"A halting-stage in the evolution of logical theory". John Dewey's critical engagement with Lotze's logic

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the way in which the American pragmatist John Dewey's engaged critically with Hermann Lotze's logic in a series of papers in the 1903 anthology *Studies in Logical Theory*. The first part of the paper describes the backdrop for Dewey's critical engagement with Lotze, namely, his attempt to distinguish his newly developed instrumentalist understanding of logic from the absolute idealism that had played an important role in his earlier thinking. The next part of the paper then describes the instrumental position from which Dewey approached Lotze's thinking, while the final part of the paper examines Dewey's critical analysis of Lotze's thinking about logic. Here the conclusion will be that even though Dewey saw Lotze as "one of the most vigorous and acute of modern logicians", he also thought that Lotze represented "a halting-stage in the evolution of logical theory" in so far as his thinking never managed to get beyond the classical "empiristic and transcendental logics" in the way that Dewey thought his own instrumental logic managed to do.

Keywords: Dewey, Lotze, Pragmatism, Idealism, Logic.

Introduction

In the preface to his 1938 magnum opus *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, the American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952) begins by pointing out that the book represents the culmination of "ideas regarding the nature of logical theory that were first presented, some forty years ago, in *Studies in Logical Theory*", and then goes on to say that "with the outstanding exception of Peirce, I have learned most from writers with whose positions I have in the end been compelled to disagree" (pp. iii-iv). What Dewey does not mention in the preface, however, is that one of the persons from whom he learned so much, although in the end had to disagree with, was the German philosopher Hermann Lotze (1817-1881). But there can be no doubt that Lotze was one of these persons. In each of the four essays that Dewey contributed to the 1903 anthology *Studies in Logical Theory*, in which he and some of his students at the University of Chicago presented their new 'instrumental' logic for the first time, Dewey thus develops his own position in and through a critical analysis of the 1888 English translation of Lotze's logic. Despite the fact that Lotze probably is *the* single philosopher whose work Dewey has examined the most in exegetical detail (if one discounts his early work on Leibniz), surprisingly little has been written about the encounter between these two thinkers. The fact that Lotze influenced Dewey is just mentioned in William R. Woodward's magisterial biography *Hermann Lotze: An Intellectual Biography*, but not developed in any detail, just as the recent anthology *Lotze et son Héritage* does not have an essay on Dewey and Lotze, even though it does have ones on Lotze, James and Santayana. And while a lot of standard works on Dewey's thinking about logic point out that he engaged with Lotze's thinking, none of them analyzes this engagement in detail[1]. Even though James Scott Johnston cannot avoid discussing Dewey's engagement with Lotze in his fine *John Dewey's Earlier Logical Theory*, it is telling that he complains about how Dewey's engagement with Lotze "makes for an unsatisfactory explication of Dewey's own logical theory" because it is quite "difficult to read Dewey's positive statements on logical theory out of his (negative) criticisms of Lotze"[2]. Given the fact that Johnston is primarily interested in showing that Dewey never really left the Hegelianism of his youth, it is of course perfectly understandable that he is not interested in his engagement with Lotze for its own sake. But it just goes to prove that this is a general trend among Dewey scholars. In fact, the most detailed examination of Dewey's engagement with Lotze seems to be Christopher Hookway's extremely short "Lotze and the classical pragmatists" from 2009, which in less than eight pages discusses the different ways in which "the philosophical ideas of both James and Dewey were influenced by their knowledge of Lotze's writings", and even Hookway ends by concluding that "this part of the intellectual context of pragmatism probably has more of offer to our understanding of James and Dewey than is currently supposed"[3]. I fully agree with Hookway, and in this essay, accordingly, I intend to examine in detail Dewey's critical engagement with Lotze's thinking about logic in *Studies in Logical Theory*. In the first part I sketch the background for Dewey's engagement with Lotze. This part will, primarily, consist of a description of the position that *Studies in Logical Theory* occupies in Dewey's movement away from the absolutism of his youth towards his more mature pragmatism. Then I move on to describe the logical position – instrumentalism – from which Dewey approached Lotze's thinking. Finally, I then examine Dewey's critical analysis of Lotze's thinking about logic. My conclusion here will be that even though Dewey saw Lotze as "one of the most vigorous and acute of modern

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logicians", he also thought that Lotze represented "a halting-stage in the evolution of logical theory" in so far as his thinking never managed to get beyond the classical "empiristic and transcendental logics" in the way that Dewey thought his own instrumental logic managed to do[4].

2. From absolutism to experimentalism: Dewey's Hegelian background

While Dewey today is recognized as one the three most prominent classical pragmatists – together with William James and Charles S. Peirce – he began his career by being heavily influenced by German Idealism and especially by the neo-Hegelianism that held sway when he received his philosophical formation in the 1870s and 1880s. As has been described in detail by James A. Good, it was not just the British Isles that were influenced by German philosophy and especially by Neo-Hegelianism in the latter half of the 19th century. The same was also the case with the US, which as a consequence did not just send many of its young philosophy students to study in Germany, but also witnessed the development of a particular American form of Hegelianism centered in St. Louis (hence the name The St. Louis Hegelians), and it is this American Hegelianism which influenced Dewey's early formation as a philosopher[5]. In a way this influence already began before Dewey decided on philosophy as his preferred career choice. Before he made that momentous decision, Dewey thus sent two articles to, in his own words, the "well-known Hegelian" W. T. Harris asking for his advice "as to the possibility of [Dewey] successfully prosecuting philosophical studies"[6]. Since Harris' answer turned out to be encouraging Dewey began his graduate studies in philosophy at the new research university Johns Hopkins in 1882, where his first serious encounter with German Idealism and Hegelianism took place. This encounter was mediated by his new teacher George Sylvester Morris, who was described at the time as "one of the most accomplished Hegel scholars in America", and who "deeply affected" Dewey with his "enthusiastic and scholarly devotion"[7]. Besides Morris and his particular American version of neo-Hegelianism, however, Dewey was also influenced by such British neo-Hegelians as Thomas Hill Green, Edward and John Caird, and William Wallace. As a consequence of this strong Hegelian influence, Dewey was led to develop a Hegelian critique of Kant, which he submitted as his doctoral thesis when he graduated from Johns Hopkins in 1884.

When he left Johns Hopkins, Dewey had thus been deeply affected by neo-Hegelianism and had also come to think of himself as part of this movement. In fact, the impact that Hegelian ways of thinking made on him during these formative years was so strong that in 1930, when he looked back on his philosophical development in the autobiographical essay "From Absolutism to Experimentalism", he admitted that "the acquaintance with Hegel has left a permanent deposit in my thinking"[8]. In the same essay, however, he also pointed out that he gradually "drifted away from Hegelianism in the next fifteen years" after he left Johns Hopkins. Even though this move away from Hegelianism happened gradually, one specific event is usually pointed out as being of particular importance in the process, namely, Dewey's 1890 encounter with William James' monstrous masterpiece *The Principles of Psychology*[9]. Dewey's encounter with James' famous book took place against the backdrop of his own Hegelian inspired treatment of the new, emerging science of psychology in his 1886 *Psychology*, where he still operated with the idea of an "absolute mind"[10].What influenced Dewey most in James' book was his thoroughly biological, Darwinian approach to mental life, or, as Dewey himself described it, "the objective biological factor in James's conception of thought"[11].What Dewey referred to by this 'objective biological factor' was the fact that James in *The Principles* treats all categories as tools or means for life or activity. This new way of thinking made it possible for Dewey to see another way in which one could avoid the individualism and particularism of empiricism that had attracted him to Hegelianism in the first place. Instead of postulating some kind of constitutive thought, it now became possible to see life, activity or experience as the thing that held things together and gave them unity. Taking his cue from this Jamesian idea, Dewey then gradually drifted away from neo-Hegelianism and especially the idea of a "transcendent absolute". One aspect of the process had to do with psychology where he developed a functionalist-biological approach which received its classical expression in his famous 1896 article "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology". Another aspect – and the one that is most important in relation to Lotze – had to do with logic. This was a subject that Dewey had taught both in 1890 and in 1899-1900 through critical discussions of the works of such influential thinkers as John Stuart Mill, Bernard Bosanquet, Francis Herbert Bradley and - Hermann Lotze. But it was through his critical engagement with Lotze's logic in *Studies in Logical Theory* from 1903 that he first presented his new instrumental understanding of logic to a broader audience, which also, as it is often said, represented the final, culminating stage in his move from Absolutism to Experimentalism. In this way Dewey's critical engagement with Lotze played an important role in his move from Absolutism to Experimentalism, and while John R. Shook is probably right to point out that Dewey, in theory, might as well have chosen Bradley or Bosanquet as the target of his analysis, he also seems right when he suggests that "Lotze's preeminent stature and the structure of his logical and epistemological system" probably made him "an irresistible target for Dewey".[12] In order to understand how and why the structure of Lotze's logical and epistemological system made him an irresistible target for Dewey, however, it is first necessary to take a closer look at the new, instrumental logic that Dewey's encounter with James led him to develop.

3. Dewey's framework: Epistemological *vs* instrumental logic

Dewey's approach to Lotze in *Studies in Logical Theory* is informed by the idea that there are two radically different and mutually exclusive ways of thinking about logic. On the one hand there is "the epistemological logician" whose thinking leads to an "epistemological type of lo-

gic" (p. 55)[13]. This type of logic is then opposed to the "instrumental type" (p. 53) of logic that Dewey himself espouses. As Dewey sees it, the difference between these two forms of logic has to do both with the way they think about thinking as well as with what they take to be the fundamental problem of logic. According to Dewey, the characteristic thing about "the epistemological logician" is thus that he does not just operate with a distinction between "thought as such" or "at large" and "reality as such" or "at large" (pp. 50, 51), but also thinks that "the main problem" of logic is to decide whether "the specifications of thought as such hold good of reality as such" (p. 51). So the epistemological logician presupposes a sharp separation between thought and reality (or the subjective and the objective), which he then thinks it is the primary job of logic to try to bridge, and it is because he thinks that "logic is supposed to grow out of" this classical epistemological problem "and lead up to its solution" (p. 51) that Dewey calls this type of logician "epistemological".

As Dewey sees it, the history of philosophy has been dominated by two (warring) types of epistemological logics, namely, "empiristic" and "transcendental logics" (p. 85). The difference between these two forms of epistemological logic has to do with the way in which they try to bridge the gulf between "thought as such" and "reality as such" in order to explain how "the specifications of thought as such" can "hold good of reality as such".

The characteristic thing about empiristic logics, as Dewey understands them, is that they recognize that thinking is dependent upon certain, empirical "antecedents" (p. 72) in the form of "an experience which is *mere* existence or occurrence" (p. 79). Typically this has taken the form of an isolated sensory impression or feeling. The job of the empiristic logician has then been to find out how it is possible to go from this idea of thought as dependent upon empirical antecedents to the idea that some ways of thinking are of more "worth" (p. 79) than others, even though they all take their cue from empirical antecedents. The perennial problem for this type of logic, as Dewey sees it, is that it becomes virtually impossible to explain how it is possible for thought to make a distinction between valid and invalid ways of thinking if all thinking takes its cue from an antecedent that, as "an experience which is *mere* existence or occurrence", has nothing to do with validity and invalidity. The gap between genesis and validity simply becomes too wide to bridge.

As opposed to empiristic logics, transcendental logicians begin from the perspective of thought with the idea of "thought as active in forms of its own, pure in and of themselves" (p. 85), which then leaves the problem of explaining why we have reason to think that the forms of pure thought are valid for something beyond thought itself, i.e., reality. The way the transcendental logician solves this problem is by introducing the idea of "some constitutive thought" or "absolute universal thought" (p. 82) which has somehow already structured reality rationally, so that the categories of pure thought are valid for something beyond pure thought itself. In the case of human beings, however, "Absolute Reason" works "under limiting conditions of finitude of a sensitive and temporal organism" (p. 82) so that human thinking (which is *reflective* as opposed to *constitutive*) has to take its cue from "fragmentary sensations, impressions, feelings" even though reality in itself is rationally structured according to the categories of "Absolute Reason" or "Pure Thought" (p. 82). Despite the different starting points, however, the problem for the transcendental logician is, as Dewey sees it, at bottom the same as for the empiristic one (if one ignores the additional problem of explaining why "a perfect, absolute, complete, finished thought finds it necessary to submit to alien, disturbing, and corrupting conditions in order, in the end, to recover through reflective thought in a partial, piecemeal, wholly inadequate way what it possessed at the outset in a much more satisfactory way" (p. 83)). If human thinking, as a consequence of human finitude, is reflective and takes its cue from some "wholly indeterminate unrationalized, independent, prior existence" (p. 83), then the antecedents of human thinking are not really already rationally structured by constitutive thought and the transcendental logician has the same problem as the empiricist, namely, to explain how it is possible to distinguish between valid and invalid thinking if reflective human thinking takes its cue from "a wholly indeterminate, unrationalized, independent, prior existence" (p. 83)

In order to avoid the problem that he takes to be common to both the transcendental and the empiristic form of epistemological logic, Dewey's own instrumental approach to logic does not begin with a "fixed distinction" or a "fixed gulf" between "thought as such" and "reality as such". Instead it takes its cue from Dewey's idea of an experience or a situation. According to this idea, there are many different types of experiences or situations. While some experiences or situations are primarily of "an affectional quality", others are thus "practical or appreciative or reflective" (p. 59), as Dewey explains. At the same time that Dewey's thinking about logic takes its cue from this idea of an experience or a situation instead of the distinction between "thought as such" and "reality as such", it also has a very different take on "the problem of logical theory" (p. 52). Instead of thinking that the main problem of logical theory is to find out whether "the specifications of thought as such hold good of reality as such", an instrumental logician like Dewey believes that the main job of logic is, on the one hand, to describe how "the reflective process" (p. 65), "activity" (p. 54), "function" (p. 65), "situation" (p.) or "experience" relates to "unreflective" (p. 49) forms of experience. Besides describing how "reflective" experience relates to "unreflective" experience, however, Dewey also thinks that logic should describe the main characteristics of reflective experience as a peculiar form of experience. So, as Dewey sees it, logic should both describe the relations "*between*" reflective and unreflective experience as well as reflective experience from "*within*" (p. 59).

In order to understand why this way of thinking makes Dewey's approach to logic specifically *instrumental*, it is necessary to take a closer look at his understanding of the relation *between* "reflective" and "unreflective" experience. According to Dewey, "reflective experience" does not just come "out of" (p. 47) an "unreflective" (p. 49) form of experience, but also exists "for the sake of" (p. 47) such a form of experience. To be more precise, Dewey is convinced that the peculiar form of experience termed thinking arises as a consequence of tensions, crisis, con-

flict, disequilibration, disintegration or problems in unreflective experience and has as its primary goal to solve the problem out of which it arose in the first place. A simple example may serve to illustrate Dewey's thought here. Imagine a long jumper who systematically oversteps the foul line. Since the purpose of this unreflective form of experience or activity is to jump as far as possible without overstepping, the fact that he systematically oversteps creates a tension, conflict, problem or disequilibration in his activity. This problem may then set the long jumper and his coach thinking about why he oversteps. Perhaps he thinks too much about the foul line? Perhaps his run-up is too long and he gets tired before he reaches the foul-line and so on. Whatever conclusion the reflective experience leads to, however, the long jumper and the coach will use it to modify the jumper's activity, hoping thereby to solve the problem in unreflective experience out of which reflection arose in the first place, and it is in this sense that Dewey thinks reflective experience or logic is to be seen as "an instrument of adjustment or adaptation to a particular environing situation" (p. 58).

Dewey's instrumental understanding of the relation between reflective and unreflective experience has a number of consequences which sets it off from epistemological logics. First of all Dewey's approach does not imply that the unreflective experience which antecedes and evokes reflection is a-rational or meaningless – a mere existence or occurrence. Even though the long jumper experiences a tension or problem in his activity, it is not as if the situation is totally void of meaning. Many things still make sense and it is from these that his reflective experience takes its cue. Secondly, and most importantly, Dewey's approach does not begin by taking "the distinctions of thought and fact, etc., as ontological, as inherently fixed in the makeup of the structure of being" (p. 57) in the way that epistemological logics do. Instead, Dewey's instrumental approach sees the "distinction of meaning and fact" as "an *induced* and *intentional* practical division of labor" within reflective experience. What this means is that the distinction between thought (idea, meaning) and fact (reality) is one that is deliberately introduced by the one engaged in a reflective activity because it is useful if reflective activity is to achieve its goal and solve the problem in unreflective experience that evoked it in the first place. In the case of the long jumper, for example, it will be useful for him in his reflections on why he oversteps to introduce a distinction between *the facts* of the case (how long is his run up? What is he thinking when he runs etc.) and *his ideas* about how to change his run up or his thoughts while running. But while this distinction is important in the jumper's reflective experience, it does not, according to Dewey, exist when he is unreflectively engaged in jumping, and the only justification for introducing it, as well as particular facts and ideas in his reflective experience, is because he has reason to think that they will help him solve the problem that originally made him think. For, as Dewey sees it, the test of the particular distinctions and objects within reflective experience is also instrumental in the sense that "the test of validity of [an] idea [or a fact] is its functional or instrumental use in effecting the transition from a relatively conflicting experience to a relatively integrated one"(p. 107). And it is because Dewey's instrumental approach to logic in this way does not just treat reflective experience as instrumental in relation to a meaningful but problematic and unreflective form of experience, but also treats the different distinctions within reflective experience as "flexible and historic, relative and methodological […] instead of as "absolute, fixed and predetermined", that he takes his own approach to be superior to all epistemological logics - whether transcendental or empiristic.

4. Lotze's logic as a halting stage in the evolution of logical theory

At the most general level, Dewey's reasons for classifying Lotze's thinking about logic as "a halting stage in the evolution of logical theory" is quite clear. On the one hand he sees Lotze as trying to break with a transcendental way of thinking about logic. As he points out in one place, the peculiar thing about Lotze's thinking is thus that "he saw that previous transcendental logicians had left untouched the specific question of our supposedly finite, reflective thought to its own antecedents, and he set out to make good the defect" (p. 83). In another place he makes the same point by remarking that Lotze "is too far along to be contented with the reiteration of the purely formal distinctions of a merely formal thought-by-itself. He recognizes that thought as formal is the form of some matter, and has its worth only as organizing that matter to meet the ideal demands of reason; and that "Reason" is in truth only an adequate systematization of the matter or content" (p. 98). So Lotze tried to move away from a transcendental approach to logic by taking into account the empirical antecedents of thought, and Dewey praises many of the insights that this led him to. At the same time, however, that Lotze tried to take the empirical antecedents of thinking into account, Dewey also believes that this move plunged him into fundamental "inconsistencies" (p. 79) and "contradictions" (p. 81) because he never freed himself from the dualism between thought in itself and reality in itself that Dewey takes to be shared by all epistemological logics – transcendental as well as empiristic. As Dewey sums up his general view at the end of one chapter, "The significance of Lotze for critical purposes" is thus that "his peculiar effort to combine a transcendental view of thought (i.e. of Thought as active in forms of its own, pure in and of themselves) with certain obvious facts of the dependence of our thought upon specific empirical antecedents brings to light fundamental defects in both the empiristic and the transcendental logics. We discover a common failure in both: the failure to view logical terms and distinctions with respect to their necessary function in the redintegration of experience" (p. 85). So the reason why Lotze's logic is so interesting to Dewey is because he has tried to move beyond the traditional empiristic and transcendental logics just as Dewey himself wanted to. The big problem, however, is that Lotze did it in the wrong way by sticking to certain "logical terms and distinctions" as fixed in themselves instead of viewing them instrumentally "with respect to their necessary function in the reintegration of experience", as Dewey's instrumental approach to logic does, and it is because Lotze's thinking about logic has not left this common presupposition of epistemological theory behind that

Dewey is led to think that it "represents a halting-stage in the evolution of logical theory".

In the rest of this paper I will take a closer look at the interpretation of Lotze that Dewey takes to support this general conclusion. My main purpose here will be to make Dewey's reasons for claiming that Lotze's thinking about logic is characterized by fundamental "inconsistencies" and "contradictions" as clear as possible. Whether these reasons are well-founded and Dewey's various interpretations represent Lotze's thinking faithfully, I will leave to Lotze scholars to determine[14]. Following his own instrumental understanding of the relation between reflective and unreflective experience, Dewey's critical engagement with Lotze's thinking is divided into three parts. First Dewey analyzes Lotze's thinking about the way in which "reflective experience" is evoked or called forth by empirical antecedents. This is done in a chapter entitled "The Antecedents and Stimuli of Thinking". Then Dewey engages with Lotze's understanding of the way in which reflective experience is supplied with facts and ideas. This is done in the chapter entitled "Data and Meanings". Finally, Dewey also analyzes Lotze's understanding of validity or objectivity in a final chapter on "The Objects of Thought". Given the limited amount of space available, my main focus in the rest of this paper will be on Dewey's reason for thinking that Lotze's understanding of "The Antecedents and Stimuli of Thinking" is marked by "inconsistencies" and "contradictions".

As Dewey presents it, Lotze thinks that the "ultimate material antecedents of thought are found in impressions which are due to external objects as stimuli" (p. 68). These impressions, as Lotze sees it, are "mere psychical states or events" that succeed each other and give rise to a "train or current of ideas" (p. 68). This current of ideas, as Lotze understands it, is "just as necessary as any succession of material events" (pp. 68-9). No matter whether the current is the product of successive impressions from external objects or the product of a single external impression which then stimulates an "associative mechanism" (p. 68) in such a way that we start remembering or imagining, the current of ideas is thus necessary. In order to back up this analysis, Dewey refers to some of the opening pages of Lotze's *Logic* and provides the following quotation from Lotze: "Just because, under their respective conditions, every such series of ideas hangs together by the same necessity and law as every other, there would be no ground for making any such distinction of value as that between truth and untruth, thus placing one group in opposition to all the others" (p. 69, Lotze I, p. 2). As this passage indicates, no distinctions of value (of truth and untruth) exist within the series of ideas as such. One person may be led to think that the position of the stars is the reason why he lost his job when he in fact lost it after his horoscope had predicted it, while another person's reading of Marx may lead him to think that he lost his job because of capitalism's inherent tendency to move production to where the production costs are lowest. As mere currents of ideas, they will be on the same level. They will each have been produced by the same necessity determined by external impressions and the associative mechanism. According to Lotze, however, the current of ideas happens to have "a peculiar property" since some ideas "are merely coherent" while others are "coherent" in the sense that they reflect a "real connection" among things or events (p. 69), and it is the special job of thought to "recover and confirm the coherent, the really connected" at the same time that it "eliminates the coincident as such" (p. 69). According to Dewey, these are the main features of Lotze's thinking about the empirical antecedents of thought. On the one hand there is "*de facto* coexistences and sequences" in the form or "mere happenings" and then there is the activity of thought which tries to assess "the cognitive *worth* of these combinations" (p. 69).

Dewey's assessment of Lotze's thinking about the antecedents of thought reflects his overall assessment of Lotze's thinking. On the one hand he thus praises the fact that Lotze does not just avoid "the extravagancies of transcendental logic, which assumes that all the matter of experience is determined from the very start by rational thought", but also "avoids the pitfall of purely empirical logic which make no distinction between the mere occurrence and association of ideas and the real worth and validity of the various conjunctions thus produced" (p. 70). On the other hand, however, Dewey also thinks that "a further analysis" of Lotze's position will lead to the conclusion that it is riddled through and through with inconsistencies and self-contradictions" (p. 70).

The big problem, as Dewey sees it, has to do with the fact that Lotze is led to provide "impressions and ideas" with two radically different and irreconcilable roles. His basic position is that the impressions are "the ultimate antecedent in its purest and crudest form" in the sense that it is "that which has never felt, for good or bad, the influence of thought" (p. 70). This is the idea that impressions are "nothing but states of consciousness, moods of ourselves, bare psychical existences" (p 71). At the same time, however, that Lotze takes an impression to be "a bare event" that antecedes thinking but has never experienced "the influence of thought", Dewey also believes that he takes impressions to furnish "the material content of thinking". In order to back up this claim, Dewey quotes copiously from Lotze, who says such things as "it is the relations themselves already subsisting between impressions, when we become conscious of them, by which the action of thought which is never anything but reaction, is attracted; and this action consists merely in interpreting relations which we find existing between our passive impressions into aspects of the matter of impressions" (Dewey p. 70, Lotze I, p. 25); "thought can make no difference where it finds none already in the matter of the impressions" (Dewey p. 70, Lotze I, p. 36) and "the possibility and the success of thought's procedure depends upon this original constitution and organization of the whole world of ideas, a constitution which, though not necessary in thought, is all the more necessary to make thinking possible" (p. Dewey p. 71, Lotze I, p. 36).

The reason why Dewey finds it so problematic that Lotze lets impressions and ideas play, first, the role of "ultimate antecedents" or "crude material" and, then, the role of "content for thought" (p. 71) is that he takes it to amount to a contradiction. As he sees it, it simply does not make sense to say, first, that an impression "is merely subjective", "a bare state of our own consciousness" or a "mere happening" and then go on to say that it is in fact determined not only by "external objects as stimuli" but also by an associative mechanism "so thoroughly objecti-

ve or regular in its workings as to give the same necessary character to the current of ideas as possessed by any physical sequence" (p. 71). For when Lotze treats the impressions as determined in this way, they are no longer treated as "bare psychical existences" but as "real facts in a real world" with the (unexplained) "capacity of representing the cosmic facts which cause them" (p. 71). According to Dewey, this contradiction in Lotze's thinking is a direct product of the fact that he attempts to "put thought's work, as concerned with objective validity, over against experience as a mere antecedent happening, or occurrence" at the same time that he also wants to "consider thought as an independent somewhat in general which nevertheless, in our experience, is dependent upon a raw material of mere impressions given to it" (p. 80). So Lotze wants to move away from a purely transcendental logic by taking the empirical antecedents of thinking into account. But because he is stuck with an empiristic conception of experience as "mere impressions", the only way in which he can take the empirical antecedents into account if he also wants to keep a distinction between valid and invalid ways of thinking is by describing his "impressions" in contradictory terms.

So, according to Dewey, Lotze's thinking about the antecedents of thought represents "a halting stage in the evolution of logical theory" because it never frees itself from the idea that Dewey takes to plague all epistemological logics: that "the difference between the logical and its antecedent is a matter of the difference between worth and mere existence or occurrence" (p. 79). And the only way, Dewey thinks, that someone like Lotze can avoid the contradictions that such a distinction leads to is by dropping the distinction and turning towards Dewey's own (instrumental) conception of logic, according to which "meaning and value is already there" in the unreflective experience that evokes thought, which then has for its task "the transformation or reconstruction of meaning, through an intermediary position" (p. 72). It is because Lotze, despite his good intentions and many specific insights, never managed to do this, that Dewey took his thinking about logic to represent "a halting stage in the evolution of logical theory".

Notes

[1] See J. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality*; T. Burke, *Dewey's New Logic*; and J Scott Johnston, *John Dewey's Earlier Logical Theory*.

[2] J Scott Johnston, *John Dewey's Earlier Logical Theory*, p. 108.

[3] C. Hookway,"Lotze and the classical pragmatists" in *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* vol. I, p. 8.

[4] J. Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic* (includes a reprint of *Studies in Logical Theory*), pp. 66, 85,98

[5] J. Good, *A Search for Unity in Diversity: The "Permanent Hegelian Deposit" in the Philosophy of John Dewey*, p. xxi.

[6] J. Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" in *John Dewey on Experience, Nature and Freedom*, p. 7.

[7] Ibid. p. 9.

[8] Ibid. p. 12.

[9] See P. Manicas, "American Social Science: The Irrelevance of Pragmatism" in *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* vol. III, p. 14, where Manicas claims that "It is true and important to recognize that between perhaps 1891 and 1903, with the Studies in Logical Theory, Dewey had made a conversion to his distinctive version of naturalism". It is important to note, however, that Shook, Good and Johnston have recently questioned whether Dewey ever turned away from Hegel – as opposed to neo-Hegelianism – but for my purposes this question is not that important.

[10] J. Good, *A Search for Unity in Diversity: The "Permanent Hegelian Deposit" in the Philosophy of John Dewey*, p. xii.

[11] J. Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" in *John Dewey on Experience, Nature and Freedom*, p. 17

[12] J. Shook, *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality* p. 189.

[13] In the rest of the paper all reference will be to J. Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*

[14] Dewey's main target was Lotze's *Logic* (especially book I), the English translation of which Dewey refers to, but he also drew on Lotze's *Microkosmus* as well as Henry Jones' *Philosophy of Lotze* from 1895.