁵ Kumar (2016: 105ff) offers an interpretation of “one step back” in relation to the Kantian self, though without reference to Tetens.

First, while it is clear that Kant does not explicitly speak of a Tetens-like continuum, it might help to ask if he implicitly presumes it. Such an inquiry would determine whether Kant distinguishes between lower and higher feeling in tandem with Tetens' continuum theory. This then promises to reveal the extent to which Kant's system can accommodate the claim—which both Tetens and Feder make—that *Selbstgefühl* is to be associated with both the lower and the higher levels of cognition. Further, if it could be shown that Kant implicitly presupposes the connection between *Selbstgefühl* and higher cognition, then this would help explain why Kant introduces the concept of *Gefühl eines Daseins* and relates it to higher cognition.

Second, could Tetens' notion of "Stärke" be reconciled with Kant's philosophical system? Stärke means intensity, as Frank (2002: 221) interprets it. But what does intensity mean? On Tetens' view, intensity could be interpreted as the degree of mental modification. For instance, Tetens says that representation entails greater modification of the soul than mere feeling, pure reasoning is more differentiated than mere sense since it costs more effort, etc. (§4; also see *PVI*, 167). If intensity means extent of mental modification, then would it be possible to interpret *Gefühl eines Daseins* as Tetensian finer and sharper feeling? If we could answer this question in the affirmative—and this is plausible because Kant takes the transcendental self/*Gefühl eines Daseins* to relate to pure reasoning, and in Tetens' framework pure reasoning is supposed to possess high intensity (Stärke)—then the notion of *Gefühl eines Daseins* could be given some more content.

(c) The basic conceptual framework supporting the philosophical systems of Tetens and Feder seems to be at odds with Kant's classification of the foundational concepts of his system (Kant

calls this his “Stufenleiter” *KrV* A320/B376). On Kant’s *Stufenleiter*, the most basic concept is “representation in general” (*Vorstellung überhaupt* [repraesentatio]), followed by representations with consciousness (*perceptio*) which can be either an *Empfindung* relating solely to the subject as the modification of its state, or an objective perception (*Perzeption*) which is “*Erkenntnis* (*cognitio*).” *Erkenntnis* (*cognition*) is then divided into concepts and intuitions, and concepts include ideas of reason (*KrV* A320/B376).

In contrast to Kant who considers representations to be primary and distinguishes between *Empfindung* and *Erkenntnis*, Feder takes *Empfindung* to be the “first and foremost [zuförderst]” type of cognition (*Erkenntnis*) (*LM* 1778, 32; *LM* 1771, 31). Next, for Tetens, *Empfindung* or the felt impression of a thing (*gefühlter Eindruck der Sache*) comes first, followed by representation (*Vorstellen*), feeling of relation (*Gefühle der Verhältnisse*), relations (*Beziehung*) between representations and the perception of this relation, and finally judgment (*Urtheil*) characterized as the cognition of the relationship (*Verhältniß*) between representations (*PV* I, 461). With regard to Tetens’ classification, *Empfindung* comes first which goes against Kant’s *Stufenleiter*; and it remains unclear how for instance Kant would classify (if at all) the Tetensian notions of felt impression, and the feeling of relation.

So the question arises: Does the fact that Kant, Tetens and Feder employ divergent basic conceptual frameworks make the concept of *Selbstgefühl* irrelevant for interpreting Kant’s *Gefühl eines Daseins*? Or is it possible to reconcile these frameworks with each other?

(d) Kant distinguishes between the transcendental and the empirical (§2). Neither Tetens nor

Feder makes this distinction. Therefore, despite the continuities between the concepts of Selbstgefühl and Gefühl eines Daseins, it could still be argued that Kant's introduction of the transcendental-empirical distinction makes the notion of Selbstgefühl irrelevant for interpreting Gefühl eines Daseins, apart from perhaps making the very idea of Gefühl eines Daseins inconsistent with Kant's philosophy. This claim may well be true, but it would still have to be shown what exactly in Kant's transcendental framework makes it impossible for the transcendental self to be represented as Gefühl eines Daseins. Providing such an account is especially important because there are some similarities between Kant, Tetens and Feder on what they take to be the task of philosophy. In what follows, (i)-(ii), I briefly delineate some of these similarities, but also some important divergences.

(i) Kant says that cognition is transcendental if it is occupied with our a priori cognition of objects rather than with the objects themselves (*KrV* A13/B27). Transcendental philosophy relates "merely [to] pure speculative reason" (*KrV* A15/B29). Critique differs from transcendental philosophy. As the "system of all principles of pure reason," critique is the complete idea of transcendental philosophy (*KrV* B27). But it is not itself transcendental philosophy which must also include an exhaustive analysis of all human cognition a priori (*KrV* B27).

(ii) At the broadest level, the idea of systematic completeness inherent in Kant's concepts of critique and transcendental philosophy is consistent with Feder's characterization of the task of philosophy in *Logik und Metaphysik*. Philosophy, says Feder in the third edition of *LM*, must aim to make a whole out of the stuff of human knowledge (Kenntniß) in which there is light and

order (*LM* 1771, 16). Further, the sciences (*Wissenschaft*) must be restricted to certain rules, and their fundamental grounds must be examined by philosophy (*LM* 1771, 16).²⁶ Here, the elements of systematic ordering of the whole of human knowledge, the demarcation of the limits of the sciences, and the examination of their foundations all bring Feder close to Kant. Moreover, like Kant, Feder denies that we can ever know the thing in itself. Distinguishing between absolute nature (*Wesen*) and hypothetical nature, Feder asserts that the absolute nature of a thing, which entails that a thing must have a particular feature as long as it exists, cannot be known (*LM* 1778, 268; *LM* 1771, 267-68). In addition, some of Feder's conclusions regarding the self are continuous with Kant's view. Feder says that we cannot prove the simplicity of thinking substance, because our concepts are obscure in this context (*LM* 1778, 353; *LM* 1771, 352)—which anticipates Kant in the paralogisms section of the first *Critique* (*KrV* A351/B408). Despite these similarities between the philosophical approaches of Kant and Feder, Feder's subjectivism—the view that truth is what all humans cannot think in another way (*LM* 1778, 158; *LM* 1771, 155)—remains at odds with Kant's apriorism.²⁷

²⁶ These particular passages are absent from the fifth edition.

²⁷ Several scholars have pointed to the overlaps between Kant and Feder. Motta (2018: 110-14) argues that the division of metaphysics is similar in Feder and Kant; the basic themes of the *Körperlehre* and cosmology are antinomial for both Kant and Feder; the difference between analytical and synthetic proof on the one hand, and between a priori and a posteriori on the other in the 1770 edition of *Logik und Metaphysik* is consistent with Kant's view; and both Feder and Kant are concerned with the limits of the understanding. Motta (2018: 121), however, also says that Feder's empiricism is incompatible with Kant's apriorism. Thiel (2018: 83) states that, in the

(iii) Like Kant, Tetens also seeks to work out a “Grundwissenschaft” (*SP*, 13). This Grundwissenschaft, which Tetens calls “transcendent philosophy” (transcendente Philosophie) resembles Kant’s transcendental philosophy in at least two respects. First, transcendent philosophy is concerned not with real (wirklich) and present objects, but only those objects that are either possible or necessary with regard to things in general (Dinge überhaupt) (*SP*, 18). Similarly, Kant takes the object in general as the focal point of transcendental philosophy. In the B-deduction, he speaks of how the categories and apperception together enable us to think of objects in general (“Das Bewußtsein seiner selbst ist also noch lange nicht ein Erkenntnis seiner selbst, unarchtet aller Kategorien, welche das Denken eines Objekts überhaupt durch Verbindung des Mannigfaltigen in einer Apperzeption ausmachen” *KrV* B158).

Second, according to Tetens, transcendent philosophy deals with the form or mode of combination that is either expressed in first order propositions, or lies in them as their ground (*SP*, 34). It is a “Grundwissenschaft” consisting of general principles (Grundsätze) on the basis of which we judge and infer all things in general (*SP*, 39). This sounds like Kant’s notion of

early editions of *LM*, Feder like Kant conceives of metaphysics as the “Grundbegriffe” and “Grundsätze” of human thinking. Thiel (2018: 85) also says that Feder is neither rationalist nor empiricist, because he gives metaphysics an important function and use while pointing out its limits. Finally, Klemme and Kuehn (2010: 310) say that Feder aimed to determine the most rational thought on traditional metaphysical issues, and took metaphysics to be of “critical and skeptical import.”

critique as the “system of all principles of pure reason” (*KrV* B27, op. cit.). However, unlike Kant, this *Grundwissenschaft* is part of an observational philosophy of the human understanding. This observational philosophy provides the concepts of the human understanding and the mode of their origin, and thus contributes to the formation of a general science of reason (*Vernunftwissenschaft*) regarding objects outside the understanding (*SP*, 56-57). Despite the empiricist nature of this claim, Tetens also says that we must go beyond Locke and Hume, and that the ground of general philosophy (*allgemeine Philosophie*) must be “purified” (*gereinigt*), and should consist in “firm foundational concepts” (*festen Grundbegriff*) (*SP*, 60). This claim seems minimally consistent with Kant’s idea of pure philosophy. Finally, seemingly like Kant, Tetens says that the thinkability of a thing is related to the understanding of a cognizing nature (“Die Gedenkbarkeit der Dinge ist eine Beziehung auf den Verstand eines erkennenden Wesens,” *PV* I 326). He further says that our search for all the relations that we can think vis-à-vis a thing forms the extent and limit of human understanding (“diese Aufsuchung aller von uns gedenkbaren Verhältnisse und Beziehungen der Dinge den Umfang und die Grenzen des menschlichen Verstandes...,” *ibid.*).

Thus, on the whole, the extent to which Tetens departs from Kant’s philosophical method remains uncertain. Tetens conceives of philosophy as *Grundwissenschaft*; speaks of purifying philosophy for the sake of gaining firm foundational concepts; and specifies the limits of the understanding. All of these features seem comparable to Kant’s view. On the other hand, Tetens locates *Grundwissenschaft* in an observational philosophy. He believes, unlike Kant, that one must undertake a “physics of the human understanding” which requires collecting, in tandem with the analytical method of Locke, Hume and Condillac, the real (*reelle*) concepts and

principles of human understanding by means of observation (*SP*, 66-67). Any speculation on general grounds can be ventured only after this observational philosophy has been accomplished (*SP*, 66-67).²⁸

(iv) Tetens takes the psychological “I,” or the “I” of human beings, as his object of inquiry. For Kant, it would seem that the psychological “I” is merely the empirical “I,” and the aim is to understand the nature of the transcendental “I.” Does this divergence of views between Tetens and Kant entail that Tetens’ concept of Selbstgefühl is irrelevant for understanding Gefühl eines Daseins? Answering this question requires further investigation. But, as I now indicate, it is not obvious that this question must be answered in the affirmative.

Tetens says that the soul is united to the body, but that the soul in the psychological sense, or the “I,” is a distinct persisting thing or substance (“ein Wesen, das [...] für sich ein eigenes bestehendes Ding oder eine Substanz ist, die wir die Seele in psychologischer Bedeutung oder unser Ich nennen” *PV* II, 158). He also says that it is not unreasonable to think of the soul as a non-bodily nature (unkörperliches Wesen) that either alone or for the most part constitutes the sensing and thinking part in human beings (“empfindende, denkende and thätige Seelenwesen”) (*PV* II, 158).

²⁸ Thiel (2014: 102) says that it remains unclear how Tetens wishes to put together the observational empiricist method and speculation, and this applies also to the notion of Selbstgefühl.

Further, Tetens presupposes the soul to be immaterial, but adds that Selbstgefühl cannot give us an image (Bild) of the immaterial soul (*PV II*: 190). The Selbstgefühl of the soul, or the way the soul feels and senses (empfindet) itself, is the same as the way in which the eye sees itself in a mirror (*PV II*: 158).²⁹ While some of these claims are not inconsistent with Kant's conclusions in the paralogisms (the assumptions of immateriality and identity),³⁰ it might be said that Tetens is concerned with the "I" in a psychological sense, while Kant is not. This view is strengthened by Tetens' attempts to provide a causal account of the relationship between the soul and the brain—e.g., that the alterations of the soul and the alterations of the brain are reciprocally related (*PV II*, 159ff)—which Kant would reject.

Yet, in my view, more needs to be said about what Tetens means by "psychological" before a radical disanalogy between Kant and Tetens on Selbstgefühl can be posited. First of all, Tetens says that the soul, or the "I," in the psychological sense is a persisting substance independent of the body (*PV*, II 158). This conception of the psychological "I" is unlike the Kantian empirical self which is the bodily self. But it is perhaps to some degree comparable to the Kantian "I" of the discursive intellect, which is the notion of the "I" at issue in the Deduction of the first

²⁹ "Von der Natur des Selbstgefühls der Seele. Sie fühlte und empfindet sich auf eine ähnliche Weise, wie das Auge sich im Spiegel siehet." (*PV II*: 158)

³⁰ Tetens' position on the simplicity of the soul is also like Kant's. Thiel (2014: 98) says that in the eighteenth century, the view was that an ostensibly simple soul substance might be an immediate Gefühl. But Tetens is careful with this view, and remains metaphysically neutral regarding this issue.

Critique. The human intellect is a type of discursive intellect because it combines passive sensibility and active rationality. Second, it could be said that, at *PV II*, 158, Tetens employs the term “psychological” to distinguish two sorts of inquiry: investigating the “I” of human beings is psychological in the true sense, as opposed to the general metaphysical speculation about the detachment of the soul from the body.³¹ Here the term “psychological” refers to the human in general, and not to the individual psychologies of particular human beings. Further, there may be two kinds of psychological analysis in Tetens’s writings: one providing a mechanical-causal account of the mind (*PV II*, 159ff), and the other investigating the psychological “I” as it relates to the discursive (human) intellect composed of both sensibility and rationality.

Hence, positing a radical break between Tetens’ psychological “I” and Kant’s transcendental “I” requires further unpacking Tetens’ notion of the psychological, and exploring the extent to which Kant’s transcendental “I” might be continuous with Tetens’ psychological “I” of the human being in general.³²

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³¹ Thiel (2014: 99) says that Tetens goes beyond the empiricist method to argue for the metaphysical unity of the soul through pure argumentation. This substantial unity of the soul (Seele) cannot be immediately given in Selbstgefühl.

³² If such a continuity thesis could be defended, it would be in line with Thiel’s conclusion that “Kant’s account is continuous with the debate [on the unity of the self] among empiricist thinkers and is not to be understood as simply a break with that tradition” (2015: 163).

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