

On the Concept of Temperament by Rudolf Herman Lotze

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Abstract

In the grand symphony of human mind and moral law, Rudolf Herman Lotze's theory of temperament, with its profound insights and unique perspective, reveals the intricate connection between temperament and moral development. Lotze deeply understood that a person's inner qualities and emotional inclinations are like a hidden spring, serving not only as the secret driving force behind behavior but also as the solid foundation of moral development. By delving into the subtle influences of external nature, the evolution of civilization, and the foundations of human physiology and psychology, he explored how these factors subtly shape temperament and emphasized the central role of temperament in moral cognition, judgment, and behavior. Lotze was well aware that the perfection of morality is not merely a simple expression of natural inclinations, but requires the refinement of time and the nourishment of culture to fully shine. True moral behavior originates from an individual's free will and deep spiritual pursuit. This perspective provides an important balance between freedom and responsibility in contemporary society. Lotze reminds us that in pursuing technological and material progress, we should not overlook the inner freedom and happiness of individuals. By deeply understanding and practicing Lotze's theory of temperament, we can promote the profound development of individuals and the harmonious unity of morality in the complex social environment, thereby continuously advancing on the path of moral cultivation.

Keywords

External Nature, Temperament, Gender Differences, Moral Development.

1. Introduction

In the long history of humanity, the relationship between human nature and morality has always been a core topic of study. This topic not only concerns an individual's self-awareness and growth but also serves as the foundation for social harmony and progress. Against this backdrop, the German philosopher Rudolf Hermann Lotze proposed his theory of temperament, analyzing the complex connection between human temperament and moral development from a unique perspective. In his work *Mikrokosmos: Ideen zur Naturgeschichte und Geschichte der Menschheit. Versuch einer Anthropologie* (2017), Lotze pointed out that "although humans are innately inclined towards goodness, this inclination alone is far from sufficient to directly lead to moral perfection"¹. Lotze believed that the current definition of the term "temperament" is somewhat vague. The original meaning of temperament refers to the general characteristics of human spiritual life, an individual's inherent traits and inclinations, a collection of innate natural emotions and tendencies, which is also influenced by personal experiences and the social environment. Temperament is not only the driving force behind human behavior but also the starting point and foundation of moral development. Lotze further elaborated that "even in an educated conscience, a passionate pursuit of lofty ideals does not necessarily guarantee that we can acutely distinguish between true morality and false imitation in specific situations, or flexibly apply general moral principles without distortion or misinterpretation"¹. Deep within

the human psyche, we seem to be able to find the starting point of moral development, but these starting points do not directly provide us with clear moral guidelines in the complex relationships of life. Therefore, the comprehensive development of morality requires long-term education and refinement. Lotze's view emphasizes the relationship between temperament and moral development, pointing out that the natural inclinations of temperament need to be guided and regulated through social and cultural education in order to truly achieve moral perfection. This article will delve deeply into Lotze's theory of temperament, dissect his unique insights into the relationship between human nature and morality, and the important role it plays in the development of civilization and morality. Through Lotze's theory, we can not only understand more profoundly the necessity and complexity of moral education but also find a way to achieve harmonious co-existence between natural temperament and moral norms, thus promoting the overall moral progress of individuals and society. This research not only deepens our understanding of the relationship between temperament and morality but also provides valuable guidance for moral education and cultural construction in contemporary society.

2. The Power of the Environment in Temperament Shaping

In the process of humans exploring the relationship between their own temperament and the external nature, they often seek a certain mysterious harmony in an idealized way. This exploration reflects the common psychological tendency of humans, that is, they hope to find inner peace and the source of the meaning of life through close contact with nature. However, the real-world connection is far more complex than it appears on the surface. The interaction between nature and the human psyche forms a system full of dynamic changes, adaptations, and interactions. The key to understanding this system lies in recognizing that the influence of the natural environment is transformed and interpreted through human perception, cognitive abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the experiences of the same natural phenomenon in different cultural and historical contexts may present completely different meanings.

When exploring the impact of the natural environment on human temperament, Lotze did not immediately draw a clear conclusion. Instead, through meticulous observation, he gradually constructed and continuously revised his views. During this research process, Lotze's understanding of this issue also evolved and deepened. Lotze utilized the vastness and relative isolation of the African continent's geographical conditions to explain that these geographical features indeed imposed certain restrictions on the temperament, social activities, and cultural inheritance of the local residents. However, this does not mean that they directly led to the lag of African civilization. Lotze first explored the question: why did African civilization seem to stagnate for a long period of history? He questioned whether it was related to the fact that the residents lived near the equator, and whether the intense direct sunlight made it difficult for them to look up at the sky, thus forming a timid and cowardly temperament, causing them to only bend down to engage in physical labor. Lotze's initial research seemed to lean towards the position of geographical determinism. This theory holds that geographical conditions have a decisive impact on the cultural, political, and social development of a nation or country. The ancient Greek philosopher Herodotus mentioned in his work *The Histories*: "I think that mountain-dwelling people are more warlike than those living on the plain because they are scattered in small areas, making it difficult to gather their strength and form large groups. In contrast, people on the plain can easily unite and form a powerful force. The lifestyle of mountain-dwelling people is more scattered, and it is difficult for them to support each other when invaded, while people on the plain can quickly assemble and are thus more likely to defend themselves. This is why in many parts of Asia, mountain tribes are more barbaric and warlike, while plain-dwelling people are more civilized and gentle."² Similarly, the sociologist

Edward Sapir pointed out in his *Culture, Language, and Society* that races that have lived in a specific climate environment for a long time have developed a lifestyle adapted to this climate, including eating habits, work rhythms, and social structures. These adaptation mechanisms make them more physically and psychologically adapted to the current environment, rather than simply being constrained by climate conditions.³ Subsequently, after in-depth exploration, Lotze revised his original view. He realized that many African tribes had constructed a strong collective memory and sense of identity through oral traditions and ritual activities. To a large extent, this sense of identity compensated for the limitations imposed by the geographical environment. Lotze also noticed that in modern cities, although natural landscapes are becoming increasingly scarce, people have created many new forms of natural experiences through technological and artistic means, such as the natural scenes presented by virtual reality technology and the natural elements integrated into urban parks. These emerging ways of experience have, to a certain extent, shaped the psychological characteristics of urban residents. The impact of natural landscapes on human temperament demonstrates the profound interaction between nature and humans. Majestic mountains, vast oceans, and lush forests are undoubtedly key sources of inspiration for human aesthetic emotions. Lotze's view echoes the research of the environmental psychologist Roger Atkinson, who proposed in *Environmental Psychology*: "Natural landscapes have a significant positive impact on human mental health and well-being. The living terrain conditions of the Alpine residents have given them extraordinary physical strength, and the formation of this strength is not only the direct result of the natural environment but also the result of long-term social practice and cultural identity working together"⁴. Atkinson's research shows that natural landscapes can not only provide physical stimulation but also indirectly affect human behavior patterns and psychological characteristics by enhancing social cohesion and personal self-awareness. However, Lotze realized that the positive impact of natural landscapes also needs to be examined within the framework of social relations. The social psychologist George Herbert Mead emphasized in his *Mind, Self, and Society*: "Humans are a social species, and group life has a non-negligible impact on our minds and behaviors. That is to say, in Mead's view, while in close contact with natural beauty, individuals also have experiences of sharing with others. This sharing not only deepens the understanding of natural beauty but also strengthens the social connections between people"⁵. Lotze had a similar view on this issue. He believed that "when an individual is alone with nature for a long time and lacks the opportunity for interpersonal communication, although the natural landscape can provide a certain degree of psychological satisfaction, long-term loneliness may lead to the accumulation of psychological pressure, affecting personal emotions and behavior patterns"⁶. Therefore, when considering the impact of nature on temperament, the role of social interaction needs to be taken into account, not just the physical characteristics of the natural environment.

When exploring the interaction between the natural environment and human temperament, Lotze emphasized the importance of individual subjectivity and differences. Even when growing up under the same natural conditions, different individuals may exhibit vastly different psychological characteristics. This phenomenon mainly stems from an individual's cognitive abilities, cultural background, and personal experiences, which jointly influence how an individual perceives and responds to the natural environment. For example, a scientist might discover scientific evidence of Earth's changes in the glaciers of the Alps, while an artist might experience the beauty of the fragility of life and the passage of time from the same scene. This difference showcases the complexity and diversity of the human psyche. Therefore, the impact of nature on temperament is a multi-level and multi-dimensional process that requires analysis from both individual and group perspectives. Ultimately, Lotze believed that humans cannot escape the bondage of freedom because free choice is an essential characteristic of theirs. He pointed out that the key to deeply understanding one's own temperament and essence lies in a

profound comprehension of the freedom one possesses and the choices it brings, as well as a willingness to assume the responsibilities that come with those choices. Although the natural environment has a profound impact on human living conditions and psychological development, Lotze emphasized that humans are essentially free, and they can shape their lives and psychological characteristics through their choices and actions. In other words, while the natural environment sets certain conditions and limitations, human free will and creative behavior are the key factors determining their life trajectories.

"The higher the degree of civilization, the more distinct the differences in temperament become, just like other innate abilities"⁶. Lotze believed that "this may be because our understanding of primitive forms of life is not comprehensive enough, making them seem to have a certain uniformity, while the actual situation may not be so; or perhaps only advanced civilizations can provide sufficient space for the development of individuals. Although these differences are obvious in themselves, the meaning of the term 'temperament' used to distinguish these differences remains vague. The original meaning of temperament refers to the general characteristics of spiritual life. It does not completely determine the direction and degree of cultural development, but it surely promotes or hinders the development of intellectual or moral qualities in various ways"⁶. For Lotze, if we shift the focus of our research from the external nature to humans themselves, it is not difficult to find that the original attributes of human nature set many limitations on the development of individuality. Differences in age, gender, as well as the sensitivities and impulsivities of different ethnic groups, will all have an impact on an individual's temperament, talent, and psychological state. The realization of human ideals is, to a certain extent, influenced by natural endowments, but the essence of ideals is not to pursue uniformity at the expense of individuality. Among wild animals, the uniformity of the species is regarded as perfection, while for humans, the special nature of an individual should endow their behavior with a unique style, despite the overall consistency of human characteristics. Our understanding of human endowments is still limited. These endowments are largely restricted by the body structure or are the result of the accumulation of countless similar impressions in life. Whether these continuous influences have, to some extent, been fixed as a development trend of the body structure, or whether the psychological development of ancestors has been passed on to descendants as an innate ability in a spiritual way that is difficult for us to understand, we cannot completely ignore the impact of these endowments.

In societies with a high level of civilized development, the complexity of social structure and function provides individuals with a wider range of possibilities and choices for growth. For instance, in more civilized societies, the educational system is usually more complete, offering a rich variety of learning and development opportunities. This enables individuals with different temperamental characteristics to find their own development paths in fields that suit them. In contrast, due to the lack of diverse incentives and opportunities in more primitive ways of life, the manifestation of temperamental differences is not as significant. Societies with a high level of civilization generally have more explicit social norms and cultural values, which to a large extent shape the development of individual temperaments. For example, in some cultures, the freedom of emotional expression is particularly emphasized, while in others, self-control of emotions is more highly regarded. Such cultural differences lead to different behavioral patterns in emotional management among individuals with different temperaments. Lotze pointed out that there are differences in the manifestation and recognition of temperaments in different cultures. Take Asian cultures as an example. They emphasize harmony and collectivism, which may lead individuals to be more reserved and restrained in emotional expression. In contrast, in Western cultures, individualism and self-expression are highly valued, and individuals may be more open and direct in emotional expression. This difference not only reflects the value orientations of different cultures but also reveals the intricate interaction between temperament and cultural development. Temperamental differences are

related not only to individual talents but also closely linked to the acquired environment and cultural background. The combined effect of these factors makes temperamental differences exhibit diverse characteristics in different cultures and groups, reflecting the complex interactions in the process of human development. Although it has not been clearly determined whether there is a direct connection between these temperamental characteristics and specific physiological structures or disease susceptibilities, the influence of natural endowments cannot be ignored.

Lotze's theory posits that human temperament and psychological traits are not solely determined by biological factors but are the result of the combined effects of the environment, culture, and social interaction. In highly developed societies, individuals have a broader space and more resources to cultivate their individuality, and this process is the product of self-education and self-shaping. In societies with a higher degree of civilization, the differences in individual temperaments are more prominent. This is not only due to the rich stimuli and opportunities provided by society but also because individuals can understand and express their emotions and thoughts more deeply. For example, the emotional fluctuations and rapid changes in temperament during childhood are natural phenomena. However, in civilized societies, these characteristics need to be gradually adjusted so that individuals can develop a stable temperament in adulthood. A highly civilized society not only promotes the diversified development of individuals but also provides more opportunities and resources to overcome the limitations and obstacles of temperament. Social norms and cultural backgrounds have a profound impact on individual temperaments and behavior patterns, and the differences in gender and social roles make individual temperaments more complex and diverse. The progress of civilization enables individuals to understand and control their emotions and behaviors more effectively, thus shaping more stable and mature temperamental traits.

3. Gender Differences and Changes in Temperament

Individuals' physiological characteristics, such as gender, body shape, and muscle structure, constitute their physical constitution. Lotze believed that these characteristics not only determine an individual's external appearance but also profoundly influence their internal psychological state. For example, the female physical constitution is generally more flexible and supple. This not only enables them to show greater adaptability in dealing with various life pressures but also provides a physiological basis for their delicate and sensitive emotions. In contrast, the male physical constitution is more rigid and robust, which not only makes them more powerful in physical activities but also inclines them to be more rational and decisive psychologically. This view has also been verified to some extent in modern psychology. Research has found that women are more emotionally sensitive and can perceive the emotional changes of others more quickly, while men tend to solve problems through logic and rationality. The development of temperament is not only a manifestation of an individual's internal physiological and psychological characteristics but also the result of the interaction between the individual and the external environment. This interaction process makes temperament a dynamic and continuously evolving process, behind which lies the comprehensive effect of complex physiological mechanisms and social culture. The formation of temperament is the result of the interaction between the individual and the social environment. A healthy physical structure, a positive psychological state, and a rich social and cultural background together form a solid foundation for an individual's temperament. Only when these factors achieve a harmonious unity can an individual's temperament fully develop and exhibit diverse and unique characteristics. Lotze believed that women are more inclined to emotional and spiritual expression, while men are more adept at rational thinking and external actions, which reflects the complementarity between genders. He emphasized that men and women play their unique

roles in society and the family. These roles are not only based on gender differences but also deeply rooted in the influence of physiological characteristics on the psychological state. Lotze's view is similar to Jung's theory, but it places more emphasis on the harmony and cooperation between genders rather than on single physiological or psychological characteristics. Lotze pointed out that women's ability to express emotions and spirituality makes them more sensitive and delicate in the family and society, enabling them to better understand and support others. They can promptly detect conflicts among family members and resolve these conflicts through emotional expression and understanding, thus promoting family harmony and stability. For example, women usually assume the roles of taking care of children, caring for the elderly, and handling daily family affairs. These responsibilities require a high degree of emotional investment and meticulous observation. Conversely, due to their relatively stable physical structure, men often have a more firm and stable psychological state. This enables them to make calm decisions and take effective actions when facing social affairs and career challenges. For example, men usually play the roles of decision-makers, leaders, and executors in the professional field. These responsibilities require a high degree of logical thinking and decision-making ability. Lotze's view not only reveals the influence of physical constitution on temperament but also deeply explores the multiple roles of gender differences in emotions, rationality, morality, and social roles. His theory has been comprehensively analyzed within the context of multiple disciplines such as physiology, psychology, and sociology, providing a comprehensive framework for us to understand the formation and development of temperament.

In terms of psychological state, Lotze believed that "due to physiological differences, women and men exhibit different internal balance mechanisms"⁶. According to Lotze's view, women's physiological characteristics, such as the menstrual cycle and fluctuations in hormone levels, make their emotions more sensitive and changeable. Although such emotional fluctuations may sometimes affect their psychological stability, they also enable women to be more perceptive and expressive of their emotions. For instance, when facing life pressures and challenges, women may be more likely to show anxiety and unease, but at the same time, they can obtain support and understanding through emotional expression. Precisely this kind of emotional expression and communication allows women to play important supporting and coordinating roles in families and society. In contrast, due to their relatively stable physical structure, men usually have a more steadfast and stable psychological state. Their nervous and endocrine systems show fewer fluctuations when facing external stimuli, enabling them to handle problems more calmly. Men often play the roles of decision-makers, leaders, and executors in professional and social affairs. These responsibilities require a high degree of logical thinking and decision-making ability. It is precisely this rational thinking and calm action that make men more effective in handling complex external affairs.

Lotze's theory not only reveals the influence of physical structure on temperament but also delves deeply into the multiple roles of gender differences in emotions, rationality, morality, and social roles. His theory integrates the perspectives of physiology, psychology, and sociology, providing a comprehensive framework for us to understand the formation and development of temperament. Through these analyses, we can more profoundly recognize the complexity and importance of gender differences in human life, thereby promoting social harmony and inclusiveness. Lotze's background as a biologist gave rise to his keen interest in the relationship between physiological characteristics and psychological states. He believed that understanding gender differences is not only a philosophical issue but also a scientific one, which helps us to have a more comprehensive understanding of the essence of humanity. Lotze's view emphasizes the complementarity of gender differences at multiple levels. He thought that women's emotional sensitivity and empathy can complement men's rational decision-making and actions, jointly promoting the harmony and stability of families and society. This

complementarity is not only an important moral value but also provides diverse perspectives and choices for the construction of social ethics.

Lotze, in exploring personal temperament and its development process, analyzed the temperamental characteristics of childhood, adulthood, and old age. His theory is not only based on physiological and psychological perspectives, but also combines social and cultural backgrounds, providing a multi-dimensional framework for understanding. Lotze believed that in childhood, intense emotional fluctuations are regarded as a natural and appropriate phenomenon. This rapid change of emotions helps children to accept and process various psychological stimuli without prejudice, thus promoting the comprehensive development of their minds. The psychological theory of "resilience" further supports this view. Anne S. Masten pointed out in her article "Ordinary Magic: Resilience Processes in Development" that "Emotional fluctuations and rapid recovery in childhood can cultivate children's psychological resilience, enabling them to more effectively regulate their emotional states in the face of life's challenges and pressures"⁷. In addition, this unstable emotion may also promote the development of social skills, because children learn to adjust their emotional responses in interactions with different people. However, Lotze believed that "the appropriateness of emotional fluctuations does not mean unrestricted fluctuations"⁶. As children grow up, the cultivation of emotional management ability becomes particularly important. Parents and educators should focus on how to help children gradually build a more mature and stable psychological state to cope with the increasing social and cognitive challenges. Based on physical health, emotional fluctuations are regarded as the organism's natural response to stimuli. A healthy body depends to a large extent on the relative independence of its components, so as to avoid every impact from easily spreading to other parts. When the tolerance of the nervous system decreases to the extent that it can no longer maintain the normal resistance to the spread of stimulation, a slight stimulus can also affect the entire body, which is regarded as a sign of neurasthenia. Relatively speaking, moderate sensitivity to stimuli is appropriate in the early stage of psychological development. The development of the mind is not doomed to stagnation, but only when the individual is not restricted by innate constitution can he or she educate himself or herself and gradually shape his or her personality. There is a general ability of mutual excitation among all mental states, as well as a general sensitivity to environmental stimuli. This continuous overreaction constitutes the personality trait of "intense emotional fluctuations" that we mentioned. In childhood, the rapid change of emotions is a crucial stage for impression accumulation, and these impressions form the basis of children's mental life. These impressions are free from any prejudice or specific tendency. Usually, only when the emotional fluctuations do not last too long can children achieve the most rapid development. Lotze pointed out that children's mental world is open and elastic, and their curiosity and receptivity to new things are the main driving forces for their growth. In uncivilized tribes, vibrant personality traits also exist naturally. The differences in the interests of tribal members in life are usually small, which is not enough to stimulate the single pursuit of specific goals, which instead weakens their initial ability to accept various impressions. However, with the development of society and the increase in complexity, this open and flexible mindset becomes increasingly valuable. At the same time, the development of rapid thinking ability and pleasant activity ability requires good external environmental conditions as support. Lotze's discussion in this section seems to coincide with the view of William James in his book *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. James proposed that "We should criticize that apathetic attitude, for it is both unwise and unsympathetic. However, what we pursue is a state of tranquility that will not be overly excited by any event. This state is not newly emerged; it has gone through various emotional baptisms and has long learned to give each emotional impulse an appropriate evaluation in the intricate human interests and can

extract this evaluation from any accidental emotional power that may arise due to specific circumstances"⁸.

Lotze's theory regards adulthood as a crucial stage in the development of human life. This stage marks the gradual transition of an individual from the fluctuations and explorations of adolescence to stability and maturity. During this period, individual temperamental differences and the ability to adapt to the environment become more prominent, profoundly reflecting the diversity and complexity of individuals in a society with a high degree of civilization. Lotze proposed that with the progress of civilization, individuals have more extensive development space and opportunities, enabling temperamental characteristics to be fully demonstrated and shaped in a diverse environment. After experiencing various challenges and events in life, the temperament of adult individuals gradually stabilizes, and their core values and personality traits become more distinct. This stability helps individuals establish a clear position in society. However, stability does not mean rigidity. The temperament in adulthood also shows adaptability to new experiences and dynamic adjustment of personal goals. This flexibility and openness are the charm of a mature temperament. Lotze also emphasized that temperamental characteristics are closely related to cultural development. Different temperamental tendencies guide individuals to show differential growth in intellectual and moral qualities. Curiosity drives the pursuit of knowledge, and a sense of responsibility forms the basis of social service. The emotional maturity and deepening self-awareness in adulthood are valuable assets, enabling individuals to face challenges more rationally and understand themselves more deeply. At the social level, these adults with mature temperamental characteristics, like the pillars of society, promote the continuous development of social structure and culture through their positive actions and responsible attitudes. Lotze's view not only reveals the rich connotations of temperamental characteristics in adulthood but also provides profound insights into the internal connection between personal temperament and social progress. Lotze further pointed out that the temperamental development in adulthood is not only influenced by an individual's internal psychological processes but also by multiple interactions with the external social environment. Social cultural backgrounds, educational systems, economic conditions, and political systems all shape an individual's temperamental traits to varying degrees. For example, Carol S. Dweck mentioned in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* that "In a highly competitive social environment, individuals may be more inclined to cultivate tenacity and perseverance to cope with stress and challenges. While in a social atmosphere that emphasizes cooperation and harmony, individuals may place more emphasis on agreeableness and altruism. These differences in the social environment directly affect the development direction and specific manifestations of an individual's temperament"⁹. In addition, Lotze further studied the dynamic evolution of temperament in an individual's life course. He proposed that although the temperament in adulthood is usually relatively stable, it may still undergo adjustments and transformations when encountering major life transitions and critical events. Such as career changes, alterations in family situations, and health problems can all prompt individuals to re-evaluate their temperamental traits and make corresponding adjustments. This dynamic change demonstrates the plasticity and adaptability of temperament, and it is also a key manifestation of an individual's self-development and social adaptation. Lotze believed that through continuous self-reflection and experience accumulation in adulthood, individuals can gradually shape more mature and stable temperamental traits. This development process not only promotes an individual's internal growth but also lays a solid foundation for the harmony and progress of society. In Lotze's theoretical framework, the close connection between temperament and moral judgment is also particularly emphasized. He believed that "During the process of temperamental development in adulthood, individuals gradually form a set of stable moral standards and codes of conduct. These moral standards not only guide an individual's daily behavior but also play a crucial role

when they face complex moral choices. Therefore, the temperamental development in adulthood is not only an embodiment of an individual's self - realization but also an important sign of their moral maturity"⁶.

In old age, with the gradual decline of physiological functions and the transformation of psychological states, certain adjustments may occur in an individual's temperamental characteristics. However, generally speaking, the personality traits and values of the elderly tend to maintain a certain degree of consistency, which is largely shaped and influenced by the individual's life experiences. During this period, the elderly often exhibit a mindset of seeking tranquility and avoiding excessive excitement. This is because they have learned to strike a balance among complex personal and social interests during their long life journey and to make appropriate value assessments of various passionate impulses. Lotze pointed out in his theory that the formation and development of temperament is a gradually cumulative and stabilizing process, which is closely related to an individual's sensitivity to environmental stimuli and response patterns. As people age, they become more aware of the importance of their emotions and impulses, enabling them to maintain a calm and rational attitude when facing various challenges in life. This mindset is generally regarded as a natural temperamental characteristic of the elderly, although not all elderly people can reach this state, as each person's life experiences and personal temperaments are unique. According to Lotze's theory, those who have maintained a good psychological balance throughout their lives are often the ones who can best enjoy the beauty and freshness of life. These people embrace all things in the world with a pure heart and a sense of eternal freshness. They are not indifferent to any emotions, nor do they get caught up in one - sided and narrow - minded emotional entanglements. Such people can maintain an open and inclusive attitude in the face of the various changes in life, thus continuing to enjoy the richness and diversity of life in their later years. This temperamental characteristic in old age not only helps individuals maintain mental health but also has a positive impact on the surrounding social environment. Their peaceful mindset and the ability to handle emotions rationally usually play a stabilizing and cohesive role within families and communities. The elderly often become a treasure trove of wisdom for the younger generation. By sharing their life experiences and insights, they help the next generation better understand and cope with the challenges and difficulties in life. This inter-generational transfer of wisdom and social support also contributes to social harmony and stability to a certain extent.

Lotze deeply explored the temperamental characteristics of different stages of human life, meticulously analyzing the transition from the emotional fluctuations in childhood to the temperamental stability in adulthood, and then to the peaceful mindset in old age. He believed that each stage of life has its unique psychological and emotional characteristics. These characteristics not only reveal the dynamism and gradualness in the process of temperament development but also emphasize the interaction between the individual and the environment. Lotze's perspective provides us with a comprehensive framework for understanding, helping us better support individuals at different stages and promote their mental health and social adaptation. In Lotze's theoretical framework, the formation and development of temperament is a multi-dimensional process. This process involves not only physiological and psychological factors but is also closely related to the social and cultural background. The challenges and experiences that individuals face at different stages of life can have a profound impact on their temperament. For example, the educational environment, family atmosphere, and peer relationships in childhood can all affect the development of children's emotional stability and social skills. In adulthood, work pressure, interpersonal relationships, and life events play an important role in an individual's temperamental stability. In old age, physical health conditions, post-retirement life arrangements, and relationships with children can influence their peaceful mindset and sense of well-being. Lotze's theory not only focuses on the internal psychological changes of individuals but also emphasizes the impact of the external environment on the

development of temperament. He believed that the interaction between the individual and the environment is a two-way process. An individual's temperament affects their perception and response to the environment, and conversely, the environment also influences the development of an individual's temperament. Therefore, in order to promote the healthy development of individuals, we need to pay attention to the interaction between the individual and the environment and create a supportive environment for individuals at different stages. Lotze's theory provides us with a comprehensive framework for understanding, enabling us to better support individuals at different stages and promote their mental health and social adaptation. By deeply understanding the temperamental characteristics of individuals at different stages of life, we can provide more targeted support and assistance to help them cope with life's challenges and achieve personal growth and development.

4. Temperament and Moral Development

Temperament is a relatively constant and enduring element in human character, manifested as emotional tendencies and behavior patterns, deeply rooted beneath external behaviors. According to Lotze, the initial behaviors and thoughts of humans stem, on the one hand, from the urgent need for self-preservation, and on the other hand, from a calm and powerful driving force to pursue spiritual satisfaction. These needs and the motivation for satisfaction drive humans to continuously explore and construct social relationships. Although the initial cognition is incomplete, through tentative efforts, the results enrich scientific knowledge. The accumulation of knowledge expands the scope of human capabilities and cultivates an enterprising spirit. Lotze believed that "emotions and cognition are inseparable. Emotions not only drive human actions but also play a central role in the cognitive process"⁶. For example, he pointed out that "the initial human activities are to meet physical and spiritual needs, and the process of satisfying these needs itself is constantly shaping the interaction between emotions and cognition"⁶. Emotions provide the impetus for action, while cognition helps individuals understand the meaning and consequences of their actions, thus contributing to more mature moral judgments. Optimists usually show a more positive and open-minded attitude when facing moral dilemmas, and are more inclined to explore ways to solve problems, while pessimists may tend to respond negatively or even avoid problems.

Lotze proposed that there is a close interaction between human temperament and social relations. Social relations provide individuals with emotional support and cognitive resources, and play a crucial role in the shaping of moral cognition. For example, when discussing ancient free culture and slavery, he pointed out that the social structure of slavery had a profound impact on the temperament and moral concepts of Athenian citizens. While enjoying freedom, Athenian citizens relied on the labor of slaves. This dependent relationship not only shaped their temperament but also influenced their moral judgment. In modern society, the relationship between labor and happiness has become more complex. Although the progress of science and technology has simplified the means of achieving specific goals, new goals and temptations keep emerging, resulting in an increase rather than a decrease in the amount of labor. Lotze believed that while the increase in the amount of labor reflects, to a certain extent, the improvement of human capabilities, it also brings new challenges and pressures. In order to maintain and ensure survival, individuals have to sacrifice a great deal of time and energy, which gives rise to a longing for leisure time and dissatisfaction with life. However, Lotze emphasized that labor itself should be a source of enjoyment, not just a means to achieve enjoyment. In this regard, his view coincides with Nietzsche's, that labor and creation are important ways for humans to realize self-value and pursue happiness. Lotze pointed out that "the development of culture and labor is the key to the spiritual progress of mankind. In this process, through interaction with the external environment, individuals not only acquire more

knowledge but also cultivate deeper spiritual and moral sensibilities. However, the development of this culture does not mean that the happiness of life will increase accordingly. Although modern society has made great progress in material and intellectual aspects, the sense of happiness of individuals in labor and life has not increased significantly. This can be confirmed by the common feelings of stress and dissatisfaction among people in modern society"⁶. The interaction between temperament and moral cognition is complex and multifaceted. Lotze's theory emphasizes the central position of emotion and cognition in human behavior and moral judgment, and at the same time points out that social relations have a profound impact on temperament and moral cognition. Despite the remarkable achievements of modern society in the fields of technology and economy, the temperament and moral cognition of individuals are still restricted by labor and social structure. The idea that labor should be a source of enjoyment rather than merely a tool to achieve enjoyment provides important inspiration for interpreting the relationship between labor and happiness in modern society.

In his work *Microcosmos*, Lotze proposed that individuals maintain their independence in the torrent of history, and the course of history is full of infinite possibilities. Lotze believed that the origin of human history is unknown, and its ultimate goal is also unclear. Even within the known scope of history, history presents a state of freedom that is not bound by any laws, and at the same time, it shows an interweaving of stagnation and development. Lotze applied this view of freedom and independence to the interpretation of individual temperament as well. He believed that human temperament is the external manifestation of the soul, a free and active way of being that is distinct from the natural world. Temperament is the sum of an individual's attitude towards the world and emotional tendencies, which profoundly influences how an individual interprets moral principles and makes choices between moral principles and personal will. Lotze pointed out that temperament is not merely the emotional fluctuations of an individual at a certain moment, but a stable trait gradually shaped through long-term moral practice and social interaction. This stable trait reflects an individual's overall attitude towards the world, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral tendencies. The temperament of an individual is gradually constructed in social and historical activities, and this construction process is a dynamic and complex interactive one. Lotze criticized the view that simplifies historical development into natural laws or inevitabilities. He emphasized that history is a field interwoven with freedom and possibilities. This view also applies to the field of moral judgment. Lotze believed that moral judgment is not merely based on fixed moral rules, but the product of the interaction between personal temperament and free will. Lotze advocated that human temperament plays a central role in moral judgment because temperament is a unique attribute formed by an individual in a specific social and historical context, which determines an individual's understanding and application of moral principles. Therefore, moral judgment is not only a rational process but also a personalized one deeply influenced by an individual's temperament. In his work *Critique of Practical Reason*, Immanuel Kant clearly pointed out that moral judgment should be based on rational moral laws rather than simply relying on personal emotions or desires. Kant believed that true moral behavior should stem from respect for and compliance with moral laws, rather than merely based on personal emotions or desires. He emphasized that the legitimacy of moral behavior lies in its compliance with universal moral laws, not personal subjective feelings¹⁰. However, Kant also recognized the importance of emotions in moral practice. Emotions can inspire people's willingness to abide by moral laws and thus play an indispensable role in moral behavior. Kant did not deny the value of emotions, but he advocated that emotions must be guided and restricted by reason to ensure the purity and universality of moral behavior. Lotze's view seems to be in line with Kant's view on the role of emotions in moral judgment, but he might further emphasize the crucial role of personal temperament in moral judgment. Lotze proposed that temperament is not just a simple

emotional reaction but a stable psychological trait shaped by the long - term interaction and mutual influence of emotions and reason. Temperament can be regarded as a unique perspective of an individual in moral judgment, which integrates the intuition of emotions and the speculation of reason, thus playing a vital role in the moral decision - making process. David Hume put forward a view quite different from Kant's in his work *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Hume believed that "emotions form the foundation of moral judgment, arguing that human behavior is driven by emotions, and reason often succumbs to emotions. Emotions are the driving force of moral behavior, while reason mainly plays an auxiliary and interpretive role"¹¹. Although Lotze did not fully agree with Hume's emotivist position, his view on temperament coincides with Hume's theory to a certain extent. Especially when temperament is regarded as a personal trait shaped by the long - term interaction of emotions and reason, Lotze's theory meets some of Hume's views unexpectedly. Lotze proposed that temperament, as a personal trait combining emotions and reason, plays a crucial role in moral judgment, ensuring that moral behavior is neither a simple emotional impulse nor a pure rational calculation, but a harmonious unity of emotions and reason. Lotze held the view that the temperamental characteristics of an individual would significantly influence the way he or she understands and applies moral laws; at the same time, the moral laws themselves would, in turn, affect the shaping and development of an individual's temperament. This mutually influential relationship makes moral judgment a dynamic and highly personalized process. Jeremy Bentham put forward a utilitarian view of morality in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, believing that moral judgment should be based on the consequences of actions, that is, maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain¹². While Lotze emphasized the freedom and independence of the individual in his philosophy of history. To some extent, an individual's temperament affects his or her perception of pleasure and pain, thus influencing his or her moral judgment.

Lotze delved deeply into the generative mechanism of moral judgment and particularly emphasized the central role of temperament in moral behavior. He believed that moral behavior is not merely about following external moral norms, but rather an autonomous decision made by an individual based on their own temperament within a specific social-historical context. Lotze's critique of historical determinism further strengthened this stance. He held an idealistic view, believing that the course and struggles of history carry profound significance. Nevertheless, he was critical of the idealism of figures like Rousseau, contending that humans are inherently good - natured. In Lotze's view of the philosophy of history, he placed special emphasis on human free will, arguing that the choices and actions of individuals in the historical process are free and independent. This concept of free will is crucial for understanding the connection between temperament and moral behavior. Lotze believed that human temperament plays a decisive role in moral behavior. Temperament not only shapes an individual's moral judgment but also directly influences the individual's behavioral choices after making a moral judgment. Lotze emphasized that an individual's moral behavior should be a true reflection of their temperament, rather than merely a mechanical implementation of moral rules. Lotze's theory of temperament further explored the mechanism of the interaction between the individual and society. He believed that social order and rules have a significant impact on an individual's temperament, but an individual's free choices can also have a counter-effect on society. This mechanism of interaction makes moral behavior a complex phenomenon that is both personal and social. In Lotze's philosophy of history, he also emphasized the freedom and independence of individuals in social interaction, believing that an individual's temperament and moral behavior are the result of their free choices within society. Although Lotze also emphasized the historicity and sociality of humans, he was more concerned with an individual's free choices in this context. Lotze's perspective provides a unique angle for us to understand the relationship among temperament, moral judgment, and moral behavior. In his

thinking, human temperament is not only a comprehensive manifestation of an individual's attitude towards the world and emotional tendencies but also a stable trait gradually formed through social interaction and historical development. Lotze emphasized that moral judgment and moral behavior are not about mechanically following external moral rules, but rather the manifestation of an individual's temperament and free will within a specific social-historical context. This view not only enriches our understanding of Lotze's philosophy but also offers a new direction for exploring moral philosophy.

5. Conclusion

Lotze's theory of temperament, with its profound and unique insights, provides us with a new perspective to deeply analyze the complex relationship between human temperament and moral development. Temperament is not only a manifestation of an individual's internal traits and tendencies, but also the result of the interaction between their natural emotions and social culture. Temperament plays a central role in moral cognition and judgment. It is not only the driving force behind an individual's behavior, but also the starting point and foundation of moral development. When exploring the influence of the environment on temperament, Lotze pointed out that both the natural environment and the development of civilization have a profound impact on an individual's temperament. The natural environment shapes different emotional and psychological characteristics through an individual's cognitive level, cultural background, and personal experiences. The development of civilization, on the other hand, plays an important role in social relations and historical context. Through education and cultural norms, it guides and regulates an individual's temperament, enabling them to find a balance between freedom and rules. This dynamic and multi-level process of temperament formation requires us to consider the supporting role of the social environment while understanding individual differences. In the relationship between temperament and moral development, Lotze's view reveals the path of an individual's moral choices when facing complex situations. Temperament is not just a collection of emotions, but a stable trait formed through the long-term interaction between emotions and reason. This trait plays an important role in an individual's moral judgment, making moral judgment not only a rational reasoning process, but also a personalized process deeply influenced by personal emotions and background. When compared with Kant's rationalism and Hume's emotionalism, Lotze's view provides a more comprehensive theoretical framework, emphasizing both the guiding role of reason and the driving role of emotions. Finally, Lotze believed that the essence of human freedom lies in the fact that individuals can shape their lives and psychological characteristics through their own choices and actions. Therefore, the key to understanding one's own temperament is to recognize and assume the responsibilities brought about by this freedom. In modern society, although technological progress has brought many conveniences, an individual's temperament and moral cognition are still restricted by labor and social structure. Labor itself should be a source of enjoyment, not just a means to achieve enjoyment. This view has important implications for contemporary society, reminding us that while pursuing material and technological progress, we should not ignore individual freedom and happiness. Lotze's theory of temperament not only deepens our understanding of the relationship between human nature and morality, but also provides a path to achieve harmonious co-existence between natural temperament and moral norms. Through this theory, we can better support an individual's mental health and social adaptation at different stages of life, and promote the overall moral progress of individuals and society. Lotze's theory of temperament provides us with a comprehensive perspective, helping us realize that the formation of an individual's temperament is not only the result of internal factors, but also the combined effect of the social environment and cultural background. This comprehensive understanding helps

us better understand individual differences and promote the harmonious development of society.

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