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Windelband, Wilhelm (1848 - 1915)

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Windelband, Wilhelm (1848 - 1915)

From "The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy"



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German philosopher and originator of Baden neo-Kantianism. He studied under Kuno Fischer (1824-1907) and Lotze, and was professor at Zürich, Freiburg, Strasbourg, and Heidelberg. Windelband gave Baden neo-Kantianism its distinctive mark of Kantian axiology as the core of critical philosophy. He is widely recognized for innovative work in the history of philosophy, in which problems rather than individual philosophers are the focus and organizing principle of exposition. He is also known for his distinction, first drawn in "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft" ("History and Natural Science," 1894), between the nomothetic knowledge that most natural sciences seek (the discovery of general laws in order to master nature) and the idiographic knowledge that the historical sciences pursue (description of individual and unique aspects of reality with the aim of self-affirmation). His most important student, and successor at Heidelberg, was Heinrich Rickert (1863-1936), who made lasting contributions to the methodology of the historical sciences.

See also [neo-Kantianism](#). [H.v.d.L.](#)