Hermann Lotze

An Intellectual Biography

As a philosopher, psychologist, and physician, the German thinker Hermann Lotze (1817–1881) defies classification. Working in the mid-nineteenth-century era of programmatic realism, he critically reviewed and rearranged theories and concepts in books on pathology, physiology, medical psychology, anthropology, history, aesthetics, metaphysics, logic, and religion. Leading anatomists and physiologists reworked his hypotheses about the central and autonomic nervous systems. Dozens of fin-de-siècle philosophical contemporaries emulated him, yet often without acknowledgment, precisely because he had made conjecture and refutation into a method. In spite of Lotze’s status as a pivotal figure in nineteenth-century intellectual thought, no complete treatment of his work exists, and certainly no effort to take account of the feminist secondary literature. Hermann Lotze: An Intellectual Biography is the first full-length historical study of Lotze’s intellectual origins, scientific community, institutional context, and worldwide reception.

William R. Woodward is a professor of psychology at the University of New Hampshire.
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Hermann Lotze

An Intellectual Biography

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Preface

I have traveled with this manuscript for three decades, but it goes back even further. This project grew out of an undergraduate thesis about G. T. Fechner under psychologist E. G. Boring at Harvard in 1967 and a master’s thesis under psychologist Julian Jaynes at Princeton, also on Fechner, in 1969.¹ This book began as a dissertation on the history of medicine in 1974–1975, encompassing the present Chapters 1 through 8. My mentor, George Rosen, gave genial encouragement to my philosophical and psychological predilections and guided me to my first publications through Karl Rothschild.² My readers Frederic L. Holmes and Owsei Temkin set standards that sustained me through the unexpected byways of several more decades.

An appointment in 1975 in the Department of Psychology at the University of New Hampshire gave me a foothold in psychology through which I could explore Lotze’s work in personality psychology, sense perception, and volition, encouraged from afar by Josef Brozek.³

I dedicate the book to Peter and Susanne Behaghel of Mannheim, independent booksellers of high taste and generous spirit, who educated me into liberal German culture beginning in 1965 and made my family at home in Heidelberg and Mannheim in 1981–1982 and 1985–1986. Margot Behaghel, Peter’s mother, transcribed the letters to Salomon Hirzel in 1982 that found their way into print; and she shared her sense of humor about German professors and empathy for their wives. Friends and colleagues who taught me about German culture and helped with transcriptions and translations include Axel W. Bauer, Alexandre Métraux, and Katharina Steingraeber in Heidelberg; Horst Gundlach in Passau; Renato Mazzolini in Italy; G. Schwender in Leipzig; Helga and Lothar Sprung in Berlin; and Helmut Fickenwirth and Leopold von Kanicky in Durham, New Hampshire.

The work could not have been completed without invaluable stays in Germany. The National Library of Medicine of the National Institute of Health (LM03492) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation supported my year at the Psychologisches Institut in Heidelberg in 1981–1982. I am most grateful to my sponsor, Carl Friedrich Graumann, and to Georg Eckardt for hosting a conference on evolution in Jena. In 1985–1986, the National Endowment for the Humanities (RH-20620) and the Humboldt Foundation funded my year at the Institut für Geschichte der Medizin in Heidelberg, generously hosted by Heinrich Schipperges, yielding historiographic explorations of Lotze’s middle period. In addition, I received summer support in 1985–1986 from the National Science Foundation (SES-8319542) and IREX travel grants to plan and facilitate a summer institute in 1987–1988. In 1990–1991, I was fortunate to receive a Fulbright Teaching Fellowship at the Humboldt University in East Berlin from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars. An invitation to

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Lübeck by Dietrich von Engelhardt began a fruitful collaboration with Bettina Wahrig. I was proud to serve my courageous host in the German Democratic Republic, Karl-Friedrich Wessel, through the history-making changes of 1986 to 1991. This led to productive collaboration with Reinhardt Pester, Hartwig Frank, Lothar Sprung, and Helga Sprung. Dean Stuart Palmer, Dean Marilyn Hoskin, Dean Kenneth Fuld, and the Office of Sponsored Research helped with awards for summer research and special needs.

I would like to say a word to my readers. Previous Lotze scholarship has largely focused on the medical, the philosophical, or the psychological. I have persevered in addressing Lotze’s whole life and works because “thought” in the nineteenth century still did transcend disciplines. My own gaze comes from mentors in history of science: Everett Mendelsohn, John E. Murdoch, Kenneth Taylor, and others at Harvard. Julian Jaynes inspired me in history of psychology at Princeton. Then Larry Holmes, George Rosen, Asger Aaboe, Bernard Goldstein, Martin Klein, and Derek Price rounded me out at Yale in history of science and medicine. Philosopher Robert S. Cohen commuted to New Haven, and I commuted to psychologist John J. Sullivan in New York City to learn to combine biography with philosophy.

Cheiron Society colleagues have encouraged whatever feminist sympathies I have: Laurel Furumoto, Elizabeth Scarborough, Jill Morawski, Gail Hornstein, Fran Cherry, Deborah Coon, and Ellen Herman. Colleagues in the European Society for the History of the Human Sciences gave me

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inspiration to explore the sociopolitical context of Lotze’s thought, especially Irmingard Staeuble and Gordana Jovanovic and, more recently, David Sullivan, Nikolay Milkov, and Frederick Beiser. The resulting book combines scientific biography with origin and reception history. Scientific biography accounts for the texture of scientific and scholarly communities and the problem areas they shared. But it can reflect and explore political values. This book’s origins thus include my own struggle of conscience in the late 1960s. I took a middle way in the Peace Corps. This book explores that struggle in another context: the German professoriate in the nineteenth century as scholars faced setbacks to constitutional freedoms in 1830, 1837, 1848, and 1871. Lotze and his colleagues also took the middle way.

I owe much to German archivists: Klaus Haenel and Helmut Rohlfing and the manuscript department at the University Library in Göttingen; Ulrich Hunger and Frau Bruns at the University Archive in Göttingen; and G. Schwendler at the University of Leipzig. Staff members of the archives are mentioned in the list of unpublished sources at the end of the book; they invariably met my requests for unpublished materials, including photographs, in Göttingen, Leipzig, East Berlin, West Berlin, Dresden, Erlangen, Leipzig, Merseberg, Jena, Stuttgart, Tübingen, and Zittau. I thank R. Bernet and the Husserl Archives in Louvaine for permission to quote an unpublished manuscript. Adalbert Brauer described the history and contact persons for the Weidmann and Hirzel publishing houses. Barbara Schreck of Hirzel Verlag was kind enough to report that they lost their archival holdings in World War II. The Christian-Weise-Bibliothek Zittau provided a drawing of the Zittau Gymnasium. Uwe Dathe in Jena was most helpful. Lotze family members proved more than helpful: Wilhelm Lotze in Soest, his son Wilhelm Lotze in Bad Homburg, and Erla Horneffer in Göttingen. I record here my gratitude to a descendent of Lotze’s sister Natalie Lotze Auster, the late Dr. jur. Werner Kuhn in Göttingen, who was sadly deprived of seeing the finished book but contributed to its biographical detail. I also thank the Evangelisches Kirchenbuchamt Bautzen for sending photocopies of genealogical records. I owe a special debt to Hannelore and Reinhardt Pester of Greifswald and Berlin, with whom I shared the excitement of

collaborative Lotze projects and chasing down unpublished sources during the decade before German unification.

In the United Kingdom, I want to record my gratitude to the librarians at Balliol College Oxford, Merton College Oxford, University College Oxford, King’s College Cambridge, Trinity College Cambridge, the University Library at Newcastle upon Tyne, and the University College London Library. In the United States, I thank Houghton Library at Harvard University, Stirling Memorial Library at Yale, and the Wells College Library.

For the hospitality of colleagues who hosted my talks or gave encouragement, I am grateful: Lutz Geldsetzer and Gerd König in Germany; Sven-Eric Liedmann and Ingemar Nilsson in Sweden; and in the United States, Valentine Dusek, Paul Grimley, and Robert Scharff. Michael Heidelberger’s friendship and conversations have been invaluable. Lothar Kreiser, Wolfram Meischner, and Anneros Meischner-Metge were generous with their time and support in Leipzig. Warm family support has come from Winnie Wang and Horst Gundlach, Dietrich and Ulrike von Engelhardt, Christoph and Dörthé Mundt, Hans and Kirsten Assmus, Hans and Bettina Rübesame, and Karl-Friedrich and Anne Wessel.

I thank my successive editors Helen Wheeler, Alex Holzman, Frank Smith, Deborah Gershenowitz, Dana Brickner, and Tom Carson at Cambridge University Press, as well as the anonymous readers. I am grateful for the skilled work of project manager Sathishkumar Rajendran, copy editor Lois Tardío, and indexer Kevin Broccoli. Colleagues Mitchell G. Ash, Elke Hahn, and Michael Heidelberger coached me along. Frederick Gregory, David Robinson, Donald Fleming, and David Sullivan read this manuscript; to them I am indebted for hard-hitting suggestions about architectonics and emphasis. My parents, Walter R. Woodward and Catherine Cooley Woodward, nurtured a fascination with religion and science. Finally, I thank my family, which gave me sustenance and the distractions I needed to persevere.


Challenges to the male canon of philosophy, medicine, and psychology have forced many a rethinking of the manuscript. Surveying the literature afresh, I find that my own evolution toward addressing gender and race in the classroom has given sharper focus to some of the conclusions of this book. As a Caucasian heterosexual male, my white privileges had made me insufficiently aware of the dimensions of status and power in this life story. Finally, my work with colleagues on a new undergraduate minor called “Race, Culture, and Power” and my education in postcolonial scholarship have led to a heightened appreciation of Lotze’s practical philosophy and cautious cosmopolitanism, despite his eschewal of democratic principles and his preference for a constitutional monarchy.

Abbreviations

AdB – *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, 52+ vols.


AP – Lotze, *Allgemeine Pathologie und Therapie als mechanische Naturwissenschaften* (Leipzig, 1842)


A: Family papers from the collections of Hermann Lotze, Konrad Lotze, Robert Lotze, and Wilhelm Lotze

B: Official letters and documents about Lotze (Personalakte Göttingen University)

C: Letters to Lotze regarding administrative matters, honors

D: Family letters

E: Honors to Lotze (in German)

F: Honors to Lotze (foreign)

G: Letters to Lotze, chronologically ordered by Max Wentscher (collection 1)

H: Letters to Lotze (collection 2)

I: Further letters, drafts, honors

BL – *Biographisches Lexikon*

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List of Abbreviations

BStH – Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Handschriftenabteilung [Manuscript Department]
A: Sammlung Adam 14140
B: Sammlung Darmstaedter 2a 1845 (6)
C: Sammlung HärTEL


DSB – Dictionary of Scientific Biography

FAD – Jakob Friedrich Fries – Archiv, Heinrich Heine Universität Düsseldorf

GdA – Lotze, Grundzüge der Aesthetik. Diktate aus den Vorlesungen (1884 [1856])

GdAiD – Lotze, Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland (Munich, 1868)

GdL – Lotze, Grundzüge der Logik. Diktate aus den Vorlesungen (Leipzig, 1891)

GdPsK – Hermann Lotze, Geschichte der deutschen Philosophie seit Kant (Leipzig, 1882)

GdR – Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie

GG – Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972ff.)

GgA – Göttingsche gelehrte Anzeigen

GSWD – Gesammelte Schriften Wilhelm Diltheys

HH – Hermann von Helmholtz and the Foundations of Nineteenth-Century Science, ed. David Cahan

HHS – History of the Human Sciences

HLBD – Reinhardt Pester, ed. & intro., Hermann Lotze, Briefe und Dokumente, foreword by Ernst Wolfgang Orth (Würzburg, 2003)

HP – Handwörterbuch der Physiologie, ed. Rudolf Wagner
List of Abbreviations

HW – Der Briefwechsel zwischen Wagner und Henle, eds. Hans-Heinz Eulner & Hermann Hoepke (Göttingen, 1979)

JFHSW – Johann Friedrich Herbart Sämtliche Werke

JHBS – Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences

JHP – Journal of the History of Philosophy

KS – Hermann Lotze Kleine Schriften (4 vols.)


LH – Lotze to Hirzel, UAG, RF/1901, UBG (in HLBD)

LK – Lotze to Kämmel, BStH, B, I, No. 1–6, reprinted in HLBD


Mic – Lotze, Microcosmus, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1885)

Mik – Lotze, Mikrokosmus, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1856, 1858, 1864)

MP – Medicinische Psychologie (Leipzig, 1852)

NTM – Naturwissenschaft Technik Medizin (contemporary German journal for history of science, medicine, and technology)

OPP – Outlines of Practical Philosophy (Boston, 1885)

OPR – Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion

PA – Hermann Lotze, Personal Files [Personal-Akten], copy, handwritten document in BH (in HLBD)


REP – Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy

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List of Abbreviations


SA – Sudhoff’s Archiv

SEP – Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

SSJFF – Sämtliche Schriften Jakob Friedrich Fries


UAG – Universitätsarchiv Göttingen (Göttingen University Archive)

A: Personalakten Hermann Lotze Az 4 Vb/120

AA: Philosophische Fakultät, Dekanatsakten, Band (vol.), Blatt (page)

UAL – Universität Leipzig, Universitätsarchiv (Leipzig University Archive), Personalakte [Personal Files] 708, Bl. [pages] 2–18

UBG – Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen, Archives [Handschriftenabteilung]

B: two letters to Hirzel


ZPpk – Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik

ZPsT – Zeitschrift für Philosophie und spekulative Theologie