

**WILHELM WINDELBAND'S HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY:
The Path from Neo-Kantianism to Neo-Hegelianism**

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A la memoria de mi padre

*“Amarrado al recuerdo
Yo te sigo esperando”*

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SUMMARY

In the context of a general reevaluation of the Neo-Kantian movement that is taken place in contemporary philosophy, the present investigation aims at reconstructing and working out the consequences of the philosophical project of the founding father of the Neo-Kantian Baden school: Wilhelm Windelband.

Windelband's philosophical program aimed at synthesizing two opposing forces operating in nineteenth-century philosophical thinking, namely, transcendental Philosophy and historical consciousness. Due to Windelband's peculiar aim, I believe that his philosophy has a twofold relevance. On the one hand, Windelband effectively deals, within a Kantian framework, with a set of problems that cannot find an adequate answer in the core Kantian texts. The fact is that those problems, which arose as a consequence of the consolidation of history as a scientific discipline, were not a component of Kant's own philosophical and cultural landscape. On the other hand, the absence of a definitive solution to the tension mentioned above, far from being a failure, presents us with the opportunity to consider the problem of relating transcendental, or systematical, approaches and historical approaches in one of its most dramatic forms.

Contrary to the widely-held view, I argue that Windelband was aware of the deep problematic of historical thinking and the imperative of transforming transcendental philosophy. History, thus, cannot be taken only as an object which philosophers study in search of transcendental presuppositions; instead, it should be considered a constitutive part of the process of reflective thinking itself. Windelband believed that the Philosopher cannot excogitate the principles of theoretical and practical rationality in pure abstraction. It is precisely for this reason that philosophy requires the mediating factor of history. The subject of Windelband's fidelity to Kantian philosophy may thus warrant some questioning, as Windelband's view undoubtedly represents an unexpected proximity to the philosophy of Hegel.

ANALYTICAL INDEX

Introduction	1
First Part: Historical Philosophy and Neo-Kantianism	13
Chapter 1: Historical Philosophy	14
1.1. The Scope of Historical Philosophy	16
1.2. The Concept of Historical Philosophy	19
1.3. Origin and Development of Historical Philosophy	26
1.4. Historical Philosophy and Neo-Kantianism	39
1.5. Conclusions	44
Chapter 2: The Neo-Kantian Movement	46
2.1. Main Challenges of defining Neo-Kantianism.....	47
2.2. The Return to Kant.....	60
2.2.1. Eduard Zeller and the Task of the Theory of Knowledge ..	62
2.2.2. Kuno Fischer's Interpretation of Kant.....	66
2.2.3. Lotze's Realm of Validity	69
2.3. Conclusions	78
Second Part: Windelband's Philosophical Program	79
Chapter 3: Philosophical Preludes.....	80
3.1: Bio-bibliographical sketch	83
3.2: Windelband's Definition of Philosophy	89
3.2.1. Judgment and Assessment	99
3.2.2. Normative Consciousness.....	106
3.3: Socrates and Kant	109
3.4: Teleological Criticism	119
3.5: Conclusions	127
Chapter 4: History and the Philosophical Method	129
4.1: The Critical Method	131
4.1.1. Philosophical Background of Windelband's Con	
ception of the Philosophical Method	133
4.1.2. Windelband's Interpretation of the Critical Method	137
4.2: Psychology as the Organon of Philosophy	149
4.3: History as the Organon of Philosophy	157
4.4: History and Historical Relativism	165
4.5: Conclusions	169
Chapter 5: The Philosophy of History	171
5.1. The Logic of History	176
5.2. History and Natural Sciences	184
5.3. History and Norms	204
5.4. The Philosophy of History	209
5.5. Conclusions	212

Chapter 6: The Historiography of Philosophy	214
6.1. The Epochal Context	216
6.2. The Necessity of the History of Philosophy	226
6.3. The History of Problems	241
6.4. Conclusions	257
Third Part: Historical Philosophy Acknowledged	259
Chapter 7: Windelband's Neo-Hegelianism	260
7.1. The Renewal of Hegelianism	261
7.2. Philosophy of Culture in relationship with Historical Philo- sophy	269
7.3. Über Hegel hinausgehen?	276
7.4. Conclusions	282
Conclusions	285
Bibliography	289

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KrV = Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*.

WiPh = “Was ist Philosophie” [1882]: *Präludien. Aufsätze und Reden zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*. 6. Auflage. Tübingen: Mohr. Vol. 1, pp. 1-54.

US = “Über Sokrates” [1880], in *Präludien*. Vol 1, pp. 55-87.

IK = “Immanuel Kant. Zur Säkularfeier seiner Philosophie” [1881], in *Präludien*. Vol 1, pp. 112-146.

NHJ = “Nach hundert Jahren. (Zu Kants hundertjährigem Todestage)” [1904] in *Präludien*. Vol 1, pp. 147-167.

EH = “Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus” [1910] in *Präludien*. Vol 1, pp. 273-289.

MZ = “Von der Mystik unserer Zeit” [1910] in *Präludien*. Vol 1, pp. 290-299.

GL = “Über die gegenwärtige Lage und Aufgabe der Philosophie” [1907] in *Präludien*. Vol 2, pp. 1-23.

NN = “Normen und Naturgesetze” [1882] in *Präludien*. Vol 2, pp. 59-98.

KGM = “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” [1883/1907] in *Präludien*. Vol 2, pp. 99-135.

GN = “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft” [1894] in *Präludien*. Vol 2, pp. 136-160.

KT = “Kulturphilosophie und transzendentaler Idealismus” [1910] in *Präludien*. Vol 2, pp. 279-294.

AUF = “Die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Logik und Erkenntnislehre in Bezug auf Kultur und Naturwissenschaften”, in *Rapports et comptes rendus. Congrès International de Philosophie, tenue à Genève du 4 au 8 Septembre 1904*, pp. 103-124.

PL = “Die Prinzipien der Logik”, in Arnold RUGE (Ed.): *Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften. Bd. 1: Logik*. Tübingen: Mohr, pp. 1-60.

SWPh = “Über Sinn und Wert des Phänomenalismus”, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Heidelberg: Winter.

LGP = *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*. Tübingen: Mohr.

WW = *Der Wille zur Wahrheit. Akademische Rede zur Erinnerung an den zweiten Gründer der Universität Karl Friedrich Grossherzog von Baden*. Heidelberg: Hörning.

EPh = *Einleitung in der Philosophie*. Tübingen: Mohr.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last twenty years, interest in the Neo-Kantian movement has increased steadily and continuously. This newfound interest stands in stark contrast to the severe criticism and neglect that Neo-Kantianism faced in previous decades. Up until recently, two negative appraisals, stemming from two different philosophical traditions, have dominated the narratives about the history of philosophy in the nineteenth century. While the phenomenological and hermeneutical receptions criticized a reductive stance pertaining to the Neo-Kantian primacy of the theory of knowledge, the Marxist-oriented interpretation stressed the relationship between the academic inwardness of Neo-Kantian philosophy and the failures of the 1848 revolution.¹ Either as academic advocates of a dying idealist tradition or as exponents of a bourgeois ideology of the epoch, Neo-Kantians were seen as representatives of a conservative force deprived of any significant philosophical legacy. The idea of reclaiming the philosophical heritage of Classical German Philosophy was at odds with the demands of philosophical and political radicality of the new philosophical currents at the beginning of the twentieth century.² It was indeed the very idea of a ‘return to Kant,’ in conjunction with the historical and sociological background from which Neo-Kantianism arose, that generated serious suspicions about its creative possibilities. If philosophy could progress at all, argued those

¹ The Neo-Kantian “returning” direction seems to be in opposition with the *Vorwärts* impulse of the left-wing movements in nineteenth-century Germany. These contrasting positions are presented accurately in a socialist-oriented review of Windelband’s *Die Philosophie im deutschen Geistesleben des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Referring to Windelband’s identification of Neo-Kantianism, Neo-Fichteanism, and Neo-Hegelianism, the author of the review says ironically: “Die Moden der bürgerlichen Philosophie wechseln heute fast so schnell wie der Besten; das Bleibende ist nur das ‘Zurück’” (Eckstein 1910:188). A similar claim can be found in Lenin’s “Marxismus und Revisionismus”: “Auf dem Gebiet der Philosophie segelte der Revisionismus im Kielwasser der bürgerlichen professoralen ‘Wissenschaft’. Die Professoren gingen ‘zurück zu Kant’ und der Revisionismus tritt hinter den Neukantianern her” (Lenin (1908) [1970:21]). But the most renowned advocate of this interpretation is Georg Lukács, who develops the two lines of criticism in tandem. For instance, he speaks about Neo-Kantianism in the following terms: “ein positivistisch-agnostizistischer Neukantianismus zur herrschenden Philosophie wurde. Die gesellschaftliche Sicherheit der Bourgeoisie, ihr unerschütterliches Vertrauen zur ‘Ewigkeit’ des kapitalistischen Aufstiegs führt zu einer Ablehnung der Weltanschauungsfragen, zu einer Beschränkung der Philosophie auf Logik, Erkenntnistheorie und höchstens Psychologie” (Lukács 1974:92). In the specialized literature, a similar view is advanced by Thomas Willey: “I believe the neo-Kantians expressed the tentative and unsuccessful efforts of a segment of the upper bourgeoisie to make peace with the proletariat and to retain an attitude of cultural community with the West” (Willey 1978:23).

² From the opposite standpoint, Edmund Husserl launched an analogous claim against the Neo-Kantians: “So war es kein glücklicher Ruf ‘Zurück zu Kant’, der nach einer Zeit unweigerlich seine gleichlautenden Rufe ‘Zurück zu Fichte’, ‘Zurück zu Hegel’, zu Fries, zu Schopenhauer mit sich brachte. Der rechte Ruf lautet wieder: An die Sachen selbst als freie Geister, in rein theoretischem Interesse.” (Husserl (1917) [1986:206])

who opposed Neo-Kantianism, it was by breaking off with modern traditions and seeking new paths, paths hinted only in the works of non-academic and less conformist figures.³

Against these early and rather damaging receptions, a new historiography of nineteenth-century philosophy has found reasons not only to call the period comprised between 1860 and 1918 the “age or era of Neo-Kantianism” (Luft (Ed.) 2015:xxi) but also to defend the positive value of its study.⁴

In this new trend, Neo-Kantian philosophy is revisited primarily in order to fill a historiographical gap. As one of the dominant philosophical movements in German Academia during the middle and end of the nineteenth century, Neo-Kantianism conditioned the physiognomy of the philosophical movements that replaced it and provoked its decline.⁵ Hence, this new historiographical current claims that Neo-Kantianism is the hidden origin of core concepts and problems of contemporary philosophy and, therefore, that it constitutes a worthy object of research. In this sense, a representative of this new historiography of philosophy, Sebastian Luft, concludes that “the Neo-Kan-

³ The famous book by Karl Löwith provides a list that includes the following philosophical figures: “Das 19. Jahrhundert, das ist Hegel und Goethe, Schelling und die Romantik, Schopenhauer und Nietzsche, Marx und Kierkegaard, aber auch Feuerbach und Ruge, B. Bauer und Stirner, E. von Hartmann und Dühring.” (Löwith 1969:8). There is no sign of the Neo-Kantians. There is, however, an important point behind this scission between academic and non-academic philosophy, since it implies a determinate attitude toward government authorities: “Important philosophical minds at the time were pushed from the universities, i.e., they refused from the outset to allow their thought, teachings, and research to be put in chains” (Pester 1991:241).

⁴ Among modern general presentations of Neo-Kantianism, it is worth mentioning the works of Willey (1978); Ollig (1979); Köhnke (1986); Ferrari (1997); Pascher (1997); Dufour (2003); Beiser (2014b); and Noras (2020a). In addition, the German publishing house Königshausen und Neumann has issued the book series “Studien und Materialien zum Neukantianismus” since 1994. Finally, it is worth mentioning as representatives of this new appraisal of Neo-Kantianism three books published in English: Makkreel and Luft (Eds.) (2010); Luft (Ed.) (2015); De Warren and Staiti (Eds.) (2015).

⁵ Continuing with our previous reference to G. Lúkacs, while his criticism of Neo-Kantianism was devastating, the reader of *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft* must acknowledge that he was well versed in the philosophy of the Baden Neo-Kantians. This is not accidental, since Lúkacs moved to Heidelberg to study philosophy when Windelband and Lask were still professors there. For an evaluation of their relations that stresses the relevance of the Neo-Kantians and is in line with the new historiographical approach, see Kavoulakos (2018).

tians are the great missing link in this historical trajectory [from German Idealism to Phenomenology, and beyond]” (Luft (Ed.) 2015: xxii).⁶

Moreover, the Neo-Kantians belong to an intellectual sphere in which the fore-runners of analytical and continental traditions could engage in a shared discussion. This has led many scholars to seek in the Neo-Kantian movement an original stem from which both contesting parties could have developed. Accordingly, the historical study of Neo-Kantianism is of paramount importance if we want to fathom the point of departure of contemporary philosophy and demystify the legitimizing narratives of the so-called continental-analytical divide (González Porta 2005:36).

In addition to the purpose of offering more accurate and complete accounts of the nineteenth-century philosophical landscape, there are also claims regarding the intrinsic philosophical relevance of the Neo-Kantian movement. Neo-Kantians did not only shape the problems faced by their successors; they were also involved in substantial philosophical work, leaving us distinctive theories about subjectivity, the meaning of transcendental philosophy, the method of the historiography of philosophy, and the project of a philosophy of culture.⁷ Thus, the task of providing general historical narratives of Neo-Kantianism, which in several cases draw heavily on historical or sociological explanations, is supplemented, in this specialized literature, by technical reconstructions of theories and arguments in a style that resembles the traditional histories of philosophy. The general conclusion of this literature is that the historical placement of the Neo-Kantians must necessarily go hand-in-hand with an assessment of their specific

⁶ Sebastian Luft and Rudolf Makkreel have previously written that “any account of modern or contemporary philosophy which disregards Neo-Kantianism -that is, which perpetuates the generalized neglect of Neo-Kantianism - is decidedly lacking” (Makkreel and Luft 2010:9). A specific place in this literature is occupied by a pioneering book in the study of Neo-Kantianism (Willey 1978) since it not only reevaluates neo-Kantianism but its political philosophy: “Nothing more quickly dispels the notion that the Second Reich was an era exclusively of *völkisch* neo-romanticism, ambivalent social democracy, and state worshipping liberalism, than a study of Neo-Kantianism” (Willey 1978:22).

⁷ See Ollig (1997:61) and Makkreel and Luft (2010:9) for non-exclusive lists of Neo-Kantian themes that still hold actual relevance. Also Pascher (1997): “Lernen kann man bei einer Auseinandersetzung mit dem Neukantianismus auch einiges über Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten in der Entwicklung der Philosophie” (Pascher 1997:11); and Adair-Totef (2008): “A study of the Neo-Kantians is worthwhile because they demonstrated the importance of the study of Kant’s philosophy, and, more generally, the value of the study of the history of philosophy. Research on the movement is also rewarding because the Neo-Kantians were among the brightest, most innovative, and prolific of nineteenth-century and early twentieth century philosophers” (Adair-Totef 2008: 41-42).

theories regarding a variety of topics and their attempt to appropriate the philosophical legacy of Kant.

In the context of this general reevaluation of the Neo-Kantian movement, this investigation aims at reconstructing and working out the consequences of the philosophical project of the founding father of the Neo-Kantian Baden school: Wilhelm Windelband.

During his lifetime, which spanned from 1848 to 1915, Wilhelm Windelband had a reputation for being both an innovative historian of philosophy -due to his particular narrative centered on the origin, development, and transformation of philosophical problems through history- and a standard-bearer for the normative interpretation of Kantian philosophy, which he came to lead through the Baden school of Neo-Kantianism. Nevertheless, soon after his death, his philosophical ideas were eclipsed by his works as a historian of philosophy, Windelband's only apparent philosophical legacy.⁸ For several reasons that will be clarified later, Windelband's standing as one of the central figures in German Academia was not to last; his views were soon scorned or neglected altogether.⁹ Thus, Sebastian Luft, in his role as general editor of the latest *Neo-Kantian Reader*, recognizes that "he [Windelband] is the most neglected of the 'major' Neo-Kantians" (Luft (Ed.) 2015:267).¹⁰ Although an obscure figure today, I hold that his

⁸ Already in 1915, on the occasion of Windelband's death, Husserl wrote in a personal letter to Rickert: "Windelband fehlte es zu sehr an ursprünglicher systematischer Kraft, um zu einem großen Ausstrahlungspunkt philosophischer Wirkungen zu werden. Ein eigentlich schöpferischer Denker war er nicht und mit Recht haben Sie [Rickert] in Ihrem warmen und schönen Nachruf (einen schöneren hatte er sich selbst nicht wünschen können) das Schwergewicht seiner Bedeutung in seinen historischen Werken gesucht. Diese haben auch auf mich in jungen Jahren stark gewirkt, ja mich geradezu entzückt. Ihnen danke ich es, daß meine Seele, schon in meinen naturalistischen Anfängen, mit einer geheimen Sehnsucht nach dem alten romantischen Land des deutschen Idealismus erfüllt wurde." (Husserl 1994:177-178). Husserl is referring here to Rickert (1915). The same judgment is passed in other obituaries. See Baumker (1916:108) and Drews (1916:1).

⁹ Friedrich Meinecke, who was Windelband's colleague in Strasbourg, pondered the rise and fall of Windelband's figure in his autobiographical writings: "Windelband ist als Philosoph heute etwas in den Schatten getreten. Er war auch kein eigentlicher Felsensprenger, der das Tiefste zu bewegen vermochte. Er war ... ein reiches und wunderbar schönes Talent, unverwirrt durch verführerische Modeströmungen, mit sichersten Instinkt für die unerschöpflichen Schätze der grossen deutschen Bewegung von Kant and und für das, was die Zeit von diesen gerade brauchte" (Meinecke 1969:165; quoted in König 2018a:7). Windelband probably is as little known today as he was when these words were written.

¹⁰ A similar judgment regarding the lack of comprehensive studies of Windelband's philosophy can be found in König (2018a): "fehlt es bis in die Gegenwart fast vollständige an Versuche ... Windelband als originellen und eigenständigen Denker ernst zu nehmen, ohne seine philosophische Statut dadurch zugleich wieder einzuschränken, dass man ihn als einen *systematicien manquant* auffasst" (König 2018a:12). König also bemoans the lack of studies on Windelband's work even in the specialized literature on Neo-Kantianism (König 2018a:11 footnote).

philosophy can be seen as one of the ‘missing links’ that paved the path between between modern and contemporary philosophy.

Windelband’s philosophical program aimed at synthesizing two opposing forces operating in nineteenth-century philosophical thinking, namely, transcendental philosophy and historical consciousness. Rather than a loose juxtaposition, his double concern with systematical philosophy and the history of philosophy lays down a marker for a complex, articulated discussion of the historical dimension of philosophical thinking. I interpret Windelband’s ‘historical philosophy’ as a synthesis between the impulse for pure systematical philosophizing and the constant concern of philosophy with its own past. Due to Windelband’s peculiar aim, I firmly believe that the study of his philosophy has a twofold philosophical relevance. On the one hand, Windelband effectively deals, within a Kantian framework, with a set of problems that cannot find an adequate answer in the core Kantian texts. The fact is that those problems, which arose as a consequence of the consolidation of history as a scientific discipline, were not a component of Kant’s own philosophical and cultural landscape. On the other hand, the absence of a definitive solution to the tension mentioned above, far from being a failure, presents us with the opportunity to consider the problem of relating transcendental, or systematical, approaches and historical approaches in one of its most dramatic forms. Thus, the study of Windelband’s program allows a meditation on truly contemporary problems since it is difficult to deny that the determination of the relationship between systematical and historical thinking has ceased to be aporetic (Scholtz 2009:25).

I consider the study of Windelband’s philosophy as a gateway to understanding the origin and the form of the problematic relationship between historical and philosophical knowledge and also as a guide to formulate and evaluate a specific type of philosophy, i.e., a critical or transcendental philosophy that consciously embraces a historical standpoint. Neglecting Windelband’s relevance is, therefore, neither philosophically nor historically justified, and the study of his thinking is a suitable starting point for reflecting on one of the attempts to actualize systematical philosophy.

My strategy to approach this topic consists in a historical reconstruction: to go back to the emergence of the topic in nineteenth-century philosophy in general and in Wilhelm Windelband’s philosophy in particular. What I want to explain is how Windel-

band interpreted the imbrications between systematic philosophy and historical consciousness and how he dealt with these imbrications in his practice as a philosopher and as a historian of philosophy. After all, Windelband not only strived to think systematically, but he was also a trained historian of philosophy, formed in the tradition of Eduard Zeller and Kuno Fischer. I consider that this reconstruction will allow us to comprehend the formation and the constitutive elements of a question that we have inherited from the philosophers of the nineteenth century, and that continues to unsettle contemporary thinking. I will not limit myself to a mere philological reconstruction of his writings, nor merely attempt to place those texts in their historical contexts to elucidate their meaning. Ultimately, I intend to judge them from a historical and philosophical perspective. I aim at determining which possibilities are still open for systematical philosophy and which possibilities are not, together with which paths not to tread if we are to avoid relapsing into the contradictions that doomed Windelband's Neo-Kantian philosophy to the condition of an unfinished project.

This general proposal does not lack novelty. A widespread interpretative tradition, one that provides a dismissive account of Neo-Kantianism, claims that Windelband's philosophy of history is equivalent to a logic or methodology of historical sciences, even though it was not Windelband himself but his student, Heinrich Rickert, who strengthened this line of study. This interpretation constitutes a direct criticism since it implies that the formalism of the Neo-Kantian philosopher entails the reduction of the problem of history to a platitude. Thus, what appears on the surface as a steadfast commitment to the investigation of historical thinking and the strengthening of historiographical practices, was not really in keeping with Windelband's historicist contemporaries. The contested point is that, in the end, the Neo-Kantian way of treating history is profoundly unhistorical. This would also appear to be verified by the consideration of the methodology of the history of problems, the apex of Windelband's work, which allegedly postulates a set of unchanging philosophical problems that are held as articulating factors in the history of philosophy. The issues tackled in this investigation instead point toward the possibility of a different account of Windelband's philosophy. Rather than a methodology of the historical sciences, I posit that Windelband's main

contribution to philosophy is the formulation of a philosophical program in line with the model of historical philosophy.

Contrary to the widely-held view, I argue that Windelband was aware of the deep problematic of historical thinking and the imperative of transforming transcendental philosophy. However, the theoretical works of Windelband have the peculiarity of leaving a large degree of indeterminacy regarding the differences between history in general and the history of philosophy. This indeterminacy calls for a careful philosophical analysis. In what follows, I will show that Windelband argues that history in general, and the history of philosophy, in particular, carries out a function directly connected to systematical thinking. History, thus, cannot be taken only as an object which philosophers study in search of transcendental presuppositions; instead, it should be considered a constitutive part of the process of reflective thinking itself. Windelband believed that the philosopher cannot excogitate the principles of theoretical and practical rationality in pure abstraction. It is precisely for this reason that philosophy requires the mediating factor of history. The subject of Windelband's fidelity to Kantian philosophy may thus warrant some questioning, as Windelband's view undoubtedly represents an unexpected proximity to the philosophy of Hegel.

This relationship between Kantianism and Hegelianism, already present in the title of this investigation, expresses how complex the analysis of Windelband's treatment of history is. In addition to the task of interconnecting systematical thinking and the history of philosophy, which in itself already involves diverse layers of discourse, a further task is added in the form of an elucidation of the conditions of appropriation of past philosophical thinking. Consequently, the famous necessity of a 'return to Kant' was not a conservative repetition or restoration of the main Kantian thesis but the transformation of this same thesis in the light of a new historical situation, a situation configured, among other factors, by the consolidation of scientific history. As a result, the transformation of transcendental philosophy through a historical orientation involves a reflection that belongs to the philosophy of history in its broadest sense. From my part, I can say that I attempt to retrieve the same philosophical attitude of the Neo-Kantian philosophers regarding Kant and Hegel. In other words, I tend to disregard the idea that the understanding of transcendental philosophy and its relationship with history could

be grasped in pure abstraction, that is, leaving aside the philosophical constellation in which its possibility originated.

In its most abstract formulation, the philosophical problem that guides this investigation can be formulated under three different headings: (1) the role of the history of philosophy in systematic philosophy; (2) the role of systematic philosophy as viewed by the history of philosophy; (3) the synthesis of these two paths toward a historical philosophy. In order to analyze the neglected role of the history of philosophy in Windelband's philosophy and to achieve a thorough reconstruction of its justification, novelty, and possibilities for our current understanding of the issue, a method composed of three moments is proposed.

Chapter 1 aims at clarifying the origin and general meaning of the concept of "historical philosophy." The provisional characterization of this concept will also explain some general terms employed in this introduction. I place an emphasis on the delineation of my most general philosophical question: Under which conditions is it possible to offer a synthesis between systematical (transcendental) and historical philosophy? The second chapter offers a description of the rise and consolidation of Neo-Kantianism between 1860 and 1870. I address the problems typically associated with studying the Neo-Kantian movement, for instance, the different interpretations of its origins, and I offer the essential references to the works of Wilhelm Windelband's direct teachers: Kuno Fischer (1824-1907) and Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881). It is often said that under the guidance of these early Neo-Kantians, Windelband simultaneously developed his interest in both the history of philosophy and in systematic philosophical thinking, those interests that he then tried to harmonize into a unified philosophical program. These two chapters offer formal and concrete presuppositions for the discussion of Windelband's philosophical program.

After these introductory chapters, I embark on a study of Windelband's philosophy. This study comprises four chapters that collectively form the second part of my investigation: Windelband's Philosophical Program. From chapters 3 to 5, I determine the different roles that history plays in Windelband's systematic works. Windelband's treatment of history is multifaceted, as history has a methodological role for philosophical thinking, however, in such a role, it also becomes an object for reflection in as much as

it is the concept that is operating behind systematical thinking. Throughout my exposition, the reader will find that Windelband employs a rather idiosyncratic concept of history that involves several issues for the overall Neo-Kantian programmatic.¹¹

Windelband distinguishes between the epistemological questions related to the task of philosophically grounding the historical sciences and the ethical questions stemming from the discussion of the meaning of history. These different levels of reflection must be strictly differentiated. Moreover, even though it is assumed that history is a distinctive topic of Windelband's philosophy, it represents a later development. Finally, consideration must be given to the previously mentioned ambiguity regarding the difference between history and the history of philosophy, terms that, in some contexts, Windelband seems to use interchangeably. Therefore, this part of my investigation studies the evolution of Windelband's appreciation of history by means of a comparison of the different versions of Windelband's main work *Präludien* [*Philosophical Preludes*], a work that went through five editions between 1884 and 1915. My objective, then, is to reconstruct the methodology for transcendental philosophy elaborated by Windelband and to differentiate and articulate the different meanings of the philosophy of history: methodological, critical, and practical.¹²

Overall, throughout these three chapters, I discuss the methodological role that history of philosophy plays in the building of a system of philosophy. Here, as mentioned, the problem of distinguishing between the problems of validity and the problems of genesis arises. The specific problem regarding the method is, therefore, to establish which role should be assigned to the questions of genesis and how it is possible to keep a clear conceptual distinction between genesis and validity. The topic of the organon of philosophy, as treated in chapter 4, is Windelband's attempt at solving this problem.

A second problem arises in relation to this heading. If we claim that the history of philosophy has a determinate and necessary role for the method of philosophy as understood by Windelband, then the question which immediately arises, then, is the following: What is Windelband's conception of this specific history underlying this the-

¹¹ For instance, Windelband's concept of history conveys a certain irrational tinge which contrasts drastically with the general rationalistic predicament of the nature of his Neo-Kantian program, and also with other contesting Neo-Kantian positions.

¹² With a different terminology, König (2018b:116).

sis? This is, of course, a general problem facing any attempt to develop historical philosophy since the concept of history in play is, in many cases, left in the background. I discuss Windelband's specific conception of history, as it is expressed in several texts on the logic of historical sciences, in chapter 5. The aim of this chapter is to specify the idealistic assumptions involved in the concept of history and to see how they take part in the configuration of a historical philosophy.

However, the whole treatment related to the first problematic area, namely, the role of the history of philosophy for systematical philosophy, is incomplete without moving forward in the inverse direction, i.e., away from the role of systematic philosophy toward the history of philosophy. Only by covering this path it is possible to understand why Windelband grants a primacy to the history of philosophy rather than to history in general. A detailed account of Windelband's methodology of the history of philosophy and of certain historiographical works from the period is thus needed in order to see how these works relate to the requirements of systematical philosophy. In chapter 6, I deal with Windelband's arguments for the necessity of establishing the history of philosophy as a philosophical discipline and his specific understanding of the history of philosophy as a history of problems. I go on to show that his methodology, also called *Problemgeschichte*, is firmly rooted in Windelband's conception of philosophical inquiry. Under the assumption that history is the unfolding process of rationality -again, a Hegelian idea- Windelband thought that philosophical thinking, as a quest for self-knowledge, is compelled to take its own history as its most intimate object of study. Windelband tried to identify reason with a set of unending problems and to build a bridge, through this equation, between rational systematics and the historiography of philosophy. It is only due to this inner imbrication that Heinrich Rickert could claim retrospectively that the most representative philosophical work of his former teacher was the *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Rickert 1915:9).

By contrasting the path leading from system to history with the path leading from history to system, I acknowledge Windelband's stance. As he once put: "Die Struktur der Vernunft ist uns doppelt gegeben: einmal in der ernstesten Selbstbesinnung des philo-

sophierenden Denkens, und ein anderes Mal in ihrer historischen Entfaltung”.¹³ I try to capture through my analysis of the systematic and historiographic aspects of his work this belief in the double way in which the philosopher performs the analysis of reason. The attempt to understand this double presentation is precisely at the core of the confrontation between Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism.

Once the problem of uniting transcendental and historical philosophy is set out and Windelband’s proposal is reconstructed, an evaluation is required of the peculiarities of Windelband’s position -his conception of the philosophical method, of history, and the history of philosophy- that considers both Windelband’s contemporary resources and a more abstract discussion on the current situation of Kantian-oriented philosophy. This third part of my research, which I present in chapter 7, provides a general appraisal of Windelband’s philosophy in terms of his philosophy of culture and the problems caused by his decision to recast his philosophical program in Neo-Hegelian terms. My principal reason for offering a study of the philosophy of Windelband, is that to do philosophy today implies getting involved in historiographical practices. I believe that the relation between history and philosophy is a self-relation, meaning that the relationship between history and philosophy is, in fact, internal to philosophy, the relation of philosophy to itself.¹⁴ Moreover, this is shown in the fact that even one of the most rhetorically unhistorical trends in our past,¹⁵ transcendental philosophy, has also experienced the necessity of a self-reflective historical component.

The history of philosophy is a constitutive component of the system of philosophy. As Scholtz comments on the general development of philosophy during the period in which Windelband lived: “Historical philosophy at the end of the nineteenth-century bids a final farewell to the idea of system” (Scholtz 2015:39). In my opinion, this means that that the progressive increase of historical consciousness has weakened the

¹³ This quotation is taken from Windelband’s discussion of Emile Boutroux’s presentation during the Second World Congress of Philosophy. See Boutroux (1905:60).

¹⁴ On this, Anghern (2015).

¹⁵ Illustrative of this rhetoric is Husserl’s famous article “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft,” where we find the following passage: “Am Historischen hängen bleiben, sich daran in historisch-kritischer Betätigung zu schaffen machen und in eklektischer Verarbeitung oder in anachronistischer Renaissance philosophische Wissenschaft erreichen zu wollen: das gibt nur hoffnungslose Versuche. Nicht von den Philosophien sondern von den Sachen und Problemen muß der Antrieb der Forschung ausgehen.” (Husserl 1910/1911 [Hua XXV: 61]).

idea of a pure system of philosophy. However, the question brought to the fore by this 'farewell' is how radical the abandonment of systematic philosophy should be. Should it be a radical decision against systematic thinking, or is it possible to present an intermediate and more moderate account? Windelband moved toward the second option; the idea of systematical philosophy should not be abandoned altogether but modified, and my general intention in this study is to consider the validity of this view. Against radical historicity, I want to revive some features of critical philosophy in relation to stabilizing or aligning values and systematical philosophy.

FIRST PART: HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY AND NEO-KANTIANISM

CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

In a remarkable passage in Plato's *Timaeus*, we find the following story of wise Solon, as told by one of Plato's colorful characters. While traveling through Egypt, Solon had an opportunity to converse with an Egyptian on the subject of ancient traditions. The climax of the dialogue between Solon and the priest comes in the following lines:

"Ah, Solon, Solon," said one of the priests, a very old man, "you Greeks are always children; in Greece there is no such thing as an old man."

"What do you mean?" Solon asked.

"You are all young in your minds," said the priest, "which hold no store of old belief based on long tradition, no knowledge hoary with age." (*Timaeus* 22B)¹⁶

From his conversation with the priest Solon discovers that the Egyptian's knowledge of the past far surpasses that of the Greeks, whose records of the past only go back a few generations. The Egyptian priest speaks of events so far removed in time that they seem entirely beyond the scope of any Greek account. The meaning behind this story may well be transposed to Greek Philosophy. A sense of lack of historical depth characterizes Greek historical consciousness. In its origins, philosophy did not establish itself as the successor to a long-standing tradition but burst into Greek society as a radical novelty.

It could be argued, nonetheless, that Plato's narrative calls into question this alleged originality by claiming that the Greek vision of the past is short-sighted; in doing so, he appears to suggest that much remains unseen. Aristotle presents a different case. Aristotle interpreted his own philosophical system as the last and final step in a long-standing search for truth. In this manner, philosophy acquires its proper history articulated through the contraposition between a primitive or youthful age and the mature phase in which the theory of the four causes is finally clarified (*Metaphysics* A 993a10-15). Aristotle's philosophy acknowledges that the ripening of philosophical thinking requires the efforts of his predecessors (*Metaphysics* a 993b16); thus showing

¹⁶ Cited from F. Cornford's English translation (Cornford 1997:15).

a strong historical sense (Guthrie 1957: 37). Indeed, the relationship between philosophical thinking and its own past appears as a topic of reflection as early as antiquity, but remains linked to the Greek cyclical conception of time and never attains a high degree of conceptual clarity.

More than two thousand years after Plato's passage was written, Hegel put forward the equally suggestive, and of course, more famous image of Minerva's owl.¹⁷ No longer a nascent creature, philosophy is described as entering its declining years. The modern philosopher appears as the inheritor of an old and profound tradition, and his philosophical impulse cannot be isolated from its historical context. The truly philosophical standpoint can only be reached when the philosopher acknowledges and embraces the passing of a historical age. In this sense, modernity's historical consciousness is explicitly historical; it embraces the fact that philosophical thought has a history, but it searches, at the same time, to understand the meaning of this condition. By stark contrast, for the modern philosopher, casting aside philosophy's relation to its past appears altogether impossible.

In its inception, philosophy proceeded as if no past was given. Hegel's image reveals, on the contrary, that the way in which we have been doing philosophy since the nineteenth century is radically different from the original Greek outlook.

Nowadays, whether contested or embraced, the history of philosophy has an undeniable claim as a relevant component of philosophical studies. Today it even seems more problematic to speak about the construction of a system of philosophy than to write about the history of philosophy (Scholtz 2009:25). However, the meaning of this claim and its implications for our way of doing philosophy has yet to be clarified. As mentioned in the Introduction, the purpose of this chapter is to offer a tentative definition of historical philosophy as a philosophical stance that embraces the necessity of philosophically going back to the history of philosophy, and also to offer a historical account of how this situation came to be recognized in the nineteenth century.

¹⁷ "Wenn die Philosophie ihr Grau in Grau malt, dann ist eine Gestalt des Lebens alt geworden und mit Grau in Grau läßt sie sich nicht verjüngen, sondern nur erkennen; die Eule der Minerva beginnt erst mit der einbrechenden Dämmerung ihren Flug" (Hegel 1989:28).

1. 1. THE SCOPE OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

With the idea of offering a preliminary understanding of the meaning of historical philosophy and explaining how it can present a problem for systematical philosophy in general and transcendental philosophy in particular, I provide in this section a brief summary that is intentionally broader than is required for a strictly historical interpretation of Windelband. Initially, I will address this topic on a more general and abstract level, leaving the specificities of Windelband's Neo-Kantian case for a further chapter. I believe that an excellent pathway to the concept of "historical philosophy" is provided in the work of the British philosopher Robin G. Collingwood, who cannot be considered a Neo-Kantian philosopher by any means, but who, nonetheless, is a relevant figure in the philosophy of history.

The fundamental question posed by Collingwood in his posthumous book *The Idea of History* concerns the motives for considering the philosophy of history as an independent discipline rather than a subfield of the general theory of knowledge. Collingwood answers that the necessity of providing an autonomous account of the philosophy of history derives from the development of historical consciousness in Western Civilization. The singular value of Collingwood's answer lies in the fact that the argument that supports it also calls for a revision of the idea of philosophy.

Without denying the existence of a rudimentary historical consciousness throughout the development of Western Civilization, Collingwood considers, in what is today a firmly held belief, that it was only in the nineteenth century that historical consciousness arose as a distinctive type of consciousness and a peculiar way of knowledge, unthematized as such by philosophers during the previous centuries. Previously, the theory of knowledge was modeled after entirely different epistemic paradigms: Mathematics in Greece, Theology in the Middle Ages, and the Natural Sciences during Modernity. The existing theories of knowledge up to the nineteenth century, laid out without heed to the claims of historical knowledge, were either unable to offer a clear explanation of this knowledge or contradicted it altogether. Therefore, the appearance of scientific history demanded a general revision of the theory of knowledge. It is due to this last consequence that the philosophy of history appears as a central issue in the phi-

losophical landscape of Windelband's generation.¹⁸ However, it would be a mistake to consider that the philosophy of history is limited to epistemological problems alone.

In view of the novelty of the philosophy of history, Collingwood proposes building a philosophy of history that is distinct from the rest of the philosophical disciplines. Insofar as the main epistemological theories denied the possibility of historical knowledge, it is necessary to construct an argument that shows its possibility. However, further discussion is required concerning a second step in the development of the philosophy of history, one in which the relationship between philosophy in general and the philosophy of history, in particular, is to be placed under scrutiny. For Collingwood, the articulation of different philosophical disciplines is closely interrelated. The introduction of a new subfield of research, the philosophy of history, not only demands a revision of the theory of knowledge but has an impact on other aspects of philosophical research as well. Collingwood says: "Any addition to the body of philosophical ideas [the addition of the philosophy of history] alters to some extent everything that was there already, and the establishment of a new philosophical science necessitates a revision of all the old ones [theory of knowledge, ethics, aesthetics, etc.]" (Collingwood 1993:6). Immediately after this passage, Collingwood presents a conclusion which is of paramount importance to our general purposes:

In the present case this will mean a general overhauling of all philosophical questions in the light of the results reached by the philosophy of history in the narrower sense, and this will produce a new philosophy which will be a philosophy of history in the wide sense, i.e., a complete philosophy conceived from a historical point of view (Collingwood 1946:6-7).

In the interplay between a narrow and a broader characterization of the philosophy of history, the thematic area of this philosophy appears to suggest not only the grounding of historical knowledge but the reframing of philosophical endeavors. In conclusion,

¹⁸ Windelband's *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* expresses exactly this same idea: "Die Geschichte umgekehrt ist dem grössten Teile der philosophischen Systeme gleichgültig geblieben, um erst verhältnismäßig spät und vereinzelt Objekt philosophischer Untersuchung aufzutreten" (Windelband 1903:4). Another important reference on the matter is Windelband (AUF 1905b) where Windelband deals with the limitations of the current logic and theory of knowledge for the understanding of the problems of historical thinking: "Das ist die wissenschaftliche Originalität dieses Zeitalters; die Geschichte ist eine Wissenschaft geworden, und damit hat die heutige Logik und Erkenntnistheorie als mit dem neuen Problem zu rechnen, das ihr durch den tatsächlichen Befund des wirklichen Wissens und Forschens unserer Zeit gestellt wird" (Windelband AUF 1905b:106).

Collingwood's idea is that history does not only open up a sub-discipline but affects the way in which we conceive philosophical concepts and philosophical practices.

Collingwood's narrative regarding the possibility of a historical philosophy in the broad sense can be considered somewhat biased, as he puts an excessive emphasis on the academic aspect of historical knowledge without recognizing in full the relevance of German Idealism for the development of a historical worldview. Moreover, his narrative focuses solely on the development of the concept of history, without referring to the role that the history of philosophy played in the formation of the concept of historical philosophy. Nonetheless, Collingwood's early narrative is not without its merits. The works of Windelband do not tell the whole story either;¹⁹ however, they do represent, in my opinion, the undertaking of a philosophy of history in the broader sense as well as the recognition of the diversified impact that historical thinking had for the different philosophical disciplines. When I spoke in the Introduction about the tension between the systematic and the historical in Windelband's philosophy, I was pointing precisely toward this interplay between a narrow and a broader conception of the philosophy of history. Windelband did not make such a distinction, and perhaps this is one of the reasons for the confusing coexistence in his philosophical writings of different meanings of the philosophy of history -logical, ethical, critical- and the difficulties involved with disentangling his conception of history from his conception of the history of philosophy. Moreover, neither Windelband's contributions to the philosophy of history in the narrow sense nor his contributions to the history of philosophy square perfectly with the development of a philosophy of history in the broader sense, or what I call in the context of this research "historical philosophy," putting him in the equivocal position of a transitional figure. Nevertheless, I think that this problematic best reflects the 'spirit' behind his writings. In the following chapter, I will attempt to distinguish, as far as possible, the different modes of treating the relation between history and philosophy, with the proviso that the history of philosophy will ultimately acquire the predominant position.

¹⁹ Windelband does not explicate the genesis of the historical point of view as Collingwood or recent scholarship has done. There is, however, a concise history of the philosophy of history in Windelband's posthumous book *Geschichtsphilosophie*. See Windelband (1916:15).

So far, this characterization has been extremely formal, but it has given me occasion to highlight the basic contour of the problem. The nineteenth-century emphasis on the philosophy of history is not just a thematic addition but an essential modification of philosophical investigations. Now, this characterization has to be supplemented with a more concrete illustration of the construction process of historical philosophy and also with a conceptual analysis of its basic features. Again, I will address this problem from a broader perspective in order to connect it later with the philosophy of Windelband.

1.2 THE CONCEPT OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

The basic feature of historical philosophy is stated by Emil Angehrn in the following terms: “Philosophy ... is constitutively related to its history. This is first of all a descriptive, distinctive characteristic of philosophy which conspicuously sets it apart from other sciences and cultural forms” (Angehrn 2015:45).²⁰ The attempt to interpret this constitutive relation leads to the establishment of a model of philosophy to which I refer here as ‘historical philosophy’.

A first, general feature of the model consists in characterizing the method of philosophy by way of historical procedures. For instance, genealogical reconstruction is popularly presented as a suitable method for philosophical inquiry or as a relevant type of philosophical argument (Taylor 1984; Vermeir 2013). The use of this type of methodology has been so widespread that it has even been identified with a general way of doing philosophy in the continental tradition. Another example of a methodological metaphor is archeology. While those who refer to genealogy stress the fact that every concept and problem is the result of a historical process, the archeological metaphor has been employed to affirm that historical succession entails the sedimentation of different

²⁰ Windelband offers a distinctive argument to defend philosophy’s *sui generis* relatedness to its past in Windelband (1905a). This argument will be the main topic of the second section of chapter 5.

strata or levels in the formation of concepts, problems, or meanings.²¹ However, in both cases, the material for philosophical reflection is identified with historical sources stemming from a philosophical background.

There are undoubtedly several meanings that can be ascribed to the term ‘genealogy,’ as there are heterogeneous objects upon which such reconstructive narratives can be built: concepts, traditions, even reason itself. However, the primary claim is that the construction of the formative narrative of a philosophical problem or concept is a valid procedure for understanding or analyzing a given concept or problem. In a methodological paper, Catarina Dutilh Novaes describes the meaning of a genealogy of concepts in the following terms: “Conceptual genealogy ... focuses on how philosophical concepts are reinterpreted and transformed through their historical developments, while maintaining traces of their previous instantiation” (Dutilh Novaes 2015:76). This idea of genealogy offers a way of explaining the continuity or discontinuity of the meaning of a concept. An example of this method, one that alternates between the genealogy of concepts and the genealogy of problems, is Michael Forster’s explanation of the underlying antagonism between the different concepts of freedom in the philosophy of Kant as a result of the amalgamation of different interpretations of freedom that originated in antiquity.²² In this way, an interpretive problem concerning the system of the

²¹ The term “archeology” has been popularized by Michael Foucault. Justin Smith interprets an archeological approach as the “the project of comprehensively reconstructing the human historical past through the totality of its material traces” (Smith 2013:30). Smith considers that the history of philosophy developed from an archeological point of view is strictly speaking a historical enterprise. However, he defends the philosophical relevance of such history with a claim that reminds Charles Taylor’s position on this matter: “Historians of philosophy can help current philosophers to gain perspective on their projects by showing them the scope and range of what has been able to pass as an important philosophical question in different times and places, thereby providing a picture of the flexibility and contingency of what ought to count as a philosophical question” (Smith 2013:30). It is worth mentioning that Immanuel Kant had already used the term “archeology of reason” in his manuscripts (see footnote 37).

²² Another example of the use of genealogy, in this case, as counter-narrative, is given by Charles Taylor regarding Cartesian epistemology: “I do not think it is contingent that one has recourse to history at this point. This is because some forgetting has taken place here. In the critic’s eyes, the epistemologist is, as it were, imprisoned in his model because he cannot begin to see what an alternative could look like.” (Taylor 1984:19). In this particular case, the construction of a genealogical narrative of the origin of cartesian epistemology appears as an attempt to overcome the forgetting of its historical nature and the existence of alternatives to the model: “Instead of just living in them and taking their implicit construal of things as the way things are, we have to understand how they have come to be, how they came to embed a certain view of things. In other words, in order to undo the forgetting, we have to articulate for ourselves how it happened...” (Taylor 1984:21).

German philosopher is disclosed and solved through a detailed description of the system's lineage (Forster 2018).²³

Therefore, it can be argued that a tension exists between the idea of historical philosophy and Neo-Kantianism since the preponderance of the genealogical type of explanation seems to undermine the central Kantian distinction between *quid juris* and *quid facti*, i.e., the contrast between the issues of genesis and those of validity. In formulating his philosophical methodology, Kant put forward a juridical, not a historical metaphor (Møller 2020).

However, a further thesis, popular among Neo-Kantians, affirms the processual unfolding of reason over time, which in turn justifies the need for explaining the meaning of a given category through an exposition of its historical development.²⁴ I must point out in advance that Windelband does not develop a type of genealogical method in his philosophy -he instead speaks of a critical method-²⁵ but the philosophical grounding of his history of philosophy does imply some key elements pertaining to that type of methodological approach, specifically, the concept of evolution or development. Following this line, in chapter 6 I explain that in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* Windelband did not elaborate a history of philosophers or philosophies but a history of philosophical concepts and problems.

Hence, despite the differences in terminology and justificatory arguments, it is fair to say that the leveling of historical determination and philosophical methodology is a distinctive feature of historical philosophy.

²³ These are not exclusive characterizations of genealogy. There is a way of understanding genealogy that does fall in line with our explanation, namely, that it is a narrative that not only offers a process of formation but one that shows that this formation is not guided by rational standards. Robert Brandom has suggested that Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud provide genealogies in this specific sense. He has described them as offering natural histories of the formation of belief as a way to disregard the discussion on the validity of those beliefs (Brandom 2012). For a view against this reading of 'genealogy' as the search for causes instead of reasons, see Vermeir (2013:56).

²⁴ Paradigmatically, the concept of "knowledge." In this sense, Sebastian Luft concludes in his discussion of Cassirer's historiography that "historical consideration itself is a necessary contribution to reconstruction of what knowledge in modern western thinking in general is." (Luft 2015:201). Cassirer's more detailed discussion of knowledge takes the form of a four-volume book on the history of the modern conception of the problem of knowledge in philosophy and science. See section 4 in this chapter, "Historical Philosophy and Neo-Kantianism," for a concise account of the inseparable character of systematical philosophy and the history of philosophy in the work of Neo-Kantian philosophers.

²⁵ I explain in chapter 4 that the critical method is related to history in an intimate manner. In addition, in chapter 3 I explain how Windelband's definition of philosophy is connected with a specific historical narrative.

There are several underlying reasons behind this idea of using historical models in order to characterize philosophical methods. One of them is directly linked to the contrast mentioned above between juridical and historical metaphors. Challenging long centuries of primacy of the natural law theory, historicism claims that there is no general essence of socio-political phenomena, but that every society, nation, or political community is a self-sufficient organism with a unique nature and a unique process of development. In this sense, historical philosophy's emphasis aligns with the primacy of the individual dimension in the Historicist tradition. This feature of historical philosophy is directly linked to the establishment of a specific metaphysical status of the singular, which, of course, is dealt with in different ways by different philosophers. By and large, the enlightened preponderance on universal validity bore the brunt of this change. The assumed universal validity of human nature was undermined by the recognition of the multifaceted character of historical life, and the explanation of this character by reference to a determined, concrete, original context which renders every explanation local. The negation of essentialism and the claim that social institutions cannot be wholly understood outside their peculiar process of development is one of the underlying assumptions behind the adoption of genealogy or archeology as suitable models for the philosophical method and the abandonment of juridical metaphors connected with the Enlightenment viewpoint. Accordingly, inquiry into the meaning of philosophical concepts and problems turns local. These meanings cannot be grasped in isolation from their unique configuration processes.

Moreover, genealogical or archeological projects are not merely formal tools; they connect with the attempt to elucidate the philosophical tradition, either by seeking its continuation as the bearer of a higher conception of truth or its negation in a movement of deconstruction (Taylor 1984: 22). It is precisely in this sense that 'historical philosophy,' despite casting aside certain elements of modern philosophy, has come to be taken as the inheritor of the Kantian critical impulse and also the point in which the historical impetus forces the connection between systematic thinking and the history of philosophy.

This methodological preponderance raises an epistemological problem regarding the relationship between truth and history, which, as I have mentioned *en passant* when

commenting on the quotations from Collingwood's work, is the real crux of historical philosophy. In as much as the traditional theories of knowledge have taken up mathematics, theology, or natural sciences as their epistemic models, the concept of truth to which they gave rise was essentially characterized by its non-historical, eternal nature: what is true is that which does not change over time. A distinctive feature of the attempts at creating a historical philosophy during the preceding two hundred years is the imperative of developing a different conception of truth and the attendant emergence, in philosophy, of historical relativism, either as an alternative to traditional theories or as a danger that must be avoided in order to give a definition of truth which holds some kind of relationship with history.²⁶

As a corollary to these features, a professional profile associated with the concept of historical philosophy was formed. Philosophers, following this model, are highly engaged in historiographical practices, and the effective writing of historical texts has acquired a central place in their philosophical productions.

There is more than one reason for the increasing role of the history of philosophy in the philosophical curricula of nineteenth-century universities, a topic to which I will go back in chapter 6. However, the vital thing to notice is the tension that survives, even in our own contemporary philosophical context, between doing philosophy and doing the history of philosophy. It is a proper characteristic of historical philosophy to drop this distinction, creating the space for the capital question: Which type of history of philosophy is truly philosophical?

To sum up, the label 'historical philosophy' constitutes something that can be considered a 'philosophy of philosophy.' It defines a model of philosophy, its objects, and the methodological way of treating those objects. The project subsumed under this label recognizes that philosophy is rooted in a particular moment and that it carries with itself the past manifestations of thinking: philosophy has to respond for this past. As meta-philosophy, historical philosophy asks the questions of its own possibility, its place in the world of knowledge, and the constitution of its practice. Briefly stated, philosophy inquires into its conditions of possibility either in the traditional sense or in a new, radically innovative one. Thus, the label 'historical philosophy' that I employ has a

²⁶ As it was understood by Windelband.

broad problematic meaning that spans across the nexus of philosophy, the philosophy of history, and the history of philosophy.

My final remark in this section concerns the general concept used to identify a fundamental intellectual movement from this period: Historicism. The characterization provided of 'historical philosophy' could work apparently as a synonym for 'historicism.' For instance, Georg Iggers traces the opposition between enlightenment and historicism by referring to concepts such as event, eternal truth, natural law, essence, and the like:

Historicism liberated modern thought from the two-thousand-year domination of the theory of natural law, and the conception of the universe in terms of "timeless, absolutely valid truths which correspond to the rational order dominant throughout the universe" was replaced with an understanding of the fullness and diversity of man's historical experience. (Iggers 1983:5)

This grounding of thought in historical experience seems to be part of the agenda of historical philosophy. It is also clear, however, that the general presentations of historicism stress the intellectual, not the exclusively philosophical nature of the movement, seeking its key manifestation in the works of the German historians of the nineteenth-century while also scrutinizing its implications for political theory. There is a close relationship since those manifestations are connected to the philosophical theories of the nineteenth century, but I want to keep apart the concepts of historical philosophy and historicism for strategic reasons. Even though I will devote some pages to historicism, my research deals with certain problems that are not necessarily relevant for the discussion of historicism as an intellectual movement.

This separation would be much more difficult if this study were concerned with the philosophy of Dilthey, who was trained by members of the Historical School. But, in Windelband's case, his historical viewpoint comes from a different source: the historian of philosophy Kuno Fischer, and indirectly, Hegel.

In the first place, Windelband pronounces himself against ‘historicism’ on several occasions, considering it the greatest danger for philosophy.²⁷ Due to his philosophical concern with history, Windelband sometimes appears among the authors listed in the literature on historicism,²⁸ but he explicitly denies his ascription to this movement because he believed that historicism was a synonym for historical relativism. In the second place, there are key concepts that are not going to be present in my reconstruction,²⁹ and there are problems that are not dealt with in the literature on historicism; the obvious one being the connection between history and transcendental philosophy. Finally, although Windelband was sardonically defined as a representative of “historical philosophy” by Wilhelm Wundt, probably in an attempt to minimize his stature as a philosopher by reducing him to a mere historian of philosophy (Wundt 1913:5), I think that it is advisable to view this label in a positive light. On at least one opportunity, Windelband opposed the concepts of historical philosophy, as a philosophy methodologically oriented towards history, and historicism, as a variety of relativism (Windelband 1905a:187).³⁰ Calling Windelband a representative of historical philosophy, rather than a representative of historicism, is equivalent to affirming that he was engaged with different problems, those linked to the features listed above. He was not the most radical exponent of historical philosophy, as his theory included, as I will show, elements of a more traditional conception of philosophy. Nonetheless, he transformed the writing of the history of philosophy into a central aspect of his philosophical practice, he advanced a fragmentary theory of the historical worldview centered around the metaphysical concept of event, and he gave a methodological role to history in the construction of a transcendental theory. For these reasons, he is, in my opinion, a paradigmatic figure of transition from a rational to a historical conception of philosophy.

²⁷ Windelband differentiates historical philosophy from historical relativism in Windelband (1905a), Windelband (1909a), and Windelband (1911). The fundamental difference is that historicism only accepts a historically located validity for philosophical knowledge, while Windelband holds on to the idea that there is a superior type of validity, namely, philosophical validity.

²⁸ In fact, most accounts of historicism do mention relevant philosophers; not only Windelband but Rickert, Cohen, Dilthey, who have all denied being historicists. Examples include Beiser (2011), Iggers (1983), and Rossi (Ed.) (1977).

²⁹ Fundamentally, those relating to the historicist theory of the State, although Windelband has brief passages on the subject. See chapter 5, section 4.

³⁰ Windelband also speaks positively of a “historical philosophy” in Windelband (1911:375).

1.3. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

Following the historical spirit, it would be useful to briefly address the appearance of the peculiar phenomenon that the concept of historical philosophy tries to apprehend. This will also serve to establish a concise, preparatory reference to the relationship of historical philosophy with Neo-Kantian philosophy.

The Neo-Kantian movement was not originally defined in relationship to the problems of historical philosophy, but, due to the general development of philosophy in the period, the Neo-Kantians were compelled to incorporate some aspects of this type of philosophizing. Moreover, the very idea of performing a philosophical appropriation of the Kantian Spirit several decades after Immanuel Kant's death prompted a type of meta-philosophical reflection that can be defined as a particular philosophy of history. This reflection led, in the end, to the overcoming of the strict return to Kant in the direction of an equal appropriation of the Hegelian philosophy. My reconstruction in this section is necessarily limited and, for this reason, I focus only on the main lines of interpretation of the relation between philosophy and its history prior to the development of Neo-Kantianism, and touch upon the scholarly discussions only insofar as is strictly necessary for my general purpose.

Although the groundwork for the concept of historical philosophy was laid by the historical interest manifested during the Enlightenment,³¹ when formulated explicitly, the amalgamation of the historical and the philosophical would have seemed paradoxical for the thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only by the end of the eighteenth century, due to reasons I cannot delve into here, the relation became increasingly problematic.³² To mention one paradigmatic example, we may look more closely

³¹ There is a long tradition of rejection of the tradition in modern philosophy. The most prominent thinkers from the XV and XVI centuries rejected the value of the history of philosophy on diverse grounds: the dependence on authority, the attitude of passive reception, the view of history as a showcase of past errors. Against the recourse to tradition, philosophers like Vives, Sanchez, or Descartes elevated what was called natural light to the category of an independent and privileged source of knowledge (Cottingham 2005).

³² Windelband himself attributed the origin of historical philosophy to the inner tendencies of the German idealist movement (Windelband 1905a:175).

at the key figure of the Enlightenment, and, of course, the main reference point for all Neo-Kantians: Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).

Kant had a two-pronged attitude toward the adoption of a historical orientation in philosophy. At first sight, his philosophy appear to be a model of unhistorical thinking. Kant starts his *Prolegomena* by warning those who place undue significance on of the history of philosophy, instead of learning how to reason for themselves:

Es gibt Gelehrte, denen die Geschichte der Philosophie (der alten sowohl als neuen) selbst ihre Philosophie ist, vor diese sind gegenwärtige Prolegomena nicht geschrieben. Sie müssen warten, bis diejenigen, die aus den Quellen der Vernunft selbst zu schöpfen bemühet sind. (Kant 1783 [AA. IV:255])

For John Passmore, this oft-quoted passage synthesizes three characteristic aspects of the negation of the history of philosophy as a philosophical discipline: the historiography of philosophy is not a creative task; it discourages creative thinking; finally, philosophy should proceed through a break with tradition (Passmore 1965:31). This passage from *Prolegomena* is not the only expression that supports this line of thought. In the preface to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant firmly states: “Ich verstehe [for a critique of reason] hierunter nicht eine Kritik der Bücher und Systeme, sondern die des Vernunftvermögens überhaupt” (Kant KrV AXII). Based on this passage, one may be led think that the thorough consideration of past expressions of human thinking, both of books and systems, is but incidental and that critical discourse operates with a high degree of independence from them.

The preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* seems to stress even more strongly a disdain for the history of philosophy, since history is described there as a collection of long-standing errors. Thus, the constant shifts depicted in its history are signs that philosophy has not yet tread the secure path of science. The transformation of metaphysics into a science and the rejection of its previous dogmatic pretensions represent the overcoming of the historical character of philosophy. Casting aside these errors, Kant’s philosophy would imply a complete break with tradition, following what is truly a leitmotif of modern philosophy (Ayers 1985:30). Such expressions on Kant’s part can be seen as the official posture regarding the history of philosophy. But there are also hints that suggest a different interpretation of the matter.

In the first place, Kant's teaching activities have been taken as the key expression of Kant's engagement with the history of philosophy.³³ Kant's lectures on *Philosophical Encyclopedia* dealt directly with the topic of the history of philosophy. Moreover, his lectures on logic and metaphysics contain brief sketches of the history of philosophy (or the history of logic), as was customary in university courses at the time (Micheli 2015:704).

Second, Kant's main work, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, ends with a chapter entitled "Die Geschichte der reinen Vernunft,"³⁴ in which Kant offers the schematics for an unwritten history of philosophy in line with the principles of his theoretical philosophy. Kant starts this chapter concerning the history of reason with the following characterization:

Dieser Titel steht hier, um Eine Stelle zu bezeichnen, die im System übrig bleibt, und künftig ausgefüllt werden muss. Ich begnüge mich, aus einem bloss transzendentalen Gesichtspunkte, nämlich der Natur der reinen Vernunft, einen flüchtigen Blick auf das Ganze der bisherigen Bearbeitungen derselben zu werfen, welches freilich meinem Auge zwar Gebäude, aber nur im Ruinen vorstellt. (Kant KrV A852/B880)

The history of pure reason is a part of the system, and, precisely because of this, we have to assume that it plays a role in the theory and that it stands in a determinate relationship with the other parts of the system of philosophy as well. As Micheli rightly puts it, "Kant declared the system of transcendental philosophy to be incomplete for the lack of an explicit, systematic, non-empirical treatment of the work carried out by reason in the course of history" (Micheli 2015:698).³⁵ If this is the case, it must be considered an element that plays a role in the formulation of the Copernican Revolution.

³³ Micheli (1980) offers thorough reconstructions of Kant's involvement in historiographical practices and shows, by means of textual analyses, that Kant was familiar with historical works such as Gentzken's *Historia philosophiae* (from 1724) and Brucker's *Historia critica philosophiae* (1742-1744), among others. Concerning this topic, the earliest record of Kant's historical studies mentioned by Micheli is an outline of Gentzken's *History of Philosophy* (now classified as *Reflexion zur Logik 1635*) dating from the mid-1750s, which probably served as material for Kant's first courses at Königsberg.

³⁴ For a commentary on the chapter, see Klein (2012); Micheli (2015); and Reichl (2020).

³⁵ The tension that Micheli finds regarding this last chapter is that according to Kant's standards for the first critique, the book should be judged by its completeness, but the incorporation of this unfinished history calls into question the fulfillment of the whole project.

Kant's history of pure reason is a narrative of the achievements or developments of philosophical knowledge. But, in contrast with the standard historical narrative, it is said to be pure. This does not imply that the elements and the relations that form in the narration can be determined *a priori*. A distinctive Kantian point of view on this matter is that the narration of the history of philosophy cannot be constructed solely on a rational basis. What *a priori* means in this context is that it is possible to determine without reference to experience the fundamental structure of the story being told. Thus, we have an opposition between a scientific history of philosophy and a mere aggregate of stories regarding past thinking. In this way, it is possible to describe the final chapter of the *Critique* as an attempt to direct the history of philosophy along the secure path of science. All in all, what the inclusion of this chapter reveals, is not only the Kantian engagement with the history of philosophy but also that the philosopher from Königsberg had original ideas regarding the discipline.

In the third place, while working on his posthumously published book on the progress of metaphysics, Kant left several manuscript reflections on the topic. Following a line of arguments for transcendental idealism that resembles the strategy developed in the first critique, namely, to show that certain representations function as the conditions of possibility of experience, Kant presents an entirely new strategy based on characterizing the history of metaphysics as an articulation of three different stages, of which his critical philosophy was the third and final step.³⁶ It is precisely in the context of this unfinished book project that Kant explained his model of the history of philosophy by way of the methodological metaphor of archeology.³⁷

Finally, despite Kant's public condemnation of those concerned with the history of philosophy, his philosophical system set up the condition of possibility for the deve-

³⁶ The three stages being the dogmatical, the skeptical, and the critical.

³⁷ In the so called *Loses Blatt* F 3: "Eine philosophische Geschichte der Philosophie ist selbst nicht historisch oder empirisch, sondern rational, d.i. a priori möglich. Denn ob sie gleich Fakta der Vernunft aufstellt, so entlehnt sie solche nicht von der Geschichtserzählung, sondern sie zieht sie aus der Natur der menschlichen Vernunft als philosophische Archäologie" (Kant 1895:278).

lopment of a new type of history of philosophy, theorized first by Gustav Fülleborn³⁸ and executed later by Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann and others (Geldsetzer 1968:20; 35). These authors went on to argue that it was only after Kant's systematic definition of critical philosophy that it was possible to find a true guiding thread for their historical narratives. Kant's philosophy allowed these historians to arrange different philosophical systems according to Kant's exposition of the general structure of reason and its faculties. The idea for this grounding had been previously stated by Kant in the *Architectonic of Pure Reason* in oblique terms, since in this section Kant was not speaking about the history of philosophy. In this chapter, the philosopher from Königsberg describes the concrete process of grounding a science:

Niemand versucht es, eine Wissenschaft zu Stande zu bringen, ohne dass ihm eine Idee zum Grunde liege ... Es ist schlimm, dass nur allererst, nachdem wir lange Zeit, nach Anweisung einer in uns versteckt liegenden Idee, rhapsodisch viele dahin sich beziehende Erkenntnisse, als Bauzeug, gesammelt, hat gar lange Zeiten hindurch sie technisch Zusammengesetzt habe, es uns denn allererst möglich ist, die Idee in hellerem Lichte zu erblicken, und ein Ganzes nach den Zwecken der Vernunft architektonische zu entwerfen. (Kant KrV A835/B863)

The idea of these Kantian historians of philosophy was that before the Kantian critique there existed no clear idea of philosophy, and, for this reason, the previous histories of philosophy were only the record of a rhapsodic gathering of thoughts. Armed with the Kantian clarification of the original source behind the multiplicity of philosophies, the Kantian historian could now provide, for the first time, a scientific organization of the history of philosophy.

To sum up, against the standard view regarding Kant's philosophy, the history of philosophy did in fact materialize in his system and his practice as a university professor. It is worth quoting Tom Rockmore, who considers that "Kant stands at the divide between two main currents in modern philosophy" (Rockmore 2003:482). The first of these conceptions remains tied to the Parmenidean tradition that conceives reason as

³⁸ In his *Beyträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie*, a collection of twelve fascicles appeared between 1791 and 1799, containing essays not only by Fülleborn but also from Carl Leonard Reinhold, Friedrich August Carus, and Christian Garve among others. Particularly relevant in relation to the Kantian method of the history of philosophy is the article "Was heisst, den Geist einer Philosophie darstellen?" published in 1795.

being eternal, while the emerging tradition of modernity defends a new, historically-oriented conception.³⁹ At the time of Windelband's death, Heinrich Rickert placed Windelband in exactly the same position, that is, as straddling the divide between Parmenidean stability and Heraclitean flux (Rickert 1915:3).

The historical aspect of Kant's thinking, however, remained mostly hidden until the end of the nineteenth century, when key manuscripts were published, and the ground for a new understanding of his work was laid. For this reason, it is fair to say that, despite its roots in the eighteenth century, the concept of 'historical philosophy' belongs to nineteenth-century philosophy. The problem of the relationship between philosophy and its history coincides with the formation period of German Idealism (1790-1800) and the two are not alien to each other.

The most important figure in the development of historical philosophy is Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831). This claim is grounded on two intertwined aspects of his philosophy: on the one hand, the systematic role assigned to the history of philosophy and, on the other, Hegel's dynamic understanding of reason.

In Hegel's philosophy, we find a developmental or 'evolutionary' account of reason's self-unfolding, an account that operates as a methodological framework for the elaboration of the history of philosophy. Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* present in a concrete manner the narrative of the temporal presentation of philosophy's necessary principles.⁴⁰ With Hegel, the relationship between philosophy and its history is not only highlighted but developed into a necessary relationship. Windelband himself confirms the relevance of Hegel not only for a general model of philosophy but for his approach to the history of philosophy: "Damit war -was zu allen Zeiten und von allen Seiten anerkannt werden muss und auch wohl anerkannt wird- zum erstmal prinzipiell

³⁹ Rockmore goes on to articulate these two conceptions as an opposition represented by Kant and Hegel: "All later efforts to rethink reason as historical occurs in the conceptual space delimited by the two great modern philosophical giants, Kant and Hegel" (Rockmore 2003:485).

⁴⁰ Regarding the influence of this book, see Heit (2015).

die Geschichte der Philosophie selbst zu einer Wissenschaft erhoben ... Das bleibt Hegel Verdienst auf alle Fälle” (Windelband 1905a:176-177).⁴¹

In contrast with the works of Kant, there is no doubt that Hegel was concerned with the history of philosophy. As was the case with Kant, Hegel is highly critical of contemporary works on the history of philosophy and their relationship with philosophical thinking, but instead of dismissing the value of the history of philosophy, Hegel sought to reshape the discipline. The fundamental difference in Hegel’s thinking, which explains the general relevance of the history of philosophy, is that he does not consider the past to be a dead anachronism but an operative force shaping our philosophical epoch (Hoffmann 2015:383). Besides, Kant claimed that the only available path for philosophy involved a break with philosophical tradition since past philosophers were not able to steer metaphysics onto the secure path of science. Hegel displays a cumulative view; a new philosophy is not meant to cut loose its ties with the past but to appropriate the past in the form of a tradition:

Dies ist ebenso unsere und jedes Zeitalters Stellung und Tätigkeit, die Wissenschaft, welche *vorhanden* ist, zu *fassen* und sich ihr anzubilden, und ebendann sie weiterzubilden und auf einen höheren Standpunkt zu erheben. Indem wir sie *uns* zu *eigen* machen, machen wir aus ihr etwas *Eigenes* gegen das, was sie vorher war. (Hegel 1986:22)

This passage applies directly to philosophy, which is defined as a reshaping of what is transmitted in the history of thinking. For this reason, Hegel affirms that the history of philosophy is the best introduction to philosophical thinking or that the history of philosophy is not external but an internal dimension of philosophical science. These are Hegelian legacies that serve as a starting point for nineteenth-century philosophers.⁴² Despite all the differences between Hegel and the later thought of Win-

⁴¹ In the same essay Windelband also praises Hegel’s understanding of the relationship between philosophy and the other dimensions of culture: “Es ist Hegels Verdienst, dies, was die Philosophie von jeher getan hat, mit vollem Bewusstsein verstanden zu haben. Seitdem wird uns jede Geschichte der Philosophie unzulänglich erscheinen, die nicht diesen intimen Lebenszusammenhang der Systeme mit den Kulturinteressen ihrer Zeit aufzudecken verstünde” (Windelband 1905a:186). This second remark points toward the importance of the social context for the writing of the history of philosophy.

⁴² “In der Tat aber, was *wir* sind, sind wir zugleich geschichtlich, oder genauer: wie in dem, was in dieser Region, der Geschichte des Denkens [sich findet,] das Vergangene nur die *eine* Seite ist, so ist in dem, was wir sind, das gemeinschaftliche Unvergängliche unzertrennt mit dem, daß wir geschichtlich sind, verknüpft” (Hegel 1986:21).

delband, this idea regarding the appropriate nature of philosophical thinking and the value of tradition was never questioned by the Neo-Kantian author.

Throughout his teaching career, Hegel devoted several courses to the history of philosophy, one of the pillars of his university activities⁴³. Hegel's systematical works also contain arguments for the necessity of the discipline, namely, for its inclusion as a part of the system of philosophy. It is essential, then, to pause and consider the peculiar position of Hegel regarding the relationship between philosophy and the history of philosophy. In view of our purposes, I will refer mainly to Hegel's *Introduction* to his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.

The first pages of this *Introduction* present the fundamental idea regarding the value of the history of philosophy, but do so in a rhetorical manner. As mentioned, the history, and the activity of the present, is the progressive appropriation and transformation of the spiritual legacy.

In his *Introduction*, Hegel immediately tackles the fundamental problematics of a scientific history of philosophy. These are two.⁴⁴ In the first place, the tension between the temporal nature of any historical investigation and the alleged eternity of pure thinking. As Hegel lucidly explains:

Der Gedanke, der uns bei einer Geschichte der Philosophie zunächst entgegenkommen kann, ist, daß sogleich dieser Gegenstand selbst einen inneren Widerstreit enthalte. Denn die Philosophie beabsichtigt das zu erkennen, was unvergänglich, ewig, an und für sich ist; ihr Ziel ist die *Wahrheit*. Die Geschichte aber erzählt solches, was zu einer Zeit gewesen, zu einer anderen aber verschwunden und durch anderes verdrängt worden ist. Gehen wir davon aus, daß die "Wahrheit ewig ist, so fällt sie nicht in die Sphäre des Vorübergehenden und hat keine Geschichte. Wenn sie aber eine Geschichte hat, und indem die Geschichte dies ist, uns nur eine Reihe vergangener Gestalten der Erkenntnis darzustellen, so ist in ihr die "Wahrheit nicht zu finden; denn die Wahrheit ist nicht ein Vergangenes. (Hegel 1986:24)

⁴³ 1805 is the date referred by Rosenkranz for the first series of lectures, which also includes, apart from the first course in Jena, courses from 1816 to 1818 in Heidelberg, and two different periods in Berlin: 1820-1821 and 1823-1831.

⁴⁴ Hegel also mentions as an introductory discussion to the treatment of the history of philosophy the task of differentiating between the history of philosophy and the history of other manifestations of human thinking, such as religion or politics, and the task of providing the previous and necessary definition of philosophy in order to gain access to the history of philosophy. Although I focus on the other two questions, these other tasks are also addressed by Windelband in his writings on the relationship between the history of philosophy and philosophy.

The second problem is the relationship between the peculiar nature of scientific philosophy and the multiple and opposing historical attempts at philosophizing. In this sense, the history of philosophy was presented by Hegel's predecessors as a mere set of opinions, or worse, as a museum of philosophy's past errors. Associated with this conception of history is the typically modern attempt to overcome or end the history of philosophy by way of a definite and final system. Moreover, the solution to these contradictions cannot be solved by classical arguments, like the overcoming of traditional philosophy through a new doctrine since Hegel has already stated that the history of philosophy has an internal relationship with philosophy.

Hegel argues that the dilemma between the errors of philosophies and the elusiveness of Philosophy is misgiven or rather an abstract opposition between truth and error. For Hegel, the multiplicity of philosophies is a condition of scientific philosophy, and, therefore, the key point in his view is the acceptance of the multiplicity of philosophical doctrines as a necessary aspect of philosophical thinking.

The conception of the dynamic of reason is explained in the *Introduction* using the twin concepts of "development" and "concreteness" (Hoffmann 2015:383). It is essential to have these concepts in mind when analyzing Windelband's conception of the history of philosophy; for this reason, I will try to offer here a sufficient explanation of them.

The concept of development is grounded in the Greek distinction between δύναμις and ἐνέργεια, or through Hegel's reinterpretation, in the difference between what is "in itself" and what is "for itself." Hegel states that human beings are rational in themselves, but this does not mean that newborn infants are rational for themselves, since they are not yet capable of realizing rational acts; on the contrary, human beings are only fully rational when they start actualizing their inner potential. In this peculiar case, when they recognize their inner tendency towards rational thinking. But thinking, knowing, or learning are activities that represent this transition and, therefore, the evolution of humans from the possibility of rationality towards its actuality. This process of recognition is an essential and unique manifestation of evolution. Hegel says: "Was ihm Gegenstand ist dasselbe, was er an sich ist; und so wird der Mensch erst für sich selbst,

ist verdoppelt, ist erhalten, nicht ein Anderer geworden” (Hegel 1986:39). For the spiritual life, the process of self-knowing is also a process of self-formation. As we will see, this particular aspect of Hegel’s doctrine will resurface in both Kuno Fischer’s and Wilhelm Windelband’s justification of the necessary character of the history of philosophy.⁴⁵ The history of philosophy reveals both the temporal process of self-knowledge and the self-formation of human thinking, and is also a required step in this same process.

The second category that Hegel employs in his interpretation of the history of philosophy is that of ‘concreteness.’ Concreteness, in this case, is presented as the union between possibility and actuality through the evolution from one to the other. In an extremely condensed passage, Hegel affirms:

Da das An-sich schon in sich selber konkret ist und wir nur das setzen, was an sich vorhanden, so kommt nur die neue Form hinzu, daß jetzt als unterschieden erscheint, was vorher im ursprünglich Einen eingeschlossen war. Das Konkrete soll für sich werden. Es ist in sich unterschieden, - als An-sich, Möglichkeit ist es noch nicht als unterschieden gesetzt, noch in der Einheit (diese widerspricht der Unterschiedenheit); es ist einfach und doch unterschieden. Dieser innere Widerspruch des Konkreten ist selbst das Treibende zur Entwicklung. So kommt es zur Existenz der Unterschiede. (Hegel 1986: 43-44)

Philosophy is the knowledge of the evolution from the possibility of rational thinking to its actualization. This evolution is presented not as a cumulative process or as a causal line in which a stage gives rise to a different state but as a process of deepening into what rational life truly is. It is in this sense that Hegel speaks about the development of philosophy as the transformation of reason from its more general form toward concretion, the union between its possibility and reality through the movement of its evolution. Hence, the history of philosophy is the history of the progressive attempt to know this movement. Of course, this is just an imperfect schema of Hegel’s arguments, but it presents his main line of reasoning.

One final remark regarding Hegel’s conception of the history of philosophy and what has been called the parallelism thesis between logic and history is in order. I mention this thesis not only due to its relevance in the context of Hegel’s interpretation of

⁴⁵ Chapter 6, section 2.

the history of philosophy but also because it developed into Windelband's target of criticism.⁴⁶ Although, as we will see, Windelband shares some features of Hegel's conceptual framework, he explicitly rejects this aspect of the theory as an untenable metaphysical excess. Hegel's parallelism thesis is condensed in the following statement:

Nach dieser Idee behauptete ich nun, daß die Aufeinanderfolge der Systeme der Philosophie in der Geschichte dieselbe ist als die Aufeinanderfolge in der logischen Ableitung der Begriffsbestimmungen der Idee. Ich behauptete, daß, wenn man die Grundbegriffe der in der Geschichte der Philosophie erschienenen Systeme rein dessen entkleidet, was ihre äußerliche Gestaltung, ihre Anwendung auf das Besondere und dergleichen betrifft, so erhält man die verschiedenen Stufen der Bestimmung der Idee selbst in ihrem logischen Begriffe. (Hegel 1986:49)

By no means is this an easy passage to comment. Windelband himself seems to balk at the amount of philosophical grounding required by this structural parallelism between the series of philosophical systems depicted in the history of philosophy and the series of categories presented in Hegel's logic. It is worth noticing that the usual criticism leveled against this thesis is that it supports an artificial construction of the history of philosophy, that is, a narrative entirely constructed on a priori basis. This is indeed Windelband's criticism. The first problem is that Hegel does not affirm a unilateral direction of grounding from logic to history, but claims that there is an identical path from history to logic.⁴⁷ Besides, Hegel does not claim that a philosophical system can be explained solely in terms of logical determinations of the idea but only with regard to its internal principle. What Hegel is saying is that this principle has to have a definite place among the series of logical determinations of the idea, but this is merely the ne-

⁴⁶ See chapter 6, section 2.

⁴⁷ There is even one commentator that affirms the "priority" of the historical over the logical path: "When he [Hegel] claims a close parallel between the development of philosophy in history, and of the logical Idea, it is vital that we understand that Hegel wrote his Logic after a study of the history of philosophy rather than writing that history within the already-formed conceptual framework of the Logic. This biographical fact expresses an essential determination of Hegel's philosophy. He insists, against his predecessors, that logic is a product of human history. And, as an idealist, he views this history as essentially the progressive development of spirit" (Westoby 1978:74). Offering a different interpretation, Angelica Nuzzo also provides an interpretive key that contends the later nineteenth-century reading of this thesis: "My suggestion is that Hegel's aim in the formulation of the principle is not to provide a method for the history of philosophy that extrinsically parallels the one theorized in the last chapter of the Logic. The necessity of the "parallel" between the two systematic disciplines arises rather on the ground of their sharing a common feature. Both the Logic and the history of philosophy are, at the same time, parts of the system of philosophy, and the totality of it." (Nuzzo 2003:27). In any case, a thorough discussion of this issue is beyond my present task. What matters in the present context is to be aware of this thesis's importance for historians of nineteenth-century philosophy.

cessary prerequisite for the scientificity of the history of philosophy. Finally, Hegel admits that there is an aspect in which the historical and the logical succession differs, although he does not explain this difference (Hegel 1986:49). In any case, Hegel's parallelism thesis makes explicit a presupposition of the historiography of philosophy already present in Kantian historiographers. What makes the history of philosophy something other than a mere sum of opinions is the possibility to arrange the variety of philosophical systems according to a necessary principle of order that does not belong to history but to philosophy. This presupposition is what guarantees the rationality of the history of philosophy.

The third nineteenth-century thinker to discuss the philosophical meaning of the history of philosophy was Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834). Even though Schleiermacher is not regarded as being equally important as other representatives of German Philosophy, his theories are particularly relevant for the treatment of the historiography of philosophy (Scholtz 1984:2).

Any reference to Schleiermacher's writings has to acknowledge the intrinsic difficulty of summarizing his thoughts in a condensed manner like I have done here with Kant and Hegel. Indeed, his writings are grouped together in specialized critiques in several phases and cover a wide range of topics, both systematical (religion, ethics, logic) and historical (especially those topics related to ancient philosophy, including his translations of Plato).

As far as reflections on the history of philosophy, a central source of analysis is Schleiermacher's lectures on the History of Philosophy from 1812, edited by Heinrich Ritter in 1839.

As Ritter himself acknowledges in the preface to his edition, the value of the work lies in the general principles that Schleiermacher set for the development of the discipline (Schleiermacher 1839:9). The point to stress is the empirical character of his works, the treatment of sources. The merit of Schleiermacher's take on the discipline is the promotion of an entirely historical treatment of the discipline, which avoided the dangers of historical relativism (Scholtz 1984:90).

At the beginning of his lectures Schleiermacher expresses an idea already present in Hegel's *Lectures*, that is, the mutual reference between the history of philosophy and

the philosophical sciences: “Einigung über das Geschäft ist schwierig. Denn wer die Geschichte der Philosophie vorträgt, muss die Philosophie besitzen, um die einzelnen Facta, welche ihr angehören, aussondern zu können, und wer die Philosophie besitzen will, muss sie historisch verstehen” (Schleiermacher 1839:15). It is also possible to characterize the interrelated poles of philosophy and history by way of their differing cognitive relationships to totality. Schleiermacher characterizes historical knowledge as a real knowledge that seeks to determine the particular by reference to its place in totality. Philosophical knowledge on the contrary attempts to understand the particular through its identity with totality (Schleiermacher 1839:16). Schleiermacher therefore presents different ways of knowing reality; these paths crisscross the road between the individual and totality. In this complementarity lies the specificity of Schleiermacher’s understanding of the history of philosophy, in the sense that Kant’s univocal conception of the history of philosophy is denied and replaced by his argument in favor of the historical, that is, empirical, pretensions of the history of philosophy.⁴⁸

The interrelation between the two paths, from the history of philosophy to philosophy and vice versa, is shown in Schleiermacher’s predilection for the study of ancient philosophy. Ancient philosophy stands in front of us as a totality, not an abstract totality, but an “ein lebendiges in sich Eines” (Schleiermacher 1839:16). As such, a totality is assumed as the starting point of historical research. Although the historical starting point is a multiplicity, the period in itself is assumed as a totality, even though this totality is not something completely determined. Thus, the process of historical reconstruction starts from the separate poles of the abstract totality assumed and the plurality of materials before the historian: the philosophical and the historical standpoints with which Schleiermacher opened his “Introduction” to the lectures. The historian has to let as-yet-undetermined whole emerge from the historical materials. As Schleiermacher says: “Man muss zuerst ein allgemeines Bild sich gestalten lassen” (Schleiermacher 1839:17). Thus, totality is not an aggregate of individual items nor a completely and systematically determined system that is geared toward historiographical research. But

⁴⁸ Schleiermacher explicitly criticizes the “pragmatic” or logical interpretation of the history of philosophy (Schleiermacher 1839:16). See, chapter 6, Section 3.

the two poles, individuality and totality, are progressively determined and understood through one another.

This topic is restated in the second “Introduction” to the lectures, concerning the exposition of modern philosophy, where Schleiermacher goes on to say “Also Erklärung der Philosophie. Ohne eine solche scheint keine Geschichte möglich auf der einen Seite, auf der andern scheint Erklärung nur durch vollendete Erkenntnis möglich” (Schleiermacher 1839:146). Here, Schleiermacher clarifies that the answer to what philosophy truly is can only be given by the concrete process of the determination of philosophy, that is, through the relatedness of the particular instantiations of philosophical thinking with the larger whole. Thus, it is a result of the elaboration of a history of philosophy.

The reference to these three philosophers shows how the concept of the history of philosophy, although unclear and unstable, gained prominence in the philosophical discussion at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As I will go on to show, the problems only hinted here through my references to Kant’s, Hegel’s, and Schleiermacher’s conceptions of the history of philosophy will be taken up by Windelband in the elaboration of his conception of the history of philosophy and its relationship with philosophical thinking.

1.4. HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY AND NEO-KANTIANISM

The five decades spanning the emergence of the first versions of post-Kantian historical philosophy and the mature phase of Neo-Kantianism were marked by heated philosophical debates. Although I discuss the general features of the Neo-Kantian movement and its relation to the problem of historical philosophy in the next chapter, I mention here some traditional perspectives regarding the role of historical consciousness or the philosophy of history in Neo-Kantian philosophy. It is useful to signal the main sources of the prejudice against the study of Neo-Kantianism. It is noticeable that many, probably the most important, critical remarks against Neo-Kantian philosophy are related in one way or another with the understanding of the idea of history.

The most relevant criticism leveled against Neo-Kantianism, and specifically against the Baden School, came from Rickert's former student, Martin Heidegger, who essentially understood the philosophy of Windelband and Rickert as a trivialization of Wilhelm Dilthey's critique of historical reason:

Die Anstöße der Marburger Schule und die Diltheys haben dann Windelband und Rickert aufgenommen, verflacht und trivialisiert, die Probleme zur Unkenntlichkeit umgebogen, d. h. die Fragestellung im Sinne einer wissenschaftstheoretischen Klärung dieser Schule wird zu einer leeren Methodologie. Es wird nicht mehr gefragt nach der Struktur der Erkenntnis selbst, der Struktur der Forschung, des Zugangs zu den jeweiligen Wirklichkeiten, noch weniger nach der Struktur dieser Wirklichkeiten selbst; Thema ist lediglich noch die Frage nach der logischen Struktur der wissenschaftlichen Darstellung. (Heidegger GA 20:20)

I tackle this comparison between Windelband and Dilthey later in my dissertation, but what Heidegger suggests here is that the Southwestern Neo-Kantians understood the philosophical grounding of historical science as a problem of logic or the methodology of the sciences. If this were the case, then indeed it could be said that their thinking showed less philosophical acuity than that of Dilthey. Gadamer explains this with great synthetical power when he says that the human sciences do not only represent a problem for philosophy but, on the contrary, a problem of philosophy (Gadamer 1963:45). The idea behind this nuance is the recognition that the grounding of historical sciences also implies a grounding of philosophy, something fully explicated in the previous section.

This interpretation is present not only in the works of proponents of a hermeneutical critique of Neo-Kantianism but even comes up later in the work of some Neo-Kantian scholars. For example, Alan Kim's thesis about the Neo-Kantian ideas of history can be subsumed under the general heading of the received view of Southwest Neo-Kantianism (Kim 2015).

Kim's paper has the value of recognizing the centrality of the concept of history for the two Schools of Neo-Kantianism [Marburg and Baden]. Previously, there was a strong tendency to ascribe interest in the mathematical sciences and physics to the representatives of the Marburg School and interest in history to the members of the Southwest Schools. This is, for example, the opinion on the subject held by such an authoritative figure as Ernst Cassirer:

... in the development of neo-Kantianism the theory [of knowledge] of Cohen and Natorp is sharply opposed to that of Windelband and Rickert: a dissimilarity that flows of necessity from their general orientation, determined in the one case by mathematical physics, in the other by history. (Cassirer 1950:11)⁴⁹

However, Kim makes a strong argument in favor of the thesis that the problems associated with history, and historical knowledge, are related to the philosophical projects of both schools (Kim 2015:39).⁵⁰ Regarding the idea of history held by the Southwest Neo-Kantians, the article states that the main philosophical interest of their members, specifically Windelband and Rickert, in relation to the problems involved in the modern idea of history was to establish a grounding logic for the historical sciences:

The Southwest School sees these unresolved questions regarding an important and undeniable real epistemic activity -historiography- as indicative of a theoretical crisis that the sciences themselves lack the resources or perspective to resolve. Only philosophical critique can hope to elucidate the so-called logic of the historical or cultural sciences, and this clearly defined both the respective subject matter and methodology of the Natur- and Geisteswissenschaften. (Kim 2015:39)

In a very similar way, J. Heis -author of the recent entry on Neo-Kantianism in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*- traces a comparison between the two schools of Neo-Kantianism:

In particular, Marburg Neo-Kantians believed that some of the categories and principles that Kant identified were relative to the scientific theories of Kant's day, and that the categories and principles could change as scientists develop new empirical theories. Southwest Neo-Kantians, on the other hand, were keen to argue that history is just as much a science as mathematical physics, and they thought that Kant's critical project had to be extended in order to identify the a priori elements in history. (Heis 2018)

⁴⁹ This ascription may be contentious; for example, it underscores Cohen's position as it is presented in the preface of his *Ethik des reinen Willens*, a work that claims to be devoted to the foundations of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. This criterion for demarcation is also found in the secondary literature, for example, Dufour (2003:13). Moreover, this separation is no longer present in contemporary accounts of Neo-Kantianism. For instance: "Es ist ein Missverständnis, wenn man, nach einer üblichen Gliederung der Neukantischen Schulen, der Südwestdeutschen die Kultur reserviert, während die Marburg Schule auf eine Theorie der mathematischen Naturwissenschaften und auf die sogenannten Logizismus festgelegt wird" (Orth 1994:16).

⁵⁰ There is a sense, however, in which his presentation follows that of Cassirer, namely when Kim argues that for the Marburg Neo-Kantians, history as such is not a science.

Windelband's and Rickert's theories could pass for a chapter missing from Kant's *Prolegomena* concerning the question: "How is History possible as a Science?"⁵¹ Moreover, there are passages where Windelband supports this type of reading, but as I will show, these passages hold a different meaning.⁵² This interpretation takes the shape, going back to Kim's strategy, of a polemic statement. It is used to establish a clear-cut distinction between the ideas of history of the Marburg and Southwest Schools. He subsequently says that the philosophies of the members of the School of Marburg held a more nuanced and sophisticated vision of the relation between history and philosophy than their Neo-Kantian rivals. Therefore, he writes:

History enters the Marburg's work not as a faktum of intellectual or academic reality, but rather as an intrinsic part of analyzing and bringing to reflective clarity the act of thinking, for this activity unfolds over time. (Kim 2015:40)

Drawing on this difference, the author compares the Marburg School favorably to its rival. Although Kim does not endorse a criticism often leveled against the Southwest Neo-Kantians, to wit, that they trivialize the problems that history raised in relation to philosophy during the nineteenth-century,⁵³ from this hermeneutical perspective, this conclusion is difficult to avoid. In a nutshell, what Windelband and Rickert attempted to do, from the point of view of this criticism, was to pour new wine into old wineskins. They reduced the topic of historical thinking to epistemology and methodology, disre-

⁵¹ An excellent way to show the incompleteness of this reading is to consider that this formulation of the School's aim is already present in the obituary Bruno Bauch wrote upon Windelband's death (Bauch 1915:XII). However, in contrast with the secondary literature quoted, Bauch considers that the extension of philosophy in the direction of the philosophy of history is not aimed at methodological formulations but represents a turn toward practical philosophy.

⁵² An example is the following passage: "Das ist die wissenschaftliche Originalität dieses Zeitalters; die Geschichte ist eine Wissenschaft geworden und damit hat die heutige Logik und Erkenntnistheorie als mit dem neuen Problem zu rechnen, das ihr durch den tatsächlichen Befund des wirklichen Wissens und Forschens unserer Zeit gestellt wird" (Windelband AUF 1905b:106). The problem with this quotation is that soon after this passage Windelband distinguishes between a methodological trend in the logic of history and a path that belongs to the theory of knowledge and involves the analysis of the objective presuppositions or ultimate premises of historical knowledge (Windelband AUF 1905b:107). I will go back to Windelband's theory of historical knowledge in chapter 5.

⁵³ Charles Bambach characterizes the general insight of the Neo-Kantians of the South-West School as a "narrowly epistemological focus" on history (Bambach 1995:5). Moreover, the epistemological approach shows itself as the source of Neo-Kantianism's limitations: "Both he [Windelband] and Rickert ultimately contrived to alienate historical existence from its own vital origins through an almost blind concentration on the formal-logical definition of historical method... the Baden Neo-Kantians managed to rob history of its vital, experiential core, leaving only the desiccated husk of an abstract theory of method [for historiography]" (Bambach 1995:58)

garding the pressing objections that this type of thinking raised against the prevalence of the natural sciences inherited from positivism. In contrast, the position ascribed to the Marburg thinkers, particularly to Natorp, implies the assumption presented to itself by reason via a temporal unfolding: “Erkenntnis ist nicht Stillstand, sondern ewiger Fortgang” (Natorp 1912)⁵⁴. The historical process is, so to speak, the testimony of the continuous efforts of reason to free itself from obstacles and contradictions on its path towards its primary goals, the knowledge of the world and of itself. This brings the Marburg Neo-Kantian theories closer to a full recognition of the historicity of philosophical thinking.

It is indeed possible to argue that Marburg Neo-Kantianism represents a philosophical tradition that places a decisive emphasis on the importance of the history of philosophy. The whole direction of this philosophical school could also be described as a ‘historical philosophy.’ For instance, Cohen describes his *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung* as a combination of both a historical and a systematical approach to the study of Kantianism.⁵⁵ The same goes for the complementary nature between Marburg’s philosophy of science and the study of the concrete history of scientific disciplines. As will be explained in the fourth chapter concerning the methodology of philosophy, Neo-Kantian philosophers understood philosophy as a critical or reflexive task, that is, as the search for the conditions of a given product of intellectual life. Understood as the result and expression of rational creative capacities, this product operates as the starting point of any attempt to search for the rational principles behind its production. Massimo Ferrari makes this point with crystal clarity:

But if the ‘fact’ of science is ‘its nature a historically developing fact’, then philosophical reflection about the forms of knowledge that underlie this ‘fact’ and make it possible must be characterized by a fundamental dynamism—a dyna-

⁵⁴ A synthetic characterization is given by M. Friedman: “In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism -founded by Hermann Cohen and developed by Paul Natorp and Ernst Cassirer- articulated an historicized version of Kantianism which aimed at adapting critical philosophy to the deep revolutionary changes affecting mathematics and the mathematical sciences throughout this period” (Friedman 2010:178).

⁵⁵ “Mir aber lag es an, den historischen Kant wieder darzustellen, ihn in seiner eigenen Gestalt, so weit sie mir fassbar wurde, seinen Widersachern gegenüber zu behaupten ... Ich sah, wie systematischer Gegensatz und historischer Irrthum wechselweise einander bedingt. Auf diesem methodischen Wege, durch die Verbindung der systematischen und der historischen Aufgabe, habe ich mich von dem Zweifel an der Richtigkeit meines Unternehmens endlich befreit” (Cohen 1885:VI).

mism which is intrinsic to the formation of the transcendental method and also enables its extension to all areas of cultural objective forms. (Ferrari 2015:13)

Without contesting this type of interpretation of the Marburg Neo-Kantian school, I contend the interpretation of Windelband's handling of the relationship between history and philosophy offered in Kim's paper. Thus, in combination with the thesis about the historical concern of Marburg Neo-Kantianism, this investigation serves the purpose of showing that this concern is a common feature of the leading representatives of the Neo-Kantian tradition. In any case, I employ this interpretation of Windelband's philosophy as a contrasting tool. If this interpretation is correct, the whole problem of the history of philosophy could be reduced to the problem of adding a new section to the existing theories of knowledge. But this addition would be limited in scope, as my reference to the work of Collingwood suggested. The type of interpretation just described in this section is the target of my criticism and is in the background of the discussions of Windelband's philosophy, although the reconstruction proposed here focuses on more positive approaches.

1.5. CONCLUSIONS

As should already be clear, the central hypothesis of my investigation runs against the traditional understanding of Wilhelm Windelband's philosophy. Far from a methodology of the historical sciences, I consider that Windelband's main contribution to philosophy is the formulation of a philosophical program in line with the model of historical philosophy. In Windelband's thinking, the treatment of history in general, and of the history of philosophy, in particular, has a direct relationship with the establishment of a system of philosophy. History is not merely an object of epistemological reflection, but plays a methodological role in the systematical development of philosophical concepts and problems, and is, therefore, a presupposition of any attempt to develop a philosophical system.

Stated in this manner, Windelband's philosophical program recovers a basic tendency already present in the great thinkers of Classical German philosophy. Moreover, Windelband shares, in the elaboration of his point of view, a fundamental attitude common to the representatives of the Neo-Kantian movement.

Having established the fundamental course of my study, in the following chapter I will focus on the basic historical presuppositions of Windelband's philosophical program by investigating the contextual background within which his philosophical theories emerge. This will involve considering the situation of philosophy during the middle of the nineteenth century and the main tenants of Neo-Kantian philosophy, a label that has thus far been employed without proper discernment.

CHAPTER 2: NEO-KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY

This chapter aims to offer a general description of Neo-Kantianism. My presentation is strictly oriented toward instrumental objectives, to wit, to explain the intellectual background of Wilhelm Windelband's philosophy and the most important conceptual elements that he appropriated from the philosophical works of his immediate predecessors. Hence, I seek to offer a provisional characterization of Neo-Kantianism, its fundamental problems and attempted solutions, as may have been inherited by Windelband.

In the first section of the chapter, I discuss several historiographical issues regarding the definition of the Neo-Kantian movement, before proposing, in the second section, an overarching understanding of the term. The third section focuses on the philosophies of Windelband's most important predecessors: Kuno Fischer (1824-1907) and Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881). The references to these philosophers' works will provide flesh and blood to the more abstract presentation of the preceding section.

The most synthetic definition of Neo-Kantianism identifies it with a heterogeneous philosophical movement from the nineteenth century characterized by the attempt to revitalize philosophical thinking through an appropriation of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. As such, its representatives rallied under the banner of Otto Liebmann's call: "Also muss auf Kant zurückgegangen werden" (Liebmann 1865).

The Neo-Kantians sought this rehabilitation through the 'liberation' of psychological and metaphysical elements enveloping the core of Kant's transcendental justification of knowledge. In this sense, the Neo-Kantians were more than mere interpreters of the works of Kant. Although they left us fundamental books concerned with the interpretation of the Kantian doctrines, they never lost sight of the fact that their reflections followed their own philosophical agenda. As we will see, what makes Neo-Kantianism new in relation to the Kant's philosophy is the attempt to reintroduce core elements of Kantianism in a problematic context divergent from the one in which the philosopher of Königsberg put forward his theoretical positions.

Regarding Neo-Kantianism's geographical and chronological coordinates, its gravitational center was the German academic world and its period of predominance,

the period between 1860 and the advent of World War I. However, the historical roots of the Neo-Kantian movement can be traced as far back as the beginning of the nineteenth century.

After dominating the philosophical landscape of German philosophy for more than fifty years, the movement entered a rapid process of decline. The death of key figures of the movement -Lask (1915), Windelband (1915) and Cohen (1918)- represent capital moments in the path that led to the decline of Neo-Kantianism.⁵⁶ But the death of these philosophers is by no means the only factor behind the wane in the popularity of Neo-Kantianism. By the 1920s, the cultural and political landscape in Germany had experienced a drastic transformation that rendered basic Neo-Kantian commitments obsolete.

Beyond this schematic characterization, several distinct interpretive difficulties arise. In different degrees, all three dimensions mentioned here -the conceptual, the geographical, and the chronological- present aspects that may be considered contentious.

2.1. MAIN CHALLENGES OF DEFINING NEO-KANTIANISM

The reappraisal of Kantian philosophy epitomized by Neo-Kantianism is, it must be said, a shared characteristic of the philosophies from this period (Caimi 2001). All nineteenth century philosophers found themselves under the umbrella of Kantian philosophy to some extent or another. Therefore, the definition of Neo-Kantianism by reference to the positive reception of Kant's philosophy proves itself much too broad for its task.

We find an excellent example of this predicament in the writings of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911). Dilthey was, without any doubt, a leading nineteenth-century philosopher. He, too, was influenced by the coetaneous imperative to return to Kant. Many

⁵⁶ Its history, strictly speaking, extends to the establishment of the Nazi regime and the outbreak of World War II. Even if Ernst Cassirer's case is paradigmatic, he was not the only Neo-Kantian philosopher who was forced to leave the university. See Marck (1987). It is even possible to find in the literature the expression "Neo-Neo-Kantianism" to refer to derivations from the Neo-Kantian movement in the second half of the twentieth century (Ollig 1979; Noras 2020b).

scholars have emphasized that, in his relatively early “Baseler Antrittsvorlesung” from 1867, Dilthey expresses himself in terms that could very well correspond to a Neo-Kantian philosopher: “Also ich sage: die Philosophie soll über Hegel, Schelling und Fichte weg auf Kant zurückgreifen. Aber sie darf nicht stillschweigend an diesen Denkern vorbeigehen” (Dilthey GS V:13). Thus, at least partially, Dilthey responds to the call raised by Otto Liebmann’s *Kant und die Epigonen*.⁵⁷ What Dilthey meant in the context of his lectures was that philosophy should establish a cooperative relationship with particular sciences, a characteristic feature of Kantian philosophy, thereby offering a philosophical grounding for an experiential science (Erfahrungswissenschaft) of the human spirit (Dilthey GS V:27). But Dilthey also proved to be an acute critic of the Kantian conception of knowledge and held acrimonious debates with more “traditional” representatives of Neo-Kantianism, Windelband included.

Dilthey was well versed in Kantian philosophy and employed a terminology partially inspired by Kant. His intellectual trajectory and background share many features with those of the Neo-Kantians. But even with these similarities in mind, counting him among the Neo-Kantians is unproductive from a historiographical perspective. He did not consider himself a Neo-Kantian, nor was he considered as such by the representatives of the movement. In general, his positive attitude towards Kantian philosophy did not amount to a defense of a transcendental conception of philosophy. All in all, Dilthey’s writings show that the term Neo-Kantianism implies something narrower than being inspired by Kantian philosophy.

A different example of the inherent difficulties of offering a definition of Neo-Kantianism is the famous account of the movement written by Traugott Konstantin Österreich. For Österreich, it is possible to differentiate as many as seven branches of the

⁵⁷ The difference being, of course, the seemingly approving view on post-Kantian philosophy presented in the second sentence of the quote from Dilthey.

Neo-Kantian movement.⁵⁸ Naturally, the connecting points between the representatives of these seven branches are ubiquitous. This is not surprising given the specificities of the German academic world during the nineteenth century. A deeper, conceptual, guiding thread does not shine through in this exposition of Neo-Kantianism, making the inclusion of all these branches into a single philosophical movement something highly artificial. In addition, philosophers who figure prominently in the historical characterization of the movement are seldom mentioned in this exposition of Neo-Kantianism, nor can they be identified with any of the seven tendencies mentioned by Österreich. Notably, there are but few references to the writings of Eduard Zeller, Kuno Fischer, or Rudolf H. Lotze, authors that that held great sway over Windelband during his formative years.

The characterization is so minute that several tendencies are represented by just one or two names, thereby reducing the Neo-Kantian movement to a rather disparate collection of individuals.⁵⁹ But Österreich's presentation is similar in spirit to Windelband's synthesis of nineteenth-century philosophy:

Seitdem vor einem halben Jahrhundert die Rückkehr zu Kant als Parole ausgegeben wurde, hat der Neukantianismus mancherlei für die gesamte geistige Lebensbewegung typische Geschehnisse und Wandlungen erfahren und dabei verschieden, z. T. weit auseinander stehende Gestalten angenommen, die alle noch, mehr oder minder wirksam, in dem gegenwärtigen Denken vertreten sind. (Windelband 1911:369)

Against Österreich's all-encompassing strategy, several scholars prefer to limit the scope of the Neo-Kantian movement to two main schools: the Neo-Kantian School of

⁵⁸ The seven directions of Neo-Kantianism mentioned by Österreich are: (1) the physiological direction of Helmholtz and Lange; (2) the metaphysical direction represented by Liebmann; (3) the critical realism of Riehl; (4) the logical direction of the Marburg School; (5) the theory of value of Windelband, Rickert, and Münsterberg; (6) the relativist tendency of Simmel; and (7) the psychological direction of the Neo-Friesian School. The constitution of this commonly quoted list does not lack inconsistencies. Österreich wrote, at practically the same time, two very similar expositions of nineteenth-century philosophy. In "Die Philosophische Strömungen der Gegenwart" from 1921, Simmel is depicted as representing a pragmatist tendency related to Nietzsche's philosophy, while in the entry for Überweg's *Grundriss*, Simmel is regarded as a relativist Neo-Kantian. Hans Vaihinger suffers a similar fate. Vaihinger, the founder of the *Kant-Gesellschaft*, could be justifiably included in the Neo-Kantian circle but is listed as a pragmatist (Österreich 1921:366). For an account of Simmel's Neo-Kantianism, see Podoksik (2016).

⁵⁹ In fairness to Österreich, his explanation of Neo-Kantianism is better articulated in "Die Philosophische Strömungen der Gegenwart." Instead of a division in seven branches, the reader finds an opposition between Neo-Kantianism and Empirio-Criticism as the two leading interpretations of knowledge.

Marburg and the Neo-Kantian School of Baden. Furthering this interpretative line, Hans-Ludwig Ollig (1979) provides the following concise division: the early phase of Neo-Kantianism; classical Neo-Kantianism represented by the two main schools plus the philosopher Aloys Riehl;⁶⁰ and, finally, the young generation of Neo-Kantians: B. Bauch, R. Höningwald, and J. Cohn. This is not the only mixed strategy for ordering the plurality of Neo-Kantian tendencies. Hence, Ferrari (1997) and Dufour (2003), following Cassirer's *Encyclopedia Britannica* article, distinguish between a broader "return to Kant" or Neo-Criticism,⁶¹ as a general concept that encompasses the different variants, and "Neo-Kantianism" proper. What characterizes Neo-Kantianism properly speaking is an interpretation of philosophy constructed around the Kantian distinction between the *quid juris* and the *quid facti* (Dufour 2003:10). Therefore, Neo-Kantianism stands strongly against an interpretation of the Kantian a priori in terms of the psychological or physiological organization of human beings (Windelband 1911:369; Ollig 1979:1; Baumann 2016:598).⁶² Windelband himself went on to make a similar distinction in the early twentieth century. He speaks of an agnostic Neo-Kantianism, linked the relativism of the anthropological interpretation of the transcendental subject, and mature Neo-Kantianism, oriented toward a strictly a priori grounding of philosophy (Windelband 1909a:535; Windelband 1911:370).⁶³

⁶⁰ As was stated in Rickert (1924/1925).

⁶¹ The expression "Neo-Criticism" is employed also to refer to the attempts to rehabilitate Kantian philosophy outside of Germany.

⁶² A distinctive instance of this interpretation is provided by F. A. Lange: "Dass die ganze Objektivität mit einem Wort eben nicht die absolute Objektivität ist, sondern nur eine Objektivität für den Menschen und etwaige ähnlich organisierte Wesen" (Lange 1866:234). Curiously enough, Windelband adheres to this interpretation of Kantian philosophy: "Das psychologische Kriterium, dessen somit auch die kritische Methode bedarf, besteht nicht in der Einsicht, wie die zu prüfenden Sätze in dem einzelnen Individuum oder in der historischen Entwicklung der Gattung zum Bewusstsein gelangen, sondern in dem Nachweise, das ihre *Begründung* nirgends anders als in dem bleibenden Wesen unserer Organisation zu suchen sei" (Windelband 1882:356). Windelband considers that this specific aspect of Kant's doctrine is highly problematic (Windelband 1882:357).

⁶³ Windelband affirms the following: "Der durchschnittliche *Neukantianismus* der siebziger und achtziger Jahre des vorigen Jahrhunderts, über den Liebmann weit hinausragt, war stark empiristisch und agnostisch gestimmt. Er ging lange Zeit, wozu bedeutende Naturforscher wie Helmholtz, Rokitanski u. a. die Hand boten, nach Schopenhauers Vorgang mit der Sinnesphysiologie einen Bund ein, dessen Ergebnis des Betreten der schiefen Ebene des Psychologismus war. Auch in Deutschland wurde die Erkenntnistheorie zur Ideologie, zur psychologischen Entwicklungsgeschichte der Vorstellungen, und manche Spuren dieser Verirrung ziehen sich bis in die heutige Literatur herein" (Windelband 1911:370). This description is important since Windelband develops a critique of this peculiar trend under the label of genetic method in "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" See chapter 4.

The consideration of these different strategies for identifying the philosophical tendencies attached to Neo-Kantianism leads us to consider the chronological development of the movement. At first glance, Österreich's vastly detailed account and the circumscribed limitation of Neo-Kantianism to its two central schools represent opposite poles on the spectrum of alternatives. Despite this opposition, the vast majority of presentations begin to converge when the chronological dimension, that is, the articulation of Neo-Kantianism in the form of a developmental narrative, is factored into the picture. The static differentiation of multiple tendencies becomes merged into a single weft. Thus, both the "physiological" and "metaphysical" directions are identified with the 'back to Kant' movement, that is, with an early and imperfect origin in relation to the philosophies of the Marburg and Baden Schools. This image corresponds exactly with Windelband's retrospective vision of the development of Neo-Kantianism (Windelband 1909:536). As Köhnke says:

Sie [the Neo-Kantian movement] kam auf - langsam und kaum merklich-, heterogene Strömungen liefen zusammen, aber nicht einmal einer der an diesem Vorgang aktiv Beteiligten versand sich als Teil einer umfassenderen Bewegung. Sie wurde erst sichtbar, als man -und dies waren nicht zufällig gerade ihre Kritiker- bemerkte, es gebe da eine ganze Reihe von philosophischen Ansätzen, die untereinander zwar durchaus zerstritten seien, die aber doch ein Gemeinsames darin besäßen dass sie sich alle auf Kant beriefen. (Köhnke 1986: 213)

A strategy for a more determined characterization of Neo-Kantianism emerges. Although the mere call for a rehabilitation of Kantian philosophy does not amount to a clear and distinct definition of Neo-Kantianism, it must be said that the early interpretations of the Kantian rehabilitation were but imperfect attempts to describe the development of a movement that only acquired its proper form later on. In the next section of this chapter, we will see how these nuances between the two phases of Neo-Kantianism become more pronounced. However, the complete meaning of the difference between an early and a mature Neo-Kantianism can only be grasped, in the context of this investigation, by reference to Windelband's philosophical program in further chapters.

The schematic division of the phases of the Neo-Kantian movement is undoubtedly an important guiding principle, but is not without its obscure points. Concretely, the specialized literature has picked out the origins of the Neo-Kantian movement as a

point of particular obscurity. While most historical accounts of Neo-Kantianism date the origin of the movement to 1860, which is indeed the view presented by Windelband and other Neo-Kantian authors, there are strong motives for tracing the origin of the movement back several decades earlier. Frederick Beiser, in what is probably an exaggerated claim, traces the origin as far back as 1790.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it is fair to say that Liebmann's manifesto was the last, if not the most significant, of a series of programmatic texts urging for a renewal of Kantianism.

In an attempt at synthesis, it is possible to divide the history of Neo-Kantianism into three different stages. The first stage corresponds to a period of formation and consolidation of the movement. By reference to its programmatic nature, this phase is best described by the label "Back to Kant." The zenith of this stage was the decade of 1860, a time when fundamental texts for the consolidation of the Neo-Kantian movement were published.⁶⁵ This programmatic return to Kant is linked to the characterization of philosophy as a theory of knowledge. However, curiously enough, the general interpretation of the task of philosophy and the meaning of the Kantian doctrine still do not entirely square with these aspects in the mature phase of Neo-Kantianism.

The second stage in this history is represented by Neo-Kantianism proper, a period in which the two main schools of Neo-Kantianism were established around the figures of Hermann Cohen and Wilhelm Windelband.⁶⁶ This stage culminates with the advent of World War I and the death of leading representatives of the movement. Heinrich Rickert considers that the end of this stage sparked the demise of Neo-Kantianism as a movement. This end is not only marked by external factors but by internal philosophical reasons as well. For him, Neo-Kantianism accomplished, during this stage, the pro-

⁶⁴ As Beiser says, Neo-Kantianism as a movement has been "badly neglected" in the English-speaking world. Beiser's *The Genesis of Neo-Kantianism, 1796-1880* deals with the origin of the Neo-Kantian movement, and, therefore, with the period before the foundation of the leading Neo-Kantian schools: the Neo-Kantians before Neo-Kantianism. The problematic aspect of Beiser's broad chronology for Neo-Kantianism is that, by focusing exclusively on the genealogy of Kantianism, the author fails to address social and political factors involved in the formation of the Neo-Kantian movement.

⁶⁵ Lange's *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart* (1866); Liebmann's *Kant und die Epigonen: eine kritische Abhandlung* (1865), Fischer's *Kant's Leben Und Die Grundlagen Seiner Lehre* (1860), and Zeller's 1862 conference "Über Bedeutung und Aufgabe der Erkenntnistheorie."

⁶⁶ There is even an internal division in the mature phase of Neo-Kantianism (1870-1910), i.e., a first phase oriented toward the commentary of Kantian texts (1870-1880) and a creative or systematic phase (1890-1910) (Ollig 1979:2).

ject of rehabilitating scientific philosophy while clarifying with utmost precision the real significance and scope of the Kantian legacy. Therefore, Rickert concludes, in an essay from 1924, that “Neue Neukantianer brauchen wir jetzt nicht mehr. Sie fänden keine Arbeit vor, die erst noch zu leisten wäre” (Rickert 1924/1925: 164).

As mentioned earlier, the third phase of the Neo-Kantian movement corresponds to the formative years of a younger generation of Neo-Kantians who started their philosophical careers under the umbrella of Hermann Cohen, Paul Natorp, Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert, etc. This phase ended with the consolidation of the Nazi Regime, whereafter most of the representatives of this younger generation were forced to emigrate. This was the fate of Ernst Cassirer, the most renowned representative of the movement.

These historical coordinates provide a guiding model that goes beyond the mere juxtaposition of Neo-Kantian tendencies. However, certain conceptual determinations have yet to be properly established. A third problem related to the general characterization of Neo-Kantianism is precisely the problem of finding a thematic unity beyond the common denominator represented by the aim of renewing Kantian philosophy.

The problem of the unity of Neo-Kantianism has been analyzed by Ernst W. Orth (Orth 1994). This scholar defends a threefold division, that is, three possible ways of understanding ‘unity’ in the context of Neo-Kantian philosophy (Orth 1994:14). In the first place, Orth draws attention, in a rhetorical tone, to ‘unity’ as a distinctive philosophical concept thematized in the writings of the Neo-Kantians. But the concept of “unity” is inextricably linked to the philosophy of antiquity. Despite the fact that the Neo-Kantians offered their accounts of the unity of experience, this concept cannot be further differentiated in a meaningful way.

Unity can also be considered sociologically, and indeed the Neo-Kantians shared a common socio-political background that can be employed to identify the members of the movement. Not without reason, Neo-Kantianism has been equated with academic philosophy. I will return in what follows to the advantages and disadvantages of a sociological perspective. Presently, it is more important to consider the third source of unity, i.e., unity as a “cultural dimension” (Orth 1994:18).

Neo-Kantianism is characterized by a “mindfulness of culture” [Vergegenwärtigung der Kultur] (Orth 1994:16). There is no doubt that the rehabilitation of Kantian philosophy is intrinsically connected with the philosophical situation of the nineteenth century. Concretely, this rehabilitation was developed in response to what was conceived as an epoch of shallow materialism and utilitarianism. And the purpose behind the Neo-Kantian attempt was to offer a clear concept of culture in accordance with Kant’s “culture of reason” (Orth 1994:16).

Accordingly, Ollig conceptually determines Neo-Kantianism by reference to two dimensions of Neo-Kantian philosophy. The formal or methodological dimension of Neo-Kantianism is represented by the primacy of the theory of knowledge. In contrast, the concrete dimension sustains the primacy of culture. Culture is the central object of philosophical reflection (Ollig 1979:3).⁶⁷ Both dimensions are nevertheless internally connected insofar as the conceptualization of the validity of knowledge is the first step in order to develop a philosophy of culture. While understanding human culture is the general purpose, the resolution of the problem of knowledge is the methodological starting point. While the methodological primacy of the theory of knowledge constitutes a negative or critical side, proving the bankruptcy of positivist and materialist tendencies, the philosophical interpretation of culture always represents a constructive or propositive dimension. When thus described, Neo-Kantianism appears as a “form of cultural-philosophical idealism” (Nachtsheim 2013:136).

Up until this point, we have broadened our comprehension of what Neo-Kantianism was. One of the leading German philosophical movements, its variegated tendencies can be classified by reference to both a specific historical structuring and two conceptually-related determinations of the rehabilitation of Kant’s philosophy: the primacies of the theory of knowledge and the philosophy of culture. However, the possibility of further analyzing the constitutive narrative of Neo-Kantianism has not yet been exhausted. I will now move on to the consideration of the different historiographical mo-

⁶⁷ The same opinion is found in Christian Krijnen’s general account of Neo-Kantianism: “Trotz der inhaltlichen Verschiedenheit neukantianscher Theoreme und dem Fehler einer gemeinsamen Doktrin liege die Einheit des Neukantianismus in ihrem Ziel: in der Entwicklung einer modernen Kulturphilosophie” (Krijnen 2001:79).

des of treating the history of Neo-Kantianism, leaving the concrete explanation of the primacy of the theory of knowledge for the next section.⁶⁸

There are several methodological approaches present in the literature on the Neo-Kantian movement. These different ways of handling historical materials are evidently reflected in the resulting interpretive conclusions. It is possible to list four types or modes of tackling the history of Neo-Kantianism: (1) following the self-reflection of the Neo-Kantians; (2) the historiographical reconstruction outlined by historians of philosophy, (3) ideological analysis, and (4) systematic appropriation.

The first mode insists on establishing the self-reflection of Neo-Kantian authors as a starting point for all historiographical accounts of the movement. This tendency is widespread in the specialized literature. I have already mentioned that Windelband advanced historiographical interpretations of the Neo-Kantian movement in more than one opportunity. Probably due to the movement's constant historiographical engagements, Windelband developed his account of its philosophical time. Windelband's *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* addresses the century's main problematic aspects and establishes a link between these issues and his programmatic stance.⁶⁹ However, this engagement is also to be expected from other members of the movement insofar as they too employ the concept of "mindfulness of culture". For instance, Hans Vaihinger offers some concise but conceptually clear remarks on the history of Kant's reception during the nineteenth century (Vaihinger 1897).

Vaihinger delineates three different periods in the reception of the Kantian doctrines. The first period comprises the emergence of Kantianism, namely, the years between the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the death of Immanuel Kant. These decades were marked by the struggle between the principles of the new philosophy and the old tendencies that dominated Germany. The second period in Kant's re-

⁶⁸ The primacy of culture as a distinctive philosophical topic of reflection will only become apparent through the exposition of Windelband's concrete philosophical doctrines and is, therefore, beyond the scope of this chapter.

⁶⁹ Windelband deals with the history of the Neo-Kantian movement in the following texts: *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* (1903); *Die Philosophie im deutschen Geistesleben des 19. Jahrhunderts* (1909); "Die neuere Philosophie," in Paul Hinneberg (Ed.): *Die Kultur der Gegenwart. Ihre Entwicklung und ihre Ziele. Teil I, Abteilung V: Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*. Berlin und Leipzig, pp.382-543 (1909); "Die philosophischen Richtungen der Gegenwart," in Ernst von ASTER (Ed.): *Große Denker. Bd. II*. Leipzig, pp. 361-377 (1911).

ception extends to 1860. This is the epoch of the post-Kantian systems. The constant quarreling among the all-embracing idealist systems led to a turnaround, that is, the consolidation of materialism and the abandonment of the Kantian doctrine. Vaihinger neatly described this epoch by explaining that “Man glaubte weit über ihn [Kant] hinaus zu sein: man war in Wirklichkeit weit hinter ihn zurückgekommen” (Vaihinger 1897:3). Finally, the third period represents the heyday of Neo-Kantianism. Vaihinger lists the motives behind the return to Kant in the 1860s, the need for a basic rehabilitation of philosophy, the necessity of justifying but also limiting the claims of natural scientists, the re-discovery of the works of Schopenhauer, and, of course, the new works of Kuno Fischer, Liebmann, and many others.

This type of presentation has been dismantled by Klaus Christian Köhnke, the renowned author of *Entstehung und Aufstieg des Neukantianismus*. Köhnke accurately summarizes the Neo-Kantian view on the matter:

Der Deutsche Idealismus hatte abgewirtschaftet, Hegels System sei zusammengebrochen eine Zeit der Anarchie, des Materialismus und allgemeinen philosophischen Niederganges sei dem Neukantianismus voraufgegangen, dem es dann zu verdanken sei, dass wieder eine erkenntnistheoretische - an Kant anknüpfende - Voruntersuchung in die Philosophie wurde- lautete in etwa das neukantianische Selbstverständnis. (Köhnke 1986:59)

As is apparent, this description has the same structure as Vaihinger's. It also serves as a synthesis of Windelband's narrative, which stresses the philosophical shallowness that preceded the publication of Fischer's works on Kant or Otto Liebmann's *Kant und die Epigonen*. In Köhnke's appreciation, this narrative represents a legitimizing Neo-Kantian myth that becomes problematic when followed later scholarly developments. Its simplifying nature exempts researchers from thoroughly studying the historical sources and distorts the actual continuity between early nineteenth-century idealism and Neo-Kantianism (Köhnke 1986:61). Therefore, what Köhnke criticizes in the paragraph quoted from his book is the strong dependence on the testimonies of those involved in the creation and development of the Neo-Kantian movement. This is indeed a historiographical deficit in the sense that it is not at all necessary to preserve the categories or points of view advanced by the advocates of Neo-Kantianism, in this case, the object of historiographical research, in order to offer a ahistorical explanation, much as

it is not it is not necessary to hold Christian dogmas in order to write a history of Christianity. Köhnke stresses that the traditional narrative lacks an account of the Neo-Kantians' former teachers and a thorough determination of the historical situation of Neo-Kantianism (Köhnke 1986:319). Köhnke's own investigation strengthens the critical treatment of sources regarding the origin and expansion of the Neo-Kantian movement (Köhnke 1986:9).

The emphasis and depth of the critical treatment of the historiographical problems concerning the history of Neo-Kantianism, a treatment that avoids the partisan attitude of both Neo-Kantian apologetics and left-wing ideological attacks on "bourgeois" philosophy, makes Köhnke's book a fundamental point of reference, although certain aspects of his interpretation may be disputed. Specifically, Köhnke develops two original theses that prove the uncritical character of standard Neo-Kantian narratives. The first one concerns the orientation of philosophy around the theory of knowledge; the other, concerns the underlying and unexplored political commitments of the Neo-Kantians.⁷⁰

A fine companion to the type of historiography presented in Köhnke's book is Fritz Ringer's *The Decline of the German Mandarins*, a study pertaining to the field of the sociology of belief.

Ringer emphasizes an ideological type of explanation, that is, an explanation of the beliefs of a certain sociological group on the basis of their psychological orientation and their position in society. In the case of Ringer, the sociological group in question, the "German mandarins," is the group represented by German university professors.⁷¹ His account can very well correspond with the sociologically-oriented unity of the Neo-Kantian movement mentioned by Orth (Orth 1994:14). As I have previously stated, the Neo-Kantians occupied a leading position in German academia. For this reason, it is not

⁷⁰ In the course of his sociological explanation, Köhnke gives a detailed account of the emergence of Neo-Kantianism as related to the political situation. For cultural and political reasons, there was an increase in the hiring rate of university teachers that ultimately benefited the middle Neo-Kantians, including Windelband. Köhnke also attempts at explaining internal shifts in Windelband's philosophy in terms of the political situation of nineteenth century Germany. Köhnke overemphasis of the political background as an explanative resource has been rightly criticized in Beiser (2014b) and Kinzel (2017).

⁷¹ "For the European setting, I would define "the mandarins" simply as a social and cultural elite which owes its status primarily to educational qualifications, rather than to hereditary rights or wealth" (Ringer 1990:5).

surprising that Ringer's book includes several references to their works.⁷² Philosophy professors occupied an important place in the group's structure since philosophical teachings were the main vehicle for the group's attempts to legitimize itself. Even more importantly, philosophy professors were responsible for the layout of the educational system and the qualifying exams required to start a university career. Ringer studies this group in order to reconstruct its members' reactions to the political and economic transformation that took place in Germany in the nineteenth century and the dangers this transformation posed to their place in society and conception of cultural life. They adopted a defensive attitude since "they suspected that their own standards of personal cultivation would come to be rejected as outmoded and irrelevant" (Ringer 1990:2).

One of the formal elements of Ringer's mandarin ideology is precisely the defense of core ideas of Kant's criticism and German Idealism (Ringer 1990:90). In his description, the Neo-Kantians "were popular essayists, eloquent spokesman for a creed which could appeal to the layman as well as to the professional metaphysician" (Ringer 1990:94). Ringer's book is useful in order to learn much about the Neo-Kantian agenda, specifically in what concerns the opposition between the Neo-Kantian philosophy of culture and the specific problems of modernity, such as cultural decadence, the technification and bureaucratization of life, etc.⁷³

An entirely different attitude was adopted by what can be called "NeukantianismusForschung."⁷⁴ The aim of this line of research has been to sidestep the ideological treatment of the movement in order to focus, not on the Neo-Kantian historiographic narrative, but on the possibility of actualizing Neo-Kantian philosophy in contemporary contexts. What this perspective aims to find in the works of the Neo-Kantians are concrete possibilities of improving our understanding of transcendental philosophy in terms of a theory of the conditions of validity of scientific knowledge and of the different cultural objectifications that do not rest on the assumption of a specific type of

⁷² Ringer mentions the writings of Neo-Kantians like Cassirer, Cohn, Natorp, Paulsen, Rickert, and Windelband, as well as many authors related to the movement.

⁷³ Windelband deals explicitly with these topics in two conferences from 1908: "Bildungsschichten und Kultureinheit" and "Über Wesen und Wert der Tradition im Kulturleben."

⁷⁴ Exemplified by the book series "Studien und Materialien zum Neukantianismus" founded by Helmut Holzhey and Ernst Wolfgang Orth.

consciousness, but on formal principles of validity. The motive for this type of research is the assumption that a return to Kantian philosophy is still a *desideratum* of philosophy today. Therefore, the “Neukantianismus-Forschung” aims to establish a continuous line between Kant, the Neo-Kantians, and contemporary philosophy.

These different approaches to the history of philosophy are not necessarily contradictory; indeed, there are points of intersection between the different historiographical paths of research that I have mentioned. My own exposition of Windelband’s philosophy follows more traditional patterns of the history of philosophy, offering in many sections reconstructions of arguments. However, it is important to keep these other possibilities in mind as sources to improve our knowledge of the historical context in which Windelband’s Neo-Kantian program arises. In any case, the diversity of historiographical strategies and the uncertainty about how they relate to one another reflects the fact that the study of Neo-Kantianism is still underdeveloped. The historiography of Neo-Kantianism suffers from a condition that can also be found in the study of the nineteenth century as a whole: its story has not yet been coherently worked out (Pester 1991:235).

In the case of my reconstruction, it is important to address two types of materials. In the first place, it is obviously necessary to consider the main narratives on Neo-Kantianism presented in the specialized literature. In the second place, it is relevant to consider Windelband’s own characterization of nineteenth-century philosophy. Windelband himself provided accounts and explanations of the Neo-Kantian movement’s inner transformations, often describing its different interpretations and tendencies. Windelband regarded his own progression in philosophy as being associated with the different phases of the Neo-Kantian movement. Although Köhnke might be on the right track when he criticizes the deficits of the orthodox narrative on Neo-Kantianism, there is still an important point to be learned from what the Neo-Kantians said about themselves. And this leads us to one of the points of intersection. Windelband’s agenda strongly determines these descriptions. As such, they do not necessarily represent historiographically defensible interpretations, but serve the purpose of distinguishing Windelband’s own historical interpretation from more recent works.

2.2. THE RETURN TO KANT

The majority of historical studies of Neo-Kantianism identify three dominant factors as the origin of the Neo-Kantian movement (Willey 1978:24; Dufour 2003; Adair-Toteff 2008:28; Beiser 2014b). Two of these factors were already present in Vaihinger's summary of the history of the reception of Kant's philosophy: the collapse of idealist systems after Hegel's death and the controversy over materialism.⁷⁵ The philosophical systems characteristic of German idealism were held in check by their inner struggles and pretensions, their conflicting claims of absolute certainty and validity, and also by the natural sciences' rebuttal of the idealistic philosophies of nature. A third determining factor is strongly highlighted in Köhnke's book: the political context after the failed revolution of 1848. The conjunction of these factors configures a specific type of crisis consciousness characteristic of Neo-Kantians philosophers (Krijnen 2001:72).

The crisis consciousness experienced toward the mid-nineteenth century involved a series of doubts about the nature of philosophy. One of the advocates of the view that philosophy suffered an 'identity crisis' in the mid-nineteenth century, Frederick Beiser, explains the situation in the following terms':

Beginning in the 1840s, the decade after Hegel's death, philosophers began to suffer a severe 'identity crisis.' They could no longer define their discipline in the traditional terms widely accepted in the first decades of the nineteenth century. So they began to ask themselves some very hard questions. What is philosophy? What is its purpose? And how does it differ from the empirical sciences? (Beiser 2014a:15)

Turning against the Hegelian program, which aimed to subsume every dimension of reality under the wings of philosophical thinking, philosophy was struck by a sudden process of scientific emancipation. In any case, this context is described as a crisis situation for both the sciences and European culture.

⁷⁵ M. Brasch's (1843-1895) compilation of nineteenth-century texts (Brasch 1888) affirms that with the death of Hegel "schlisst das klassische Zeitalter der deutschen Philosophie ab" (Brasch 1888: IX). Although not widely known, Brasch's opinions can be considered symptomatic of what was deemed relevant in the epoch. For Brasch, the break between an idealist and post-idealist epoch is marked by the progressive distancing of the inner problematic of the Hegelian schools, which was centered around religious issues.

At first glance, these factors reveal a characteristic feature of the Neo-Kantian movement, namely, the attempt to tackle these problems with the tools provided by Kantian philosophy. But these problems were not exactly the same as those faced by Immanuel Kant himself. Although his philosophy was seen as an invaluable resource, its teachings could not be simply extrapolated to a new cultural and philosophical context. This, again, explains why the Neo-Kantians were not simply Kantian scholars. Their interest went beyond the reconstruction of the historical Kant. This type of reflection is present in Windelband's preface to his *Präludien*:

Wir alle, die im 19. Jahrhundert philosophieren, sind die Schüler Kants. Aber unsere heutige 'Rückkehr' zu ihm dar nicht die blosse Erneuerung der historisch bedingte Gestalt sein, in welches er die Idee der kritischen Philosophie darstellte. Je tiefer man den Antagonismus erfasst, der zwischen den verschiedenen Motiven seines Denkens besteht, um so mehr findet man darin die Mittel zur Bearbeitung der Probleme, die er durch seine Problemlösungen geschaffen hat. Kant verstehen, heisst über ihn hinausgehen. (Windelband 1915 1:IV)

The way in which Windelband understood the impulse to go beyond Kant suggests that the factor that best explains his philosophy is the crisis consciousness just mentioned. Although it is not illegitimate to provide historical reconstructions focused on sociological or ideological factors, the crisis of idealism constitutes the decisive factor in the formulation of Windelband's mature philosophical program.⁷⁶

The key figures of the return to Kant were Kuno Fischer (1824-1906), Eduard Zeller (1814-1908), Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881), Otto Liebmann (1840-1912), Friedrich Lange (1828-1875), and Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894). I mention these authors because, in one way or another, Windelband engaged with all these nineteenth-century thinkers.⁷⁷

With regard to these early Neo-Kantian doctrines, Beiser notices the important similarities between two conferences from the 1860s: Fischer's conferences on Kant

⁷⁶ See chapter 3.

⁷⁷ With the exception of Helmholtz, as far as I know. In the case of Lange, Windelband occupied the chair of 'Inductive Philosophy,' which was created *ad hoc* for Lange in Zürich, and which he left vacant in order to move to the University of Marburg. Lotze and Fischer were Windelband's philosophy professors. Fischer and Zeller were Windelband's predecessors in the philosophy chair at Heidelberg, conforming what Rickert calls the Heidelberg tradition. Finally, Liebmann was Windelband's predecessor in Strasbourg, and they developed a personal relationship. Both were also disciples of Fischer.

from 1860, published as *Kants Leben und die Grundlagen seiner Lehre*,⁷⁸ and Zeller's "Über Bedeutung und Aufgabe der Erkenntnistheorie." Beiser says that "Fischer and Zeller saw the fundamental task of philosophy as, in a word, epistemology (Erkenntnistheorie), second-order reflection on the basic concepts, methods, and presuppositions of the empirical sciences" (Beiser 2014a:37).⁷⁹ These two texts are thus essential references in relation to a description of early Neo-Kantianism.

2.2.1. Eduard Zeller and the Task of the Theory of Knowledge

The capital text, as far as concerns understanding philosophy in terms of a theory of knowledge, is Zeller's lecture from 1862.⁸⁰ This conference often appears in the specialized literature as the pivotal text for the interpretation of philosophy as a form of theory of knowledge and therefore represents a milestone in the development of the Neo-Kantian alternative to philosophy's "identity crisis". In his inaugural address at Heidelberg, explains Köhnke, Zeller formulated a philosophical program that unifies in a single enterprise the development of a theory of knowledge and the assumption of an unavoidable Kantian starting point (Köhnke 1986:).

That the conference is concerned with this alleged crisis is manifest from the beginning of the text. Zeller opens his conference with a direct indictment of a fundamental feature of the idealist systems: the equation between logic and metaphysics: "Meiner Ansicht nach ist diese Gleichstellung der Logik mit der Metaphysik oder dem ontologischen Teil der Metaphysik nicht zulässig" (Zeller 1862:6).

⁷⁸ Specifically, the second conference: "Das Problem der menschlichen Erkenntnis als die erste Frage der Philosophie."

⁷⁹ Beiser stresses the differences between Fischer's and Zeller's texts, to wit, that Fischer's diagnostic of the crisis of philosophy is centered around the automation of the sciences while Zeller's is concerned with the "collapse of the great idealist systems" (Beiser 2014b:271). Thus, Fischer still holds a more positive evaluation of post-Kantian philosophy that is absent in Zeller's conference.

⁸⁰ Although the history of the term "theory of knowledge" goes back to the beginning of the nineteenth century (Köhnke 1981). For a detailed explanation of the primacy of the theory of knowledge in early Neo-Kantianism, see Harrelson (2015).

Although the forms of thinking are always given to us in their relationship with a certain content (Inhalt), it does not necessarily follow that thinking must be investigated only in its relation to content. Zeller here restates the methodological idea of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*: to isolate the different components of representations in order to trace those components back to their origins. The analysis of the form of thinking deals with something real, insofar as thinking belongs to the fact of human spiritual life (Zeller 1862:8). Finally, the usefulness of logic is connected with the necessity to clarify and establish the methodological proceedings of scientific research and also of metaphysics and ontology. Logic, according to Zeller, precedes metaphysics. Hence, Zeller criticizes the equation of logic and metaphysics on Kantian grounds. Zeller's interpretation is as far possible from that of Hegel, for he interprets logic as a purely formal discipline: "Eine formale Wissenschaft ist die Logik allerdings so gut, wie die Grammatik oder die reine Mathematik und sie muß es sein, weil sie es eben nur mit den allgemeinen Formen des Erkennens, nicht mit einem bestimmten Inhalt zu tun hat." (Zeller 1862:10).

However, even though logic is formal, it is not "formalistic." Logic is presented as a description of the forms of thinking, but these forms cannot be understood apart from their involvement in knowledge. The value of our study of the forms of thinking is directly linked with our impulse to know reality. It is in this sense that logic is connected with the theory of knowledge (Erkenntnistheorie). And it is in this context that Zeller suggests an idea that is of great importance for the development of Neo-Kantianism, namely, the claim that the theory of knowledge works as the grounding discipline for philosophical matters:

Es ist aber nicht bloß ihr Zusammenhang mit der Logik, worin die Bedeutung der philosophischen Erkenntnistheorie zu suchen ist. Diese Wissenschaft bildet vielmehr die formale Grundlage der ganzen Philosophie; sie ist es, von der die letzte Entscheidung über die richtige Methode in der Philosophie und in der Wissenschaft überhaupt ausgehen muß. Denn wie wir zu verfahren haben, um richtige Vorstellungen zu gewinnen, das werden wir nur nach Maßgabe der Bedingungen beurteilen können, an welche die Bildung unserer Vorstellungen durch die Natur unseres Geistes geknüpft ist; diese Bedingungen aber soll eben die Er-

kenntnistheorie untersuchen und danach bestimmen, ob und unter welchen Voraussetzungen der menschliche Geist zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit befähigt ist. (Zeller 1862:11)

This understanding of the role of the theory of knowledge, and fundamentally, the discipline's main constitutive axis are contributions made by modern philosophy. For this reason, Zeller provides a brief sketch of modern philosophy which culminates in what is of concern here: his assessment of Kantian philosophy. Of course, Kant is presented as the unilateral vanquisher of both the rationalist and the empiricist traditions by presenting knowledge as an interplay between *a priori* and *a posteriori* elements (Zeller 1862:13). But Zeller's conference does not merely praise Kantianism. Zeller indeed considers that the extravagances of speculative idealism are a direct consequence of the uncertainties present in the Kantian theory of knowledge.

The Kantian doctrine of the thing-in-itself is the first and most important target of criticism (Zeller 1862:14). The centrality of this doctrine comes from the fact that its difficulties motivated the advance of the post-Kantian philosophies of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Even though Kantian philosophy plays a fundamental role in the establishment of the theory of knowledge as a central discipline, Zeller's presentation of the discipline contains the seeds of fundamental mistakes and ultimately it conduces to the false identification between metaphysics and logic, the starting point of the conference.⁸¹

In light of this conundrum, Zeller proposes to go back to the moment in which the theory of knowledge makes the false leap into metaphysical idealism. Thus, Zeller combines, in a single stroke, the formulation of a consistent theory of knowledge with the thoughtful study of the philosophy of Kant:

Der Anfang der Entwicklungsreihe aber, in der unsere heutige Philosophie liegt, ist Kant und die wissenschaftliche Leistung, mit der Kant der Philosophie eine neue Bahn brach, ist seine Theorie des Erkennens. Auf diese Untersuchung wird jeder, der die Grundlage unserer Philosophie verbessern will, vor allem zurück-

⁸¹ Zeller's criticism of Hegelian philosophy is also paradigmatic. Hegel does not pay enough attention to the specific problems of human cognition; he misses the ideal, that is, infinite, character of the task knowledge of the object; and he proceeds through a false interpretation of the method of philosophy. Zeller was himself raised as a philosopher under the umbrella of Hegelianism, and is willing to appraise the merits of Hegel's philosophy. Indeed, Hegel's philosophy can be metaphorically characterized as a transcendental illusion produced by the confusions at the core of Kantianism. As long as these sources of conflict remain in Kantian philosophy, we will not be free from the necessary spell of speculative idealism.

gehen und die Fragen, welche sich Kant vorlegte, im Geist seiner Kritik neu untersuchen müssen, um durch die wissenschaftlichen Erfahrungen unseres Jahrhunderts bereichert, die Fehler, welche Kant machte, zu vermeiden. (Zeller 1862:21)

Here we find a recurring motif in the writings of the Neo-Kantians. The path that leads us forward in philosophy consists both in recovering the spirit of the Kantian doctrine, in this case, the spirit of his theory of knowledge, and in developing that spirit, albeit with the aid of a new philosophical methodology.⁸² The remainder of Zeller's conference discussed ways of tackling this task.

Zeller's Kantianism notwithstanding, there are certain formulations in his conference that point toward a heterodox interpretation of the Kantian doctrine. For Zeller and Kant knowledge results from the interplay of two different sources, an affecting object and our own activity as cognizing subjects: the matter and the form of our knowledge. But Zeller's interpretation manifests a specific nuance that has since become synonymous with the physiological interpretation of Neo-Kantianism. What Kant presented in his *Critique of Pure Reason* as the pure forms of sensibility is characterized, in Zeller's conference, as belonging to the nature of our sense organs. The way in which we experience "ist durch die Beschaffenheit unserer Sinneswerkzeuge und die Gesetze unseres Empfindungsvermögens bedingt" (Zeller 1862:22).⁸³ However, the apex in his heterodox appropriation of Kant comes from Zeller's rejection of idealism:

Mag auch unseren Vorstellungen noch so sehr etwas Objektives zugrunde liegen, wie ist es möglich, dieses Objektive in seiner reinen Gestalt, das An-sich der Dinge, zu erkennen, wenn uns die Dinge doch immer nur in den subjektiven Vorstellungsformen gegeben sind? Kant antwortet, es sei unmöglich und diese Unmöglichkeit scheint ihm so einleuchtend, daß er gar keinen weiteren Beweis dafür nötig findet. Eben hier liegt aber der Grundfehler des kantischen Kritizismus, der verhängnisvolle Schritt zu jenem Idealismus. (Zeller 1862:24)

⁸² Of course, Zeller's answers from 1862 are not shared by other Neo-Kantians, but it is important to notice the similarities in the diagnostic. This similarity is apparent in Windelband's need to save the Kantian insight into the falsity of the *Abbild* model of knowledge (chapter 3, section 4) while reinterpreting the critical method (chapter 4, section 1).

⁸³ Zeller speaks of an ordering that already belongs to the materials given in sensuous experience, however the passage does not allow for a thorough interpretation: "Das allerdings ist nicht richtig, daß uns in der Empfindung, wie Kant sagt, nur ein ungeordneter Stoff gegeben sei und alle Form ausschließlich aus uns selbst stamme; denn die äußeren Eindrücke müssen uns als diese bestimmten notwendig auch in einer bestimmten Form und Ordnung gegeben sein." (Zeller 1862:23).

The target of Zeller's criticism of Kant and the root of speculative idealism is Kant's belief in an unknowable thing-in-itself. Here, a careful reader of Kant will dismiss as unsuitable the type of questions that Zeller starts to raise. For Zeller inquires whether our faculties of representation might indeed be in accordance with the essence of things. Moreover, we are tempted to answer affirmatively to this question, argues Zeller, once we notice that the objects of experience and our cognitive faculties belong to the same natural world (ein Naturganzes; eine Naturordnung) (Zeller 1862:24). What's worse, the methodological procedure that Zeller features as the tool to isolate what belongs to the object from what belongs to our subjective capacities of representation is presented as experimental and dependent upon deductive and inductive inferences.

In reference to the "identity crisis" of philosophy, Zeller proposes in his conference both a distinctive object and a distinctive method for philosophical investigations. Philosophy seeks to differentiate the elements and operations involved in knowledge in order to later inquire into the causes of phenomena and, ultimately, their essence. Finally, regarding the method, Zeller mentions an interrelation between deductive and inductive modes of inference. Therefore, the conference closes programmatically, specifying that the task of logic, or the theory of knowledge, is to offer a clear account of both procedures and their modes of connection. Important as it is, this conference raises more questions than solutions. In the end, Zeller offers a rather naturalistic account of the transcendental project.

2.2.2. Kuno Fischer's Interpretation of Kant

The other point of reference as far as concerns the rehabilitation of philosophy through its grounding in the theory of knowledge is Fischer's *Kant Leben und die Grundlage seiner Lehre*. Kuno Fischer's philosophy is a specially important antecedent

of Windelband's Neo-Kantian programmatic.⁸⁴ Fischer's own philosophical project relates directly with the problem of synthesizing the systems of Kant and Hegel (Beiser 2014b:221). Here, I will focus on the more "Kantian" side of Fischer's writings and I will leave the treatment of the Hegelian side for later⁸⁵. In comparison with Zeller's "Über Bedeutung und Aufgabe der Erkenntnistheorie," Fischer's position appears as rather orthodox.

Fischer's book comprises three conferences held in Jena. The first conference presents a long exposition of Kant's life. Fischer proceeds under the assumption that there is a mutual reference between the critical doctrine and the central features of Kant's personality. The other two conferences delve into the two fundamental insights of critical philosophy.⁸⁶ The fundamentals of critical philosophy are the specific way in which Kant handles the problem of knowledge and the doctrine of the transcendental ideality of space and time. While the theory of knowledge represents a new point of view in philosophy, the doctrines of space and time represent its new groundings (Fischer 1860:8).

For our present concerns, the most important aspect of Fischer's book is the second conference: "Das Problem der menschlichen Erkenntnis als die erste Frage der Philosophie."⁸⁷ Fischer's exposition would appear to confirm the "identity crisis" diagnostic, for he refers explicitly the difficulties philosophy faces to signal its own object of study. Each particular science is defined in terms of a particular object of inquiry, and no two sciences can share one and the same object (Fischer 1860:81). But philosophy suffers from the absence of a specific object:

⁸⁴ For a general presentation of Fischer's philosophy, see Hülsewiesche (1989) and Beiser (2014b). Hülsewiesche's *System und Geschichte: Leben und Werke Kuno Fischers* faces a similar problem as my present research but focusing exclusively on Fischer's philosophy. Specially relevant are his comments on Fischer's first philosophical publication "Philosophie der Geschichte un der Geschichte der Philosophie" (Hülsewiesche 1989:47). In Fischer's case, the transit seems to be diametrically opposed to that of Windelband's. Fischer sought a synthesis between Hegel's speculative philosophy and Kant's transcendental philosophy but his starting point was the Hegelian doctrine.

⁸⁵ I will deal with his Hegelian side in the context of my discussion of Windelband's interpretation of the history of philosophy in chapter 6, Section 2.

⁸⁶ Fischer focuses exclusively on Kant's theoretical philosophy.

⁸⁷ Fischer's interpretation of *Transcendental Aesthetics* was of paramount importance for the development of Neo-Kantianism. It sparked the famous controversy with Adolf Trendelenburg, which conditioned the first Kantian works of Hermann Cohen. However, this controversy did not have the same effect on Windelband's writings, and, for this reason, I left its treatment aside.

Setzen wir den Fall, dass alle wirklichen Gebiete vollkommen und ohne Recht unter die nicht philosophischen Wissenschaften getheilt sind, so ist die Philosophie eine Wissenschaft ohne Land, oder ihr Gebiet ist ein imaginäres, was so gut ist als keines; so hörst sie auf, Wissenschaft zu sein oder als solche zu gelten. (Fischer 1860:81)

The different fields of world objects have already been taken as objects by the different particular sciences, opening the question regarding the possibility of a philosophical science.⁸⁸ Fischer explains how it is possible to find an object for philosophy by tracing a distinction between philosophy and physics. The natural scientists seek to explain natural phenomena, but this explanation consists in tracing those phenomena back to their causes and establishing the necessary connection between them. However, this approach requires certain concepts -such as necessary connection, thing, property, force, and cause-, that the physicist is in no position to address (Fischer 1860:83). Therefore, from this scientist's point of view, it is not possible to explain these different concepts; in fact, these concepts are presupposed by physical explanation. Fischer characterizes this situation as follows: "Die Möglichkeit der Naturerscheinungen habe er [the scientist] erklärt, ich setze den Fall; was er mich nicht erklärt hat, nicht erklären kann, ist die Möglichkeit der Physik. Die Natur wird klar, aber die Physik ist dunkel!" (Fischer 1860:83). The lines for the solution of the question of philosophy are thus set. While particular sciences provide us with the knowledge of things, philosophy will provide us with an explanation of the knowledge of things, that is, a knowledge of knowledge. The object of philosophy is the fact of knowledge (Tatsache der Erkenntnis) or the sciences themselves. Through this reasoning, Fischer finds an object for philosophy.

During the rest of the conference, Fischer goes on to systematically restate the key concepts of Kantian philosophy: representation, judgment, analyticity and syntheticity, generality and necessity, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, etc.⁸⁹ In reference to the basic trends of modern philosophy, Fischer distinguishes three questions that belong to the theory of knowledge: What is knowledge? Is there knowledge? How is knowledge possible? His answers follow the Kantian model: knowledge consists of -"besteth in," says Fischer-

⁸⁸ Windelband will later repeat this passage almost literally in "Was ist Philosophie?".

⁸⁹ Fischer almost literally follows Kant's "Introduction" to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, although it is not the most precise reformulation of this doctrine.

synthetic a priori judgments; there are knowledges that belong to mathematics, physics, and metaphysics.⁹⁰ Therefore, the theory of knowledge is constituted as the question of how there can be synthetic a priori judgments in mathematics, physics, and metaphysics.⁹¹

The relevance of Fischer's view of Kant's philosophy for Windelband's own conception of philosophy is not, however, limited to his presentation of the critical doctrine of Immanuel Kant, which includes his distinctive Neo-Kantian emphasis on the problems of knowledge. Fischer was also important for the shaping of Windelband's methodology of the history of philosophy; I will fully address this question in chapter 6, in which I discuss the treatment of Windelband's historiography of philosophy.

As in the case of Zeller, this characterization of philosophy leads immediately to the discussion of the philosophy of Kant, since it is only with Kant that the theory of knowledge acquires its definitive critical interpretation in terms of a question on the possibilities of the fact of knowledge. Leaving aside more concrete determinations regarding the details of the theories of Zeller and Fischer and their interpretation of Kant, the content of these two conferences establishes fundamental premises and difficulties that will also be present in Windelband's first formulation of his philosophical program.

2.2.3. Lotze's Realm of Validity

The other central Neo-Kantian figure in the formation of Windelband's philosophy is his former teacher in Göttingen, Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817-1881).

Lotze is described as the “Vater des sudwestdeutschen [Neukantianismus]” (Krijnen 2001:94; Pester 2001:297)⁹². Windelband explicitly ties

⁹⁰ It would be clearer if Fischer spoke of the pretensions of knowledge, as Kant did.

⁹¹ To answer the next question, it is necessary to continue the discussion concerning the Kantian doctrine of space and time.

⁹² A similar judgment belongs to Gerhard Lehmann: [Lotze] “bildet die Brücke von Spät zum Neuidealismus: das ist, wenn man so will, seine Entwicklung. Und als Neuidealist ist er der Vater desjenigen Neukantianismus, den man selbst in engste sachliche Verbindung mit dem Neuidealismus bringen kann: des wertphilosophischen Neukantianismus Windelband, Rickerts, Bauchs” (Lehmann 1987:58).

the destiny of Lotze's philosophy with that of the Southwestern School of Neo-Kantianism in his exposition of contemporary philosophy:

Er [Lotze] war während der kritisch-empirischen Zeiten so gut wie vergessen, weil man ihn zu den übrigen Metaphysikern warf, und erst neuerdings brechen die Grundgedanken feiner Philosophie wieder siegreich durch. Freilich geschieht das in der *Weise*, daß diese Grundgedanken in die Entwicklung des Kritizismus hineingearbeitet und in feine begrifflichen Formen umgewandelt werden. (Windelband 1911:376)

Like Zeller's or Fischer's philosophy, the philosophy of Lotze is complex and often overlooked (Beiser 2017:84). But, even more so than Zeller or Fischer, Lotze is a central figure in the origins of contemporary philosophy, and his significance stretches far beyond the Neo-Kantian movement. In Beiser's judgment, Lotze revamped modern philosophy by creating a series of conceptual distinctions, normative and natural, validity and reality, and intentionality and existence (Beiser 2017:87). Through these innovative conceptual tools, Lotze set an overriding philosophical agenda based on the elucidation of the concept of validity and the rebuttal of the psychologistic tendencies in logic (Gabriel 1989: IX; Gabriel 2002:40; Beiser 2017:87).

Lotze is primarily regarded as a leading figure in the development of logical theory. But the exposition of his philosophy clearly transcends the frame of classic Neo-Kantianism in what concerns the primacy of the theory of knowledge, and raises metaphysical and religious quandaries from the very beginning.⁹³ Although Lotze's philosophical works cover a broader scope than those of Zeller or Fischer, the aspect of his philosophy that had the greatest impact on his contemporaries and also on the specialized literature belongs to the theory of knowledge. I am referring concretely to Lotze's

⁹³ The broader scope of Lotze's philosophical doctrines is revealed in the three volumes of *Mikrokosmos*, which presents, in a popular fashion, Lotze's philosophical anthropology alongside his metaphysical and religious doctrines. I will limited myself in this exposition to his theory of knowledge in order to keep the continuity between the discussion of Zeller and Fischer's philosophy and because this aspect of Lotze's production had a greater impact on Windelband's philosophy. By choosing so, I follow Gabriel's interpretation: "we have to realize that though Lotze's *Mikrokosmos* was much more popular because it includes a complete Weltanschauung, its influence was restricted to popular philosophy, whereas academic philosophy was much more interested in Lotze's *System of Philosophy (System der Philosophie)*" (Gabriel 2002:40). For contemporary interpretations of Lotze's *Mikrokosmos*, see Milkov (2006); Hartung (2009), Woodward (2015); Beiser (2017); Milkov (2017).

momentous distinction between being and validity as it is formulated in the first published part of *System der Philosophie*, his *Logik* of 1874.⁹⁴

Despite the narrow meaning that the concept of logic has for contemporary readers, Lotze's book handles the topics of the theory of knowledge or epistemology. In the context of Neo-Kantian studies, the most-discussed chapter of Lotze's work is his interpretation of Plato's philosophy. This interpretation is found in the third book of Lotze's *Logik*: "Vom Erkennen (Methodologie)."⁹⁵ The aim of this third book appears to be twofold: on the one hand, its title points toward the development of an autonomous theory of knowledge, but, on the other hand, the preface to the *Logik* claims that the book pursues not only a systematical aim but also seeks to systematically explain the history of logical views.

Before facing Lotze's coinage of the concept of validity, it is important to highlight Lotze's general conception of logic. Hartwig Frank captures the essential aspect of Lotze's logic when he claims that "Lotze ... stands completely in the tradition of classical German philosophy that had elaborated the logical as expression of spontaneous active subjectivity" (Frank 1991:252). The assertion of this spontaneous activity of thinking articulates the problems treated in Lotze's *Logik* and, as we will, constitutes a core principle in Windelband's philosophical program.

The *Logik* opens asserting that our notions of truth and falsity emerge from the interplay of our conscious representations. Immersed in the current of representations (*Vorstellungsverlauf*), we find groups of representations that manifest constant and determinate relations, thus justifying our belief that they stem from real sources. Our possibility to bring these related representations back from memory is what, according to Lotze, gives rise to our hope of attaining knowledge. Our confusion of coincidental relations with those that are constant in our representations, on the contrary, is the source of our mistakes, i.e. of falsity (Lotze 1874:3). The activity of thought comes into play regarding the following consideration. If we could arrive at a completely detached

⁹⁴ *System der Philosophie. Erster Teil. Drei Bücher der Logik*. The appreciation of Lotze's impact on Windelband has its complex aspects. The change of perspective from his earlier publications up to *Präjudien* (1884) has been a contested aspect of Windelband's career. It is not at all improbable that the publication of the revised version of his former professor's logical treatise has played a relevant role in this transformation.

⁹⁵ However, as we will see, this text on the theory of knowledge has broad metaphysical implications.

observations of the current of representations, we would note that all our representations stand in necessary relations. As real events, our representations follow one another according to universal laws, that is, they are causally determined. However, this third person's point of view proves itself insufficient for the treatment of logical matters. From the point of view of their production according to universal laws, true as well as false representations are the result of natural causes. The distinction between what is valid and what is invalid cannot be grounded, thus, on the consideration of these laws (Lotze 1874:4). The treatment of representations as mere causal events is unfitted for logical purposes and, for this reason, Lotze is entitled to introduce a different point of view regarding conscious thinking, i.e. to claim that thinking is an activity of our mind. Truth and falsity are not to be sought in the determined series belonging to the current of representations but rather in a specific activity of our minds. Lotze concludes his reasoning by establishing a distinction that would become the basis of the Neo-Kantian rejection of psychologism⁹⁶:

Durch diese Beispiele ... glaube ich hinlänglich den Überschuss der Leistung deutlich gemacht zu haben, welchen das Denken vor dem blossen Vorstellungsverlaufe voraus hat: er besteht überall in den Nebengedanken, welche zu der Wiederherstellung oder Trennung einer Vorstellungsverknüpfung den Rechtsgrund der Zusammengehörigkeit oder Nichtzusammengehörigkeit hinzufügend. Diese Leistung bleibt in ihrem Werthe völlig dieselbe, welche Meinung man auch über ihre Entstehung haben mag ... Hierin also, in der Erzeugung jener rechtfertigenden Nebengedanken, welche die Form unseres Auffassens bedingen, nicht in der blossen Sachgemässheit der Auffassungen, liegt die Eigentümlichkeit des Denkens, der unsere ganze spätere Darstellung gilt" (Lotze 1874:8-9)

The general problem of Lotze's *Logik* becomes, in view of the quoted passage, the elucidation of these "Nebengedanken". Are these thoughts the result of our apprehension of universal relations of being? Are they the sole product of our thinking capacities, thus lacking a real correlate? Or are they to be interpreted in a different manner? This elucidation is independent from the question of the origin of our thinking powers and from any attempt at psychological explanation of thinking (Lotze 1874:12). Lotze's preference entails the denial of the first option, i.e. that the general thoughts originated

⁹⁶ Although this distinction could be traced back to the first edition of Lotze's book, and even to Herbart's writings (Gabriel 2007:92).

in the activity of thinking do not have a real correlate. Just for this reason, the purpose of knowledge cannot consist in the formation of an exact copy of reality.⁹⁷

Once that we have established the scope of Lotze's *Logik*, we can go back to Lotze's most famous doctrine, namely, his *sui generis* interpretation of Plato. This interpretation is carried forward in the second chapter of the third book: "Die Ideenwelt". Although Lotze refers to doctrines that originated in ancient philosophy, he employs this discussion to draw general conclusions regarding the nature of knowledge. Concretely, Lotze is preoccupied with the problem of skepticism, that is, with our capability of acquiring true knowledge of the world. Pre-Platonic philosophy raises distinct issues in relation to this capability, both concerning its constant mutability (the Heraclitean flux) and the relationship between our subjective cognitive capabilities.

Lotze accepts the platonic solution to this conundrum. Despite the fluctuating character of nature, we do find conceptions that are identical and constant. What remains constant in the face of varying events is the autonomous content of thought, "der immer bedeutet, was er bedeutet" (Lotze 1874:495). There is something in our experience that always purports the same eternal and identical character, the same validity (Gültigkeit). Lotze tackles examples that are connected with our ordinary perception. Something sweet can change taste and become bitter, but the character of being sweet cannot experience modification; sweetness cannot transform itself into bitterness (Lotze 1874:495). These abstract properties remain the same, even though worldly events change. These meanings are what remains constant in knowledge.

Plato's discovery is that, despite being immersed in a world of change, certain things are not in constant flux but remain eternally the same. What remains unchanged configures a system of thought which is beyond the reach of the skeptical capacity to doubt. This system of thought is, therefore, the ground for knowledge (Lotze 1874:496). Lotze's conclusion is that by bypassing the problem of the existence of the external world, there is a sense of truth to be found in the analyses of conceptual relations, thus overcoming skepticism. Lotze is even ready to completely discard the subjective side of perception. For example, he disregards the relativist critique of our capa-

⁹⁷ Using Windelband's terminology, the theory of knowledge cannot be developed as an *Abbildtheorie*.

city of knowledge, according to which our perceptual cognition is tied to our sense organs. The consideration of beings that perceive the external medium differently from us does not render the distinctive and permanent characteristics of what we see or hear. It does not matter if only human beings can perceive a certain spectrum of colors. The relations among the members of that spectrum or the properties of the different nuances of color would still remain, and therefore form a limited source of true knowledge. Plato's conception of a world of ideas represents his attempt to theorize this realm of fixed meaning in a world of perpetual motion and change.

The novelty in Lotze's interpretation of Plato comes when he addresses the criticism typically leveled against the doctrine of the world of ideas. For even though Lotze compels us to accept that in our experience there is something permanent, the philosopher is also required to address the ontological problem regarding what these permanent things are. As Lotze asks, are we going to ascribe being or reality to those predicates that remain fixed even when everything in the realm world changes? The problem surrounding Plato's theory of ideas is precisely the interpretation of the being of ideas. Lotze's originality consists in offering an interpretation that denies this being and launches a new interpretation of the world of ideas.

Lotze's ontological distinctions are summarized in the following passage of his

Logik:

Für deutsche Bezeichnung dient hierzu das Wort *Wirklichkeit*. Denn wirklich nennen wir ein Ding, welches ist, im Gegensatz zu einem andern, welches nicht ist; wirklich auch ein Ereignis, welches geschieht oder geschehen ist, im Gegensatz zu dem, welches nicht geschieht; wirklich ein Verhältnis, welches besteht, im Gegensatz zu dem, welches nicht besteht; endlich wirklich wahr nennen wir einen Satz, welcher gilt, im Gegensatz zu dem, dessen Geltung noch fraglich ist. (Lotze 1874:499)

The term reality or actuality⁹⁸ is used to refer to the way in which we express ourselves in speech, affirm things, or take a concrete stance.⁹⁹ There is something common in our way of speaking about disparate items such as things, events, or abs-

⁹⁸ Lotze employs the terms *Wirklichkeit*, *Realität*, and *Dasein* without distinction.

⁹⁹ Although here Lotze is specifically working with German expressions.

tract properties. Although Lotze presents an abstract notion of ‘Bejahtheit’ or position (to take a stance regarding something), he prefers the more common term *wirklich*. Among the things that are actual, we find a series of ontological distinctions of actualities that cannot be treated in the same manner: things that are, events that occur, relations that subsist, and finally, propositions which are valid. We make affirmations on the basis of these things; therefore, we consider them actual, but in different ways. The common denominator ‘real’ is the source, of course, of a series of obscurities, concretely, when different determinations are mixed. In the concrete context of the Platonic interpretation, we are familiarized with the problem of the hypostasis of the world of ideas, namely, of attributing plain existence to ideas.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, Lotze presents us with the deep meaning of the Platonic theory in an interpretive effort analogous to what the Neo-Kantians carried forward regarding the philosophy of Kant.

This possible confusion stemming from the fact that we affirm or take a stance regarding divergent ways of being real is even more acute, Lotze continues, when we consider the central object of reflection of modern philosophy, that is, representations (*Vorstellungen*). Formally, representations are events, occurrences in our minds, but the content of these representations can be considered in isolation from their occurrence in the mind; thus, they cannot be considered an occurrence nor a thing, this content has its own mode of being real, that is, it is valid. This concept of validity (*Geltung*) is the key not only for Lotze’s reading of Plato’s ancient doctrines on the world of ideas but also for his interpretation of the way of being of the logical.

Validity, for Lotze, represents a basic and underivable concept. We cannot explain through other representations or concepts what “being” or “occurrence” are; the same holds for “valid.” Explaining what “valid” means would imply attempting to derive the concept of validity from other ways of being actual, like a thing or an event, which is a plain contradiction. Therefore, those abstract properties that remain constant while events change cannot be said to be things or occurrences but valid assertions. The deficit of the Greek language would have resided precisely in the inability to provide terminological tools to distinguish that which is, that which occurs, and that which is va-

¹⁰⁰ This interpretative strategy of the Platonic doctrines of ideas seems to have been previously advanced by Herbart although in a less developed fashion (Niel 2014:110).

lid. Therefore, what is valid was conflated with that which is, and the ideal was in this manner interpreted as a world of existing things (Lotze 1874:501).

Nichts sonst wollte Plato lehren, als was wir oben durchgingen: die Geltung der Wahrheiten, abgesehen davon, ob sie an irgend einem Gegenstande der Aussenwelt, als dessen Art zu sein, sich bestätigen; die ewig sich selbst gleiche Bedeutung der Ideen, die immer sind, was sie sind, gleichviel ob es Dinge gibt, durch Theilnahme an ihnen sie in dieser Aussenwelt zur Erscheinung bringen, oder ob es Geister gibt, welche ihnen, indem sie sie denken, die Wirklichkeit eines sich ereignenden Seelenzustandes geben. (Lotze 1874:501)

Following Plato's original finding that, in contrast with the incessant flux of worldly events, there are certain things that do not change, Lotze advances what he takes to be the soundest and clearest ontological interpretation of that very finding. Bypassing the limitations of the Greek language, Lotze finds in his own language the possibility to differentiate reality (*Wirklichkeit*) as validity (*Geltung*) from reality as being. Lotze's coinage of the term validity to express the reality of the logical proved to be of paramount importance. In a further chapter, I will discuss how Windelband interpreted this concept of validity in the context of his own philosophical project.

In order to wrap up this discussion of early Neo-Kantianism, I will refer to Lotze's discussion on *a priori* and empirical methods in chapter 3 of the third book of the *Logik*. As we saw, the specificities of the critical method seemed to be diluted in Zeller's program for a theory of knowledge. While Lotze's general interpretation of logic anticipates Windelband's criticism to the *Abbildtheorie* and his interpretation of Plato foreshadows Windelband's interpretation of *a priori* norms, Lotze's discussion of the method of philosophy is a clear precursor of Windelband's distinction between a critical and a genetic method.

Lotze argues that genetic explanations can be a useful tool for the clarification of the truth or falsity of a particular belief. However, this type of explanation is futile for the treatment of human knowledge in general (Lotze 1874:512). The explanation of a single belief can be traced back to its origin in other beliefs, its compatibility with certain facts, and with the general laws of thinking. But human knowledge in itself cannot be tested in the same manner since, in this case, every particular belief and every principle of thinking is put into question.

Lotze's defense of apriorism starts by reassessing the idea that knowing cannot consist in forming a copy of reality (Lotze 1874:521) and that thought is a spontaneous activity¹⁰¹:

Dar erkennende Bewusstsein ist keine widerstehende gekrümmte oder ebene, glatte oder rauhe Oberfläche, und es würde ihm nichts helfen, empfangene Strahlen irgendwohin zu reflektieren; in sich selbst und in seiner zusammenfassenden Einheit, die kein Raum und keine Platte, sondern eine *Thätigkeit* ist, muss er die erregten Einzelvorstellungen zu der Anschauung einer räumlichen Ordnung verbinden, welche nicht selbst wieder eine räumlichen Ordnung, sondern eben nur deren Vorstellung ist. (Lotze 1874:521)

Our understanding of human knowledge in general is linked to the study of the activity performed by the mind. This activity is responsible for the relations between our representations and the general forms of these relations are, therefore, a priori in the Kantian sense (Lotze 1874:524). This doctrine could be inferred from the preliminary presentation of the problem in the introduction to Lotze's *Logik*. In comparison, the peculiarity of this chapter is the discussion of our access to these *a priori* principles (Lotze 1874:525).

The apparent source of our knowledge of *a priori* truths is our inner experience. Therefore, we require a criterion in order to differentiate the *a priori* principles given to us through our inner experience from those representations that are due to the object of experience. The differential criterion of a priori principles is not their innateness, since we are not able to grasp them with independence of experience, but, says Lotze, their self-evidence (*Selbstverständlichkeit*). Once we are aware of an *a priori* principle, we are in no further need to refer to experience in order to credit its truth. This self-evidence manifests itself in the two features that Kant ascribed to the a priori, i.e., universality and necessity. Unfortunately, this criterion is too subjective and Lotze does not offer a sufficiently strong proof of *a priori* principles in the manner of Kant's transcendental deduction¹⁰². Lotze, on the contrary, develops a weaker line of reasoning claiming that

¹⁰¹ This whole paragraph of Lotze's *Logik* will be later paraphrased by Windelband in his conference "Immanuel Kant", thus showing that Windelband's Kantianism was developed through the prism of Lotze's philosophy.

¹⁰² In fact, the problem linked to this reference to self-evidence will reemerge in our discussion of Windelband's critical method in chapter 4.

since we cannot solve the general riddle of knowledge by means of concrete experiences, we are entitled to assume indubitable principles of knowledge (Lotze 1874:528).

Lotze's stronger argument is his rebuttal of the possibility of any psychological or experiential account of the highest principles of knowledge. Any attempt at proving or disproving logical principles such as the law of excluded middle or transcendental principles such as the principle of causality necessarily falls short. It needs to assume the validity of these same principles that are being questioned. Windelband remains adamant throughout his career about the correctness of this rebuttal. The weaker side of Lotze's argument, that is, his reference to self-evidence will prove itself more problematic, prompting Windelband to develop a special type of proof for *a priori* principles.

2.3. CONCLUSIONS

By means of a study of the early exponents of Neo-Kantianism, this chapter has set the stage for the treatment of Windelband's philosophical program. Although there are differences between the philosophies of Zeller, Fischer and Lotze, the three of them manifest the attempt to face philosophy's "identity crisis" by referring to a specific interpretation of the Kantian doctrine. It is in this reference that the theory of knowledge and the emphasis on the actual relevance of the history of philosophy are concretely unified. These authors bequeath to Windelband not only interpretations of Kantian philosophy but a general model for doing philosophy. Even Lotze's *Logik*, which is a systematic book, is full with discussions on the history of philosophy.

SECOND PART: WINDELBAND'S PHILOSOPHICAL PROGRAM

CHAPTER 3: PHILOSOPHICAL PRELUDES

The nature of Wilhelm Windelband's philosophical work has been characterized as twofold. Windelband has been portrayed as part promoter of the Baden School of Neo-Kantianism, a thinker who redefined transcendental idealism in terms of a philosophy of culture, and part renowned historian of philosophy. In accordance with this characterization, Bruno Bauch wrote in his obituary of his former professor that there was no other thinker in Windelband's generation that could condense the systematical and historical aspects of philosophical activity as harmoniously as Windelband did (Bauch 1915:VIII). The novelty in Windelband's writings was to be found, according to Bauch, in his recognition of the necessary connection between those two dimensions of philosophical activity.

There was no consensus, however, regarding the consistency of this intermixture of motifs in Windelband's works. Heinrich Rickert agreed that his teacher's contribution to philosophy consisted in the coordination of the historical and the systematical, but he did not endorse Bauch's positive view regarding the balance between the two. In comparison with Windelband's carefully crafted books on the history of philosophy, Windelband's more systematical attempts were regrettably doomed to remain fragmentary. Nobody denied that Windelband had systematical pretensions, or that he preconized a systematical mode of thinking, but the truth was that he never succeeded at producing a convincing and complete systematical presentation of his philosophy. *Präludien*¹⁰³, Windelband's capital work, is indeed a token of this incompleteness. As Frederick Beiser elegantly declares: "For [Windelband's] preludes, there would be no symphony" (Beiser 2014b: 493). Facing this incompleteness, Rickert felt entitled to

¹⁰³ *Präludien: Aufsätze und Reden zur Einleitung in die Philosophie*. Mohr: Freiburg and Tübingen, 1884. As the title of the first edition expresses the content of the book consists in autonomous essays on a variety of topics.

conclude that, as far as concerns Windelband's philosophy, "Es handelt sich [...] in systematischer Hinsicht nur um ein Programm und um Anregungen" (Rickert 1915:24).¹⁰⁴

For Rickert, Windelband's contribution to philosophy was immensely valuable but also extremely limited. His unfinished systematic writings served as a take-off platform for his more capable and determined students, among whom it is worth mentioning, not only Bauch and Rickert but also the untimely deceased Emil Lask. Indeed, the works of Windelband's disciples undeniably achieved a higher degree of completeness and depth. It is probably due to this that Heinrich Rickert has almost completely eclipsed the figure of his former teacher, to the extent that he is often considered the true representative of the Baden School of Neo-Kantianism.¹⁰⁵ On the contrary, when we shift our attention from the systematical to the historical works, the impression that Windelband was effectively surpassed by his disciples does not occur. His disciples could not match by any means what Windelband accomplished in this particular field, and it is fair to say that, in this regard, none of them carried on his work.¹⁰⁶ This contrast between the divergent impacts of his writings is one of the motives for the focus on Windelband's original methodology for the history of philosophy, the so-called 'history of problems,' as opposed to the more systematic side of his production, treated mostly as the threshold of Rickert's philosophy of values (Chang 2012:14).

My objective in this chapter is to analyze Windelband's suggestions for the development of a system of philosophy. In consonance with Rickert's evaluation, I consider that rendering Windelband's program into a single coherent whole represents a du-

¹⁰⁴ Werner Flach, one of the most important scholars of Neo-Kantianism, follows this view very closely: "Sein [Windelband] systematisches Werken mehr auf den Entwurf eines Programms als auf die Durchführung eines Programms zurückgeht. Seine systematischen Schriften sind in diesem Verstande Programmschriften" (Flach 1980:40). For Flach, the programmatic nature of Windelband's systematical writings makes the study of his texts more appealing, as this feature allows us to reach a better understanding of the basic motives and problems connected with the philosophy of the Neo-Kantian Baden School. Sandor Griffioen made a similar claim: "Mit Blick auf die südwestdeutschen Neukantianer ist Windelband die interessanteste Figur, da er mit Gefühl für Dramatik fasst, was Rickert in wohlüberlegter Systematik formuliert" (Griffioen 1998:62).

¹⁰⁵ For instance: "Wiewohl Windelband von überzeugt ist, dass die Region der Geltung ein systematisches Gefüge von Werten darstellt, Bilder er kein einheitliche gegliedertes Wertsystem aus. Dies bleibt Heinrich Rickert, dem -neben Windelband- wohl bedeutendsten Vertreter der Südwestdeutschen Schule vorbehalten" (Häusser 1989: 45). Cf. Krijnen (2001:17).

¹⁰⁶ An exception to this view could be represented by the historical works of Richard Kroner, who studied philosophy under the guidance of Fischer, Windelband, and Rickert and whose *Von Kant bis Hegel* is a well-known and esteemed historiographical work. I will return to Kroner's history of German philosophy in chapter 7.

bious, if not impossible, task. To begin with, the twofold nature of Windelband's philosophical writings, in addition to the unfinished character of his systematic attempts, make the precise reconstruction and posterior evaluation of his philosophy an extremely difficult endeavor (Ruge 1917:54).¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Windelband's "stimulations" (Rickert 1915: 24) in systematic philosophy are scattered throughout many short essays and conferences. His last incursion in systematic philosophy, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, cannot be taken as an authoritative text on account of its introductory and panoramic character. All these features make the traditional path of interpretation more appealing, but it is my personal opinion that, incomplete as it stands, it is possible to gather together the main threads of Windelband's program. In this chapter, I will try to do precisely that. My objective, then, is not to convey the whole spectrum of possibilities presented in Windelband's texts or to deny that Windelband's program remains incomplete, but to identify its fundamental scope and to familiarize the reader with some of Windelband's key concepts and ideas.

With the aforementioned aim in mind, I provide in the first section of the chapter the essential information regarding Windelband's life and works. After this, Section 2 seeks to discover the proper articulation of Windelband's philosophical program, which he initially presented in *Präludien*. In this section, I focus on Windelband's definition of philosophy. This definition is of paramount importance, and I will employ it to articulate the content of this investigation from chapters 3 to 6. Continuing the discussion of Windelband's definition of philosophy, Section 3 attempts to complement Windelband's definition by exploring his interpretation of two central figures in the history of philosophy: Socrates and Kant.¹⁰⁸ For Windelband, these two philosophers operated as historical landmarks, as beacons casting their light from the past, offering a necessary orientation in Windelband's quest for rescuing philosophy from its nineteenth-century identity crisis. Before the chapter's concluding remarks, a fourth section offers a summary

¹⁰⁷ One interpreter even speaks about the character of Windelband's writings as almost experimental, affirming, for example, that "he [Windelband] is constantly hybridizing ideas and always retracts the steps he has taken" (Ziche 2015:208).

¹⁰⁸ Both essays in the original edition of *Präludien* share a common feature. Even though they deal with a historical topic, they implicitly discuss contemporary issues to one extent or another. This becomes apparent when the handling of Socrates and Kant's philosophies in these essays is compared with Windelband's expositions of these two authors in his histories of philosophy.

of Windelband's interpretation of transcendental idealism, as was stated in the first edition of *Präludien*. To do so, I touch upon Windelband's brief polemic against the positivist philosopher Ernst Laas (1837-1885). The characterization of Windelband's program in terms of a teleological criticism comes, in fact, from Laas' review of *Präludien*. This critical review, coupled with Windelband's reply, represent documents that are not depicted in the literature, although they clearly portray the debate between positivists and Neo-Kantian trends in German philosophy. Moreover, since these texts question the interpretation of the method of philosophy, they serve as an introduction to the treatment of the critical method in chapter 4.

3.1. BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Until recently, the most valuable sources for the reconstruction of Windelband's life were obituaries such as those penned by Rickert (1915) or Ruge (1917). Horst Gundlach's *Windelband und die Psychologie* (Gundlach 2017), a book that focuses on the tense relationship between philosophy and psychology during the nineteenth century, and Gerald Hartung and Jörn Bohr *Forschungsgrundlagen Wilhelm Windelband* (Hartung and Bohr (Eds.) 2020) represent the most important and up-to-date contribution to the topic. These two books unearth invaluable archive documents, especially regarding Windelband's early career. My own presentation follows the content of these texts.

Wilhelm Windelband was born in Potsdam on May 11, 1848. Little or nothing is known of his life before he entered university in 1866 (Gundlach 2017:21). He studied at the universities of Jena (1866-1867), Berlin (1867-1869), and Göttingen (1869-1870), exploring different fields including the natural sciences, history, psychology, and philosophy. In philosophical matters, his most important teachers were Rudolf Hermann Lotze from Göttingen and Kuno Fischer from Jena. It is from their teachings that the two contrasting tendencies in Windelband's production apparently stem. The historiographic impulse, it is suggested, is result of Fischer's influence, while Windel-

band's systematic inclination is often attributed to the teachings of Lotze.¹⁰⁹ It was under the latter's guidance that Windelband obtained his doctoral degree in 1870 at the age of 21.¹¹⁰ His dissertation is titled *Die Lehren vom Zufall*.¹¹¹

Three years later, Windelband became *Privatdozent* in Leipzig. His habilitation thesis was entitled *Über die Gewissheit der Erkenntnis: Eine psychologisch-erkenntnistheoretische Studie*¹¹². In conjunction with his doctoral dissertation, this early work represents Windelband's first incursion in systematic philosophy. As the records from the University of Leipzig show, Windelband taught there mainly historical courses on the history of modern philosophy, focusing especially on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹¹³

In 1876, Windelband moved to Zürich in order to become professor of Inductive Philosophy.¹¹⁴ He assumed his duties with the inaugural lecture: "Über den gegenwärtigen Stand der psychologischen Forschung"¹¹⁵.

In this conference, Windelband tackles the central question of the problematic relationship between philosophy and empirical sciences by dealing with the paradigmatic example of the situation of psychology. This conference represents one of the few printed works where Windelband directly addresses issues of psychology.¹¹⁶ For this

¹⁰⁹ Although, from what was established in the previous chapter, Lotze employed historical reconstructions to present his own systematical beliefs and Fischer produced systematical works in the fields of logic and metaphysics as well.

¹¹⁰ In the same year, Windelband served as a volunteer in the Franco-Prussian war.

¹¹¹ Regarding this doctoral dissertation, Lotze's formal evaluation is still conserved: "The treatise of Mr. Windelband entirely fulfills the requirements of a dissertation. Although I by no means consider its results correct, I have to accept that it is a very diligent, fundamental, well-written work and it gives evidence of excellent philosophical schooling. Nothing seems to stand in the way of granting the request" (Woodward 2015:470; also in Hartung and Bohr (Eds.) 2020:30).

¹¹² The assessment of Windelband's promoter, Moritz Drobisch can be found in Hartung and Bohr (Eds.) (2020:32).

¹¹³ A list of the courses Windelband gave that year can be found in the following link: https://histvv.uni-leipzig.de/dozenten/windelband_w.html

¹¹⁴ Windelband's immediate predecessors in the chair were Friedrich Albert Lange, for whom the chair was created, and Wilhelm Wundt, who had moved earlier from Zurich to Leipzig.

¹¹⁵ I discuss the content of this lecture in chapter 3 in the context of Windelband's theory of the philosophical method.

¹¹⁶ The other work being his *Antrittsrede* in Freiburg from 1877.

reason, it has become a trend in the secondary literature on Windelband to highlight the contrast between this period as professor of Inductive Philosophy, a subject that mixes psychological and philosophical topics, and the strictly Neo-Kantian period, characterized by an anti-positivist and anti-psychologist position.¹¹⁷ This interpretation has been partially contested by Gundlach, who explains that the separation of philosophers and psychologists into opposing camps only arose at the beginning of the twentieth century (Gundlach 2017:60), and therefore, a few decades after Windelband's lectures. Another argument against a scission in Windelband's career, also advanced by Gundlach, is the fact that, even though Windelband did not publish any works on psychological topics during his mature phase, he still frequently lectured on psychological subjects.¹¹⁸ This allows Gundlach to argue for a higher degree of continuity between Windelband's early and mature phases.

There are, however, marked differences between Windelband's early and mature phases, although these differences are not exclusively limited to the realm of psychology. While it is possible to argue that there was a certain continuity in Windelband's estimation of psychology, Windelband's conception of history's relevance for philosophy decidedly changed from one phase to the other. In this sense, I will argue in the next chapter that, due to strictly philosophical motives, the relevance of psychological research in Windelband's program nonetheless diminished during his mature phase. This last point, nevertheless, is secondary in relation to my research. The important fact to keep in mind is that, despite its absence in Windelband's early writings, the attention to the philosophy of history was to become a hallmark of his philosophy.

¹¹⁷ This interpretation was first advanced by Köhnke (1986). This early phase includes Windelband's doctoral dissertation and habilitation thesis and covers approximately the whole decade of 1870-1880 (Kemper 2006:27); (Chang 2012:20). The proximity with psychological research, a characteristic of positivist philosophy at that time, Köhnke (1986); Kemper (2006), a tendency to relativism Köhnke (1986); Kinzel (2017); Schlaudt (2018) and an emphasis on epistemological problems (Kemper 2006) configure the characteristics of Windelband's early position. It could also be said that this phase displays a complete absence of interest for the philosophy of history. In addition to these two phases, the psychologistic and the mature, commentators also include a third phase (approximately extending from 1890 to Windelband's death) characterized by the importance given to the problems of the philosophy of history and the philosophy of world-views (Kemper 2006:118); (Chang 2012:16). Windelband himself supports this interpretation of his own works through his characterization of the evolution of Neo-Kantianism in Windelband (NHJ) and Windelband (1909a).

¹¹⁸ Gundlach has edited transcriptions from Windelband's courses on psychology in Gundlach (2017) and König and Schlaudt (Eds.) (2018). According to Gundlach, Windelband planned to write a book on psychology (2017:103). Besides Gundlach's, the reader can find attempts at evolutive reconstructions of Windelband's thinking in Kemper (2006) and Chang (2012).

Windelband taught philosophy at Freiburg from 1877 to 1882.¹¹⁹ During this period, he published the two volumes of his *Die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*.¹²⁰ One of the novelties of these books was the emphasis on the relationship of philosophical doctrines with their cultural context and the peculiar situation of the sciences.¹²¹ After his stay in Freiburg, Windelband moved to Strasbourg and became the successor of Otto Liebmann. Windelband's attainment of this new academic position marks the beginning of his mature phase.

Windelband's most important philosophical work, *Präludien*, appeared in 1884.¹²² It is on the materials in the first edition that I base my outline of Windelband's mature philosophical program. During his stay in Strasbourg, Windelband also published two important historical works. The first of these two works was Windelband's *Geschichte der alten Philosophie*, which appeared in 1888; the second, Windelband's momentous *Geschichte der Philosophie*, which in 1890 was published under the title *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*. Rickert praises this last book as Windelband's most important work, and suggests that it best expresses the inner connection of the historical and the systematical dimensions of his philosophical thinking:

Es ist das eigentliche *Hauptwerk* Windelbands, die Synthese seines historischen und systematischen Denkens, und es gibt vielleicht keine andere Wissenschaft, die ein solches 'Lehrbuch' aufzuweisen hat. Es bringt die gesamte Entwicklung des europäischen Philosophierens von den Griechen bis zur Gegenwart in einen

¹¹⁹ Windelband was the founder of Freiburg's *Philosophisches Seminar* (Gundlach 2017:112). Windelband's *Antrittsrede* "Über den Einfluss des Willens auf das Denken" deals again with a psychological subject. It was published in 1878 in the *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, a journal with positivistic tendencies and directed by Richard Avenarius. It was included later in *Präludien* with a modified title, "Über Denken und Nachdenken".

¹²⁰ Windelband (1878) and Windelband (1880). Rickert says from Windelband's *Die Geschichte der Neueren Philosophie*: "Windelband musste jedem, der sehen wollte, die Augen dafür offen, dass der nachkantische Idealismus ein ebenso reiches wie organisch zusammenhängendes Geistesgebilde bedeutet, das gerade als Totalität unvergleichlich gross ist, da in ihm Schritt für Schritt auch das zur vollen Entfaltung kommt, was bei Kant um Teil nur in Ansätzen vorhanden war" (Rickert 1915:4). Kemper sees in these volumes the first expression of Windelband's history of philosophical problems (Kemper 2006:67). A third volume of this history, covering the philosophical landscape of the nineteenth century was projected but never finished.

¹²¹ This would be one of Windelband's major contributions to the methodology of the history of philosophy. See chapter 6, Section 3.

¹²² The preface to the first edition is signed with the date 1883, but the book was published the following year.

nicht allzu umfangreichen Band und leistete damit, etwas was man wahrscheinlich für unmöglich gehalten hätte, ehe es ausgeführt vorlag. (Rickert 1915:7)¹²³

Windelband was appointed rector of the University of Strasbourg. In 1894, on which occasion he delivered a famous speech: “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft.” This text will be thoroughly examined in chapter 5, where I will tackle Windelband’s conception of the philosophy of history.

From 1903 until his death in 1915, Windelband taught at the University of Heidelberg, where he took up the position that had belonged to his former teacher Kuno Fischer.¹²⁴ Windelband held prominent academic and social positions during this period. He was appointed president of the *Third International Congress of Philosophy*;¹²⁵ he was a member of the *Badischen Landtags* (1905-1908) and a founding member of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences.

A second book in which Windelband tackles problems of systematic philosophy was published in 1914. As I have mentioned before, Windelband chose for this book the unappealing title of *Einleitung in der Philosophie*, claiming that the purpose of the book was to offer a general outlook of philosophical problems and the different ways in which these problems could be handled. This book actually represents Windelband’s most concerted attempt to write a fully-fledged system of philosophy.¹²⁶

During the first year of the First World War, and inspired by this event, Windelband lectured on the philosophy of history. The manuscript of these lectures was published by his son Wolfgang Windelband and by Bruno Bauch under the title *Geschichtsphilosophie*.

¹²³ Alongside Rickert, Baeumker (Windelband’s college in Strasbourg) and Bauch also affirm the systematic nature of the *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Baeumker 1916:108; Bauch 1915:IX). These three authors acknowledge the systematic nature of Windelband’s histories of philosophy. However, they also help to justify the widespread opinion according to which Windelband was, after all, only a historian of philosophy (Herrschaft 1995:45; Chang 2012:14).

¹²⁴ About Fischer’s role as chairman of Philosophy in Heidelberg, see Gundlach (2017:177). Although there is a doctrinal affinity between Fischer and Windelband, even a personal relationship, there is also a generational distance described with precision by Klaus Christian Köhnke: “Lehrte und schrieb Fischer noch für das deutsche Volk, so repräsentiert Windelband bereits den Philosophieprofessor, - wenngleich freilich noch Hingst nicht den spitzeren Fachvertreter der oder nur für Philosophie” (Köhnke 1995:40).

¹²⁵ The first international congress of philosophy held in Germany. See also Köhnke (2015:45) and Gundlach (2017:233).

¹²⁶ On the contrary, Rickert considers that this book does not introduce any new systematical ideas but harvests the results of Windelband’s whole philosophical career (Rickert 1915:12).

sophie. Eine Kriegsvorlesung in 1916. As in the case of several philosophers from his generation, Windelband welcomed the onset of the war with enthusiasm. However, this feeling quickly abandoned him.¹²⁷ His eldest son died on the battlefield of Ypres in Belgium. A similar fate was shared by his brilliant student Emil Lask, who died in the second year of the war. Windelband passed away on October 22, 1915.

All in all, it is possible to say that Windelband was the epitome of the German university philosopher (Köhnke 1995:32; Kemper 2006:69; Hartung and Bohr (Eds.) 2020:9) or what Fritz Ringer called a German Mandarin of the *Kaiserreich*.¹²⁸ He spent his entire philosophical career at different universities. In contrast with the first generation of Neo-Kantians, including his mentor Kuno Fischer, Windelband was appointed professor at a relatively young age.¹²⁹ Moreover, Christian Köhnke correctly points out that the literary genres employed by Windelband pertain entirely to the university ‘canon:’ university discourses, academic conferences, handbooks, and textbooks for his classes (Köhnke 1995:34). Although I have mentioned that Windelband had systematic pretensions, he never wrote a system of philosophy and did not express his thinking in a systematic way. His three main books, a handbook on the history of philosophy, a general introduction to the discipline, and a collection of essays on a variety of topics, do not correspond to the model of the system of philosophy. Lastly, the disciplines covered by these texts also coincide with what was expected of a late nineteenth century profes-

¹²⁷ As his son Wolfgang narrates: “Mit stolzer Freude erlebte er die Wunderbollen Tage der Mobilmachung ... Die tiefen Sorgen, mit denen er wie so viele andere auf die zersetzenden innenpolitischen Kämpfe gesehen hatte, zerflössen vor der frohen Erkenntnis der inneren Gesundheit und jugendlichen Kraft unseres Volkes” (Windelband 1916:5).

¹²⁸ Ringer’s sociological definition of the German mandarins is the following: “For the European setting, I would define ‘the mandarins’ simply as a social and cultural elite which owes its status primarily to educational qualifications, rather than to hereditary rights or wealth ... “The ‘mandarin intellectuals,’ chiefly the university professors, are concerned with the educational diet of the elite. They uphold the standards of qualification of membership in the group, and they act as its spokesmen in cultural questions” (Ringer 1990:5-6). Windelband is mentioned several times in Ringer’s book.

¹²⁹ Windelband was appointed ordinary professor at the age of 28, just three years after his habilitation. His predecessor in the chair of Inductive Philosophy in Zürich was none other than Friedrich Albert Lange, another central Neo-Kantian figure, who obtained the same position -also his first position as ordinary professor- at the age of 42.

sor of philosophy: logic, psychology, the history of philosophy, and German literature (Gundlach 2017:75).¹³⁰

3.2. WINDELBAND'S DEFINITION OF PHILOSOPHY

Windelband's mature philosophy is first expressed in the 1884 edition of his *Präludien*. This first "torso" of Windelband's philosophy presents his original exposition of transcendental idealism and constitutes the starting point of the Southwestern School of Neo-Kantianism. The discussion of the definition of philosophy is the topic of the first essay in the collection, "Was ist Philosophie?" and will be focus of this section.

The systematic pretensions of Windelband's *Präludien* are expressed in its brief preface. There, Windelband writes: "Diese 'Präludien' sollen sich dem Leser als Vortudien für eine systematische Behandlung der Philosophie darstellen und bilden in ihrem Zusammenhang ein Programm der Untersuchung, die ich später auszuführen hoffe" (Windelband 1915 1:III). The essays contained in the book should be considered, then, as preparatory studies for a presentation of philosophy in the form of a system, and, together they constitute the basis of a research program.¹³¹ This view also explicates why his disciples were prompt to describe his works as a mere representation of impulses and fleeting moments of inspiration. Windelband's primary book only sets forth an architectural plan for future work.

¹³⁰ 20 handwritten notebooks containing Windelband's lecture notes were found in the library of Tohoku University in Sendai (Japan) (Bohr 2019). The topics of these notebooks also show the plurality of interests present in the teaching activities of Windelband: [1] Psychologie: Grundriss zu Vorlesungen (Zuerst Freiburg 1879); [2] Hauptprobleme der Philosophie (1878); [3] Vertheilung des Stoffs auf die Vorlesungen Winter 1880/81; [4] Grundlinien der Rechtsphilosophie (Vorgetragen zuerst Freiburg 1882; [5] Die Momente des Rechtsbegriffs; [6] Skelett der Geschichte der Philosophie; [7] Einleitung in die Philosophie; [8] Grundriss der Psychologie. Entwurf einer systematischen Behandlung der Erfahrungsseelenlehre; [9] Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Philosophie; [10] Psychologie No. II; [11]: Vom Bewußtsein; [17] Religionsphilosophie (1891); [18] Deutsches Geistesleben II 1899/1900; [19] Geschichte des deutschen Geisteslebens von Leibniz und Klopstock bis Hegel und Goethe (1899/1900); [20] Willensfreiheit 1899/1900.

¹³¹ This is not a minor issue, since the system was a distinctive form of philosophical writing among German philosophers at the time.

However, against the multiplicity of topics and the autonomy, even isolation, of Windelband's essays, we are compelled to consider them, at least in a first interpretive approach, as presentations of a single philosophical project. Even though each essay is a self-sufficient exposition of a particular topic, when held together, it becomes apparent that they constitute but different perspectives of a single idea of philosophy.¹³² This idea of philosophy represents Windelband's own take on the Kantian legacy, i.e., his appropriation of philosophical criticism.¹³³ Before treating Windelband's definition of philosophy in detail, it would be useful to summarize the book's contents. This tentative outline can show us how the definition of philosophy could act as a possible unifying thread.

Präludien was originally composed of ten studies that covered both systematic and historical topics. These essays displayed an argumentative organization that became increasingly blurred by the addition of materials in the subsequent editions of the book. In the original edition, the first group of essays introduces the reader to the discussion of the general definition of philosophy. This definition is initially presented in a systematically-oriented exposition - the essay "Was ist Philosophie?" - and then further explored through the discussion of two key historical figures: Socrates and Kant.¹³⁴ Philosophy is here defined as the critical science of absolute values, a definition that attempts to capture both the method and the object of the discipline, and which became a trademark of the Southwestern School of Neo-Kantianism.¹³⁵ Following this definition, two in-depth essays, "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" and "Normen und Naturgesetze", respectively cover the meaning of the critical method and the concept of value. Fi-

¹³² Windelband says: "Sie [the texts] erfüllen Eine gemeinsame Aufgabe, indem sie, einander ergänzend und erläuternd, einen bestimmten Begriff der Philosophie in allgemeinverständlicher Weise zu möglichst vielseitiger Anschauung bringen" (Windelband 1915 I:III).

¹³³ Later dubbed 'teleological criticism' by Ernst Laas.

¹³⁴ An interesting parallelism between this treatment of Socrates and Kant is provided by Christian Krijnen's exposition of Rickert's post-metaphysical philosophy, in which the author reviews and contrasts the philosophies of Plato and Kant. Plato's theory of ideas represents a landmark of metaphysical philosophy while Kant's transcendental logic represents a landmark of post-metaphysical idealism (Krijnen 2001:31, 39). The difference between the two is stated in the following terms: "Während die Metaphysik vor Kant nur über übersinnlich *seiende* Gründe verfügt, also Gründe, die der Gegenstandsseite des zu begründenden Wissens angehören, sieht Kant, dass das Wissen um diese Gründe wiederum von Voraussetzungen abhängt, die die Gültigkeit dieses Wissens konstituieren: Alles Wissen von Seiendem setzt die Geltung derjenigen Prinzipien voraus, nach deren Massgabe sich Erkenntnis konstituiert" (Krijnen 2001:47).

¹³⁵ For Rickert's definition of philosophy as a doctrine of values, see Rickert (1910).

nally, Windelband provides a concrete example of the application of his method for the field of ethics in “Der Prinzip der Moral.”¹³⁶

The second edition of the book added a final essay, “Das Heilige,” which can be considered an attempt to synthesize the different philosophical disciplines -theoretical philosophy, ethics, and aesthetics- through the philosophy of religion.

The third edition, published in 1907, introduced several amendments, clarifications, and additions to the content of the essays, all of which reflect, in my opinion, the key transformation in Windelband’s thinking. These amendments are of special relevance for the purpose of this dissertation as they are motivated by problems related to the philosophy of history.¹³⁷ A clear example of this new direction toward the philosophy of history is represented by the aforementioned essay, “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft.”

From the fourth edition (1911) onwards, the structure of Windelband’s book was completely modified. The book was divided into two volumes to accommodate the added essays. The first volume comprises a number of essays on historical subjects, while the essays in the second volume deal with questions of systematic philosophy. This new configuration and the addition of essays from different periods make it harder to interpret this book as the expression of a single research program. In this sense, Windelband acknowledges that the book, which had entered into its fourth edition, was best interpreted as an expression of the development of his fundamental thoughts throughout a time span of over 35 years (Windelband 1915 1:VII).¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Besides these essays, the original edition also contains an essay on Spinoza (an author Windelband lectured on in Leipzig and Zürich), an essay on Hölderlin’s poetry, Windelband’s inaugural speech as professor in Freiburg, and a general presentation of his thinking. In this schema, the book’s central pieces are “Was ist Philosophie?” and “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” The last text in the collection, “Sub specie aeternitatis,” takes the form of a free meditation. I personally do not agree with the assessment of this text’s place in the general outline of Windelband’s program of philosophy. Nevertheless, Philip Merlan offers a compelling insight into Windelband’s meditation by relating it to the traditional problem of the link between belief in immortality and the Aristotelian-Averroist doctrine of the common intellect (Merlan 1963:126). As far as I know, this is the only, and certainly original, attempt to explain this short juvenile piece.

¹³⁷ This point will be carefully explained in the following chapter. These changes are one of the signs of the transition from Windelband’s mature phase to his study of the philosophy of history, which is particular to his later thinking.

¹³⁸ For example, an interesting contrast can be traced between two essays on Kant, from 1881 (IK) and 1904 (NHJ), respectively. These essays allow us to explore the Neo-Kantian understanding of the philosopher from Königsberg, and therefore, of the Neo-Kantian legacy, along with the changes that took place in between.

The opening essay in all the editions of the book is titled “Was ist Philosophie? (Über Begriff und Geschichte der Philosophie)”.¹³⁹ The general purpose of “Was ist Philosophie?” is to advance and defend a definition of philosophy that is linked to the concept of value. An additional requisite that Windelband imposes to such a definition is that it has to suit philosophers involved in both systematic and historiographical practices.¹⁴⁰ This last requirement leads Windelband to elaborate an intricate dialogical relation between historical and systematic motives that articulate the argumentative framework of the essay. Windelband is not willing to accept any general definition of the discipline, not even the definition he embraces in his systematic viewpoint, without previously discussing its historiographical dimension and its utility for the work of the historian of philosophy. On the other hand, Windelband grounds his own definition of the discipline not only through abstract reasoning but also by presenting his conception of philosophy as the result of a developmental process characteristic of the history of Western philosophy.

But these aims just described immediately raise a methodological problem, since every attempt to produce a general or formal definition of philosophy through historical abstraction, the only procedure apparently suitable for the historiographer’s needs, inevitably fails. This failure comes, according to my interpretation, from the employment of a deficient logical consideration of definition, whereby the historical aspect of problems was separated from its philosophical counterpart. To prove that such is the case, it is worthwhile to consider Windelband’s line of argumentation in the opening section of “Was ist Philosophie?”

Windelband provides several arguments that demonstrate the failure of historical abstraction as the path for a purely formal definition of philosophy. The idea is that it is

¹³⁹ As far as I know, there is no English translation nor commentary of this key text. This is an added reason for offering a detailed account of its content. Gundlach conjectures that this essay, which was probably written in 1882, was Windelband’s *Antrittsrede* as chairman in Strasbourg.

¹⁴⁰ Windelband’s demands regarding the definition of philosophy are difficult to reconcile but do not lack predecessors. The problem was apparently formulated in an essay on the definition of philosophy by Rudolf Haym (Haym 1848), to which Windelband makes a belated reference at the beginning of the essay. In this essay, Haym contrasts the definition of philosophy according to its concept and according to its name [Wort]; and characterizes the former as a systematic enterprise: “Die Antwort auf die Frage: Was ist Philosophie? kann nur durch Eine Philosophie, durch die philosophische Darstellung eines philosophischen Systems gegeben werden. Mehr noch. Das Ausgehen von dem Begriff bedingt den durchaus *individuellen* Charakter der Antwort” (Haym 1848:1). The word in all its historical uses outgrows the concept but is difficult to employ for definitional purposes.

not possible to obtain a definition of philosophy in accordance with the principles of Aristotelian logic, that is, through the determination of the *genus proximum* and the *differentia specifica* of the concept of ‘philosophy’. It is impossible, says Windelband, to determine with logical precision either a general concept for philosophy or its specific notes solely by reference to historical materials. This impossibility is strikingly obvious and one example will suffice to illustrate this. Even though Windelband believes that philosophy is a science, he denies the possibility of offering a general definition of philosophy as a science that also serves historiographical purposes. It is simply not possible to subsume all historical manifestations of philosophy under the label of science. Accordingly, several philosophical doctrines cannot be considered scientific by any reasonable standard; these doctrines were decidedly viewed as un- or non-scientific by their proponents, or the scientific aspect in them was subordinated to a higher non-scientific motive, like happiness or righteousness of life. All this without taking into account that the terms ‘science’ and ‘scientific philosophy’ are always contentious and diverse.

Rather than as a science, Windelband chooses to characterize philosophy as a “proteusartige Kulturerscheinung” (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:6), that is, as an irreducible and multifaceted cultural phenomenon.

Even those who dogmatically want to subsume philosophy under the general concept of science have to give some explanation regarding the specificities of philosophy in contrast to other scientific endeavors. The defender of the definition of philosophy as science must distinguish the *differentia specifica* of philosophy. And there are only two ways to determine this difference according to Windelband, by exploring either the method of philosophy or its object.

The issue is that these two alternatives present, for the purposes of historical abstraction, exactly the same problems posed by the concept of scientific philosophy. It is impossible to isolate a single object that can subsume the wide-ranging array of topics that have been the subject of philosophical thinking, or that have occupied the center of philosophical thinking, throughout the ages. The prospect of determining a unique and comprehensive method for philosophical thinking does not seem promising either. The concealed conclusion of all these arguments is that, although philosophers

and historians of philosophy seek a historical definition by way of abstract reasoning, their results are formal and non-historical.¹⁴¹

Windelband's alternative to the Aristotelian procedure of definition calls for a change in the process of defining. Rather than offering a definition that formally subsumes all the concrete instances of philosophy, Windelband attempts to explain the meaning of philosophy by linking it to the transformation that the concept of philosophy suffered throughout its history. Moreover, this attempt aims to take into account and explain the causes that made the process of formal definition impossible. Thus, a definition of the discipline can be reached only if it is assumed that the different manifestations of philosophy, are not distinct materializations of an all-encompassing concept, but are related to each other by virtue of belonging to a single and meaningful historical account. This meaning does not come from the static determination of the concept of philosophy but from the dynamic understanding of philosophy as something in motion. Philosophy reveals its meaning precisely in this movement. Instead of an abstraction, what Windelband offers through this attempt at a definition is a reconstructive narrative.

The definition of philosophy comes, then, from our understanding and explanation of the 'proteic' creative force of philosophy. Windelband's idea consists in searching for motive or direction in this process of formation. Windelband expresses this motive in the following terms:

Soll aber diese historische Besinnung doch einen vernünftigen Sinn behalten ... so setzt das voraus, dass der Wechsel, welchen der Name 'Philosophie' im Laufe der Jahrhunderte erfahren hat, nicht bloss Willkür und Zufälligkeit bedeutet, sondern selbst eine vernünftigen Sinn und einen eigentümlichen Wert hat (Windelband *WiPh.* 1915 1:12).

The narration of the history of philosophy shows the dynamics contained in the changing meaning of philosophy. The task that Windelband sets himself for defining philosophy consists in showing that, behind the apparently unrelated succession of philosophical doctrines, it is possible to discern a unifying sense. The objective then is to view

¹⁴¹ This type of argument also bears some relevance for the understanding of the history of philosophy. While in its grounding phase at the beginning of the nineteenth century, historians of philosophy believed that a fixed concept of philosophy was a prerequisite of any historical narrative; however, following the consolidation of the discipline at the end of the nineteenth century, this prerequisite was abandoned (Hartung 2015). In the case of Windelband, it is even considered counterproductive.

the history of philosophy as a process of formation of philosophy from Greek philosophy onwards. An attempt at definition based on an alleged essence of philosophy, obtained by way of abstraction from historical sources, is replaced by a definition based on the meaning of philosophy's formative process. As I will explain later¹⁴², this process does not take the shape of a successive straight line, but it moves back- and forth- under the influence of the interrelations between philosophy, science, culture, and the philosopher's personality.

In hindsight, Windelband offers in this essay a condensed presentation of his narrative on the history of philosophy. It constitutes a prequel to the structure developed in his lengthier histories of philosophy.¹⁴³ Moreover, if it were not for this narrative, it would be impossible to fully understand the way in which Windelband justifies his own definition of philosophy as a critical science of absolute values. Despite its abstract nature, this definition of philosophy also has historical roots and acts as the first implicit argument for the philosophical relevance of the history of philosophy.¹⁴⁴

Windelband's historical narrative can be sketched as follows. The guiding force of Western civilization is originally manifested in the Greek spirit.¹⁴⁵ The starting point of philosophy is the original recognition by the Greeks of wisdom as an absolute value. We owe the Greeks the term *philosophia* and the separation between wisdom and the mythical forms of expression of thinking (Windelband 1888:132). The Greek craving for wisdom casts science into its definite shape, thus, for Windelband, the beginning of philosophy and the beginning of science are one and the same. This changing relations-

¹⁴² In chapter 6.

¹⁴³ Windelband extends his narrative in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, where the epochal articulation is presented in terms of a history of problems. In general, Windelband's whole outline of the history of philosophy in this essay foreshadows the structure of the *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*. See Windelband (1935:2), particularly the first paragraph: name and concept of philosophy. However, the essay "Was ist Philosophie?" offers a better theoretical understanding of Windelband's position. In this last sense, the essay can be also considered programmatic in relation to his histories of philosophy.

¹⁴⁴ In the next section of the chapter, I will show that this narrative is a guiding force for the system of philosophy, toward which Windelband aspired.

¹⁴⁵ "... nicht zufrieden mit der Aufspeicherung praktischer Kenntnisse und mit der phantasievollen Spekulation des religiösen Bedürfnisses, suchen die Griechen das Wissen um seiner selbst willen. [...] Aus der Verschlingung mit den übrigen Kulturthätigkeiten wird die Erkenntnis, wie die Kunst, zu einer selbständigen Funktion herausbildet. So ist die Geschichte der antiken Philosophie in erster Linie die Einsicht in den *Ursprung der abendländischen Wissenschaft überhaupt*" (Windelband 1888:117).

hip between philosophy and science is precisely one of the general features of Windelband's narration of the history of philosophy; according to his view, from the Greeks up until modern ages, science and philosophy were synonymous with each other.

In so far as this original craving for wisdom involves the knowledge of the totality, there cannot be anything that does not belong to it: "Diese Wissenschaft richtet sich deshalb auf alles, als überhaupt Objekt des Wissens werden kann oder werden zu können scheint: sie umspannt das All, die ganze Vorstellungswelt" (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:14). But this totality of knowledge implies a demand for specification and, thus, different fields of knowledge are signaled as belonging to specific disciplines. Against the subsequent division of scientific labor, which brought about the splitting up of philosophy into different sciences, Windelband's philosophical endeavors aimed to provide a distinct viewpoint from that of the sciences, namely, the viewpoint of the totality of objects in the world. The process of formation of philosophy initiated by the Greeks is ultimately directed toward the division of the spheres of the world into different groups comprising ever more concrete and more specific sciences. Moving in the opposite sense, the process of formation of philosophy also endeavors to establish itself as the knowledge of the whole (metaphysics).¹⁴⁶

Parallel to this internal movement of differentiation in philosophy, there are also changes brought by cultural factors, for example, political turmoil. Concretely, the general decline of the Greek polis and the rise of Hellenism are elements that contributed toward the transformation of the meaning of philosophy (Windelband 1888:285). Windelband refers in this context to the tensions that characterize the relation between the individual and society, a problem that acquires an important role in Stoic philosophy (Windelband 1888:288). Due to these events, the craving for knowledge as an autonomous enterprise is subordinated to the task of guiding man towards a virtuous life.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ The consideration of the emancipation of the sciences from philosophy and its constitution as metaphysics seems to reflect Windelband's contemporary problem of the multiplication of particular sciences. In this sense, Windelband's narrative seems to fall into an anachronism.

¹⁴⁷ The point of Windelband is to confront, on the one hand, the Greek ideal of science and, on the other, the conception of philosophy as an art of living (Windelband 1888:287). This example also reveals that, for Windelband, the changes in philosophy are not only logical modifications of a concept but involve changes that are not necessarily intrinsic to philosophy. The mission and meaning of philosophy change because philosophy enters into a different relationship with the social and religious aspects of human life. The same presentation is repeated later, in Windelband (LGPh. 1935:2).

Another series of changes that manifested themselves over the course of Western history are addressed in Windelband's narrative on the history of philosophy. To put it very shortly, Windelband explains that during the middle ages, the system of philosophical categories developed by the Greeks was put at the service of the knowledge of God, i.e., philosophy became the servant of the Christian faith. In this specific context, philosophy is defined as an attempt to justify religious beliefs.

With modernity, a second emancipation process begins, and philosophy transforms itself again, now aiming to become a total science of the world, worldly wisdom. Finally, due to the internal development of modern thought, philosophy becomes a study of the limits of knowledge in a process that ends with the Kantian denial of the possibility of a scientific metaphysics. This Kantian moment leads to the subsequent situation of philosophy's identity crisis, a feature of Windelband's own time.

As a reply to this crisis, we find philosophy's last transformation:

Neben die anderen Wissenschaften tritt als besondere, scharf bestimmte Disziplin eine Theorie der Wissenschaft. Ist sie nicht mehr eine alle übrigen Einsichten zusammenfassende Welterkenntnis, so ist sie nun die Selbsterkenntnis der Wissenschaft, die zentrale Untersuchung, in der alle übrigen Wissenschaften ihre Begründung finden (Windelband *WiPh.* 1915 1:19)¹⁴⁸.

The result of this process is that philosophy can no longer be defined as metaphysics or as an art of living.¹⁴⁹ Philosophy, in what became the main trend in Neo-Kantian philosophy, is defined as a doctrine of science (*Wissenschaftslehre*), or, as I showed in the previous chapter, a theory of knowledge. Windelband's essay, then, is an exposition of the first interpretations of Neo-Kantianism that contains both argumentative and narrative elements.¹⁵⁰

In sum, the unity of the concept of philosophy does not stem from its scientific nature, its object, nor its method, but from the continuous and changing reference of

¹⁴⁸ Cfr. my reconstruction of Fischer's chapter on "Das Problem der menschlichen Erkenntnis als die erste Frage der Philosophie", also Harrelson (2015).

¹⁴⁹ This indeed represents Windelband's position around 1880.

¹⁵⁰ This was the equation stated by Zeller in "Ueber die Bedeutung und Aufgabe der Erkenntnistheorie" (Zeller 1862). There is a difference, however, between Zeller and Windelband's interpretation of the theory of knowledge that is due to their differing interpretation of the philosophical method.

philosophy to science and culture.¹⁵¹ This mutable relation makes it impossible to put forward single definition of philosophy that is valid throughout different historical epochs.

In correlation to this informal definition of philosophy, Windelband arrives at his historical characterization of philosophy: “Die Geschichte des Namens der Philosophie ist die Geschichte der Kulturbedeutung der Wissenschaft” (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:20). Although the history of the word ‘philosophy’ seems at first to contain a rather heterogeneous gathering of incompatible meanings, Windelband manages to establish a common unifying trend. Philosophy’s position in every epoch is tied to the cultural appreciation of science: “Die Philosophie einer Zeit ist der Gradmesser für den Wert, welchen dieser der Wissenschaft beilegt” (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:21).¹⁵² Philosophy, using an anatomical metaphor, occupies, in the body of sciences, the place of the nervous system. Philosophy represents the self-consciousness of sciences.

Leaving aside the debatable aspects of Windelband’s explanation, what is important is the intent and the way in which Windelband develops his definition of philosophy. In what is a clear example of the stance that I have called ‘historical philosophy,’ Windelband’s definition intertwines the two dimensions, the historical and the systematical. Without this link it is impossible to understand the conjunction between the treatment of a definition of philosophy for the historiographer of philosophy and the treatment of a systematical definition of the discipline, the task set by Windelband in “Was ist Philosophie?” We do not envisage the pure self-determination of philosophy but a mutable movement of articulation between philosophical reflection, science, and culture.

¹⁵¹ In principle, Windelband appears to connect the evolution of the meaning of philosophy with the sciences, but this is not exactly the case. For example, he says: “Aus dem Gesagten erklärt sich ferner, dass die Beziehung der Philosophie zu den sonstigen Kulturtätigkeiten nicht minder nahe sind als zu den Einzelwissenschaften” (Windelband LGPh. 1935:5). Windelband speaks of a practical significance of philosophy directly connected to the fact that the criteria of judgment used in philosophy are present in every cultural formation. The interpretation of transcendental philosophy as a philosophy of culture will be explained later in the dissertation.

¹⁵² The necessary relation between philosophy, cultural life, and sciences is a constant topic in Windelband’s writings. In his last book we can read: “Wie das Leben in seinen vorwissenschaftlichen Begriffen das Material für jede wissenschaftliche Arbeit, so geben das Leben und die Wissenschaften zusammen in den vorwissenschaftlichen und den vorphilosophischen Begriffen das Material für die Arbeit der Philosophie ab. Deshalb ist die Grenze zwischen den Sonderwissenschaften und der Philosophie nicht eindeutig, sondern immer nur für jede Zeit durch den Stand der Einsichten zu bestimmen” (Windelband EPh 1914:6).

re.¹⁵³ It is true that Windelband schematizes history by means of a structural articulation of four different incarnations of philosophy that overlap at every segment of the historical process; however, is not necessary to remain faithful to this division.¹⁵⁴ What is important is the idea behind it, namely, that the historical process itself leads us to the formulation of critical philosophy and to the return to Kant.

3.2.1. Judgment and Assessment

In contrast with this historical narrative, the following long section of “Was ist Philosophie?” attempts to define philosophy by way of an abstract argument that explains the meaning of philosophy in terms of a theory of knowledge. This abstract definition comes after its historical place had already been secured by Windelband. Moreover, this definition stems from conclusions particular to Kantian philosophy, thus configuring a reply to Windelband’s peculiar historical situation. For Windelband, the only possible way out of philosophy’s crisis is to deepen the principles of Kantian philosophy.

From a systematical point of view, Windelband defines philosophy as the critical science of generally valid values (“Die Wissenschaft von den allgemeingiltigen Wer-

¹⁵³ This is not a minor issue. Take, for example, Gloy’s characterization of system: “Die klassische Philosophie zwischen Antike und Idealismus hat, was den Vermittlungsgedanken von Einheit und Vielheit betrifft, zwei Grundmodelle entwickelt: zum einen das klassifikatorische, zum anderen das dialektische” (Gloy 1993:29). Windelband presents a different model for mediating between the universal nature of a definition of philosophy and the plurality of philosophy’s temporal manifestations. He tries to avoid the classificatory and the dialectical paths. Windelband levels well-known criticisms against the persistency of the classificatory model. However, the reader must wait until chapter 6 to discover Windelband’s criticism of the dialectic path. The history of philosophy is not chaotic; it has an ordering principle, but this ordering does not stem from an inner necessity; it does not emerge solely from within.

¹⁵⁴ Windelband distinguishes four specific positions in respect to the evaluation of science: philosophy is identified with science and has an absolute value (in Greece); it is a medium for life (in Rome); it is the science of the ultimate foundation and the discipline that denies the possibility of the ultimate foundation (Kant). However, Windelband is not altogether clear about the nature of these phases in his narration. At first sight, the different forms adopted by the relationship between philosophy and the sciences appear to be completely contingent. Windelband also hints at the possibility of a fourfold structure that necessarily articulates the form of this relationship. Moreover, Windelband does not fully explore the consequence of this fourfold cycle of philosophical conceptions, i.e., the claim that a fifth, Neo-Kantian, characterization of philosophy -as meta-philosophy- arises from his own description.

ten”) (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:29).¹⁵⁵ This is Windelband’s programmatic reply to the crisis consciousness of philosophy. Despite previously denying in this essay the possibility of defining philosophy through a process of abstraction, his definition does indeed follow the Aristotelian criterion. Philosophy is presented as a science that distinguishes itself from the rest of the sciences by its object (generally valid values) and the employment of a particular method (the critical method). But the arguments that lead to this definition should be presented carefully, step by step.

Philosophy is the consciousness of the value of science. The aim of philosophy is to attempt to understand the peculiar articulation of knowledge and culture. Consequently, Windelband’s first argument discusses the meaning of conceptually grasping these spheres. Windelband’s own exposition of his definition of philosophy is centered around the interpretation of theoretical philosophy, that is, logic or the theory of knowledge.

The problem of the theory of knowledge is one of foundations, not of explanations or causes. Kant’s merit in this respect is to have expressed this difference by means of the distinction between *quid juris* and *quid facti*. Through this famous distinction, Kant arrives at a higher sense of necessity that belongs to the idea of a foundation of knowledge, but that is not reducible to the necessity involved in the causal origin of representations. Following Kant, Windelband distinguishes and opposes psychology as the science that explains the causal origin of our representations from philosophy as the science that inquires into the validity of knowledge.¹⁵⁶ While psychology offers a reconstruction of those states of mind that lead a subject to hold a certain belief, philo-

¹⁵⁵ The meaning of the concept of value is inherently obscure. Thomas Willey, for example, expresses the following opinion: “The word value in neo-Kantian literature often leads to confusion because it has several meanings. In the historical methodology of Windelband and Rickert, value means a subjective criterion of selection, or a category of historical thought. Values are also taken to signify the actual products (Güter) of cultural history. Then again value can mean an unconditioned standard of what ‘ought to be,’ a transcendent value unaffected by the time-bound judgment of the historian” (Willey 1978:23). For Morrone, this ambiguity is present in all manifestations of South-western Neo-Kantianism, including Lotze’s theory (Morrone 2013:41).

¹⁵⁶ As Windelband explains: “Die Vorstellungen kommen und gehen; Wie sie das tun, mag die Psychologie erklären: die Philosophie untersucht, welcher Wert ihnen unter dem kritischen Gesichtspunkte der Wahrheit zukommt” (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:25).

sophy criticizes the grounds on which that belief can be ascertained as true or false¹⁵⁷. This is not an otiose question, as the psychological explanation proves to be quite limited. While the cause of a person's beliefs may be explained, this brings us no closer to being able to determine whether another person is also compelled to share those same beliefs. We know under which circumstances a belief arose but not if we should share this belief or not. Although this explanation is objective, it does not address the truth value of the belief, and, from this point of view, it cannot transcend the level of the subjective consciousness. Philosophy, on the contrary, attempts to elucidate under which conditions, if any, is it possible for us to move from the mere individual level to the collective level. Here lies one of the most pressing problems of Windelband's philosophy, namely, the danger of confusing normal consciousness with social consciousness, a move that would lead directly to the hypostasis of a factual human consciousness or to relativism (Lehmann 1931:197). For this reason, Windelband's whole argument is directed at showing that, in order to bring about this shift from the individual to the collective, it is necessary to grasp a universal principle.

As Kant's three critiques have shown, there are also validity claims related to the spheres of morality and aesthetics. The critical quest extends to every claim or pretension of general validity involved in culture.¹⁵⁸ For this reason, Windelband's Neo-Kantian program is understood in terms of a general theory of validity (Herrschaft 1995:7). The starting point of philosophy are materials elaborated through thinking, willing, and feeling, and philosophical thought inquires into them with the aim of determining the legitimacy of science, morality, and aesthetics.¹⁵⁹ But why is it necessary to understand those creations of thinking, willing, and feeling in terms of validity and values?

¹⁵⁷ The strategy of opposing philosophy and psychology was already suggested in Lotze's *Logik*, but the strong opposition between psychological and logical research can also be attested in other nineteenth-century philosophers such as Herbart or Bolzano (Niel 2014). In any case, the unique aspect of Windelband's thinking is the use of the notion of value to further clarify the task of philosophy.

¹⁵⁸ One peculiar feature of the South-Western School of Neo-Kantianism is the early interpretation of transcendental philosophy in terms of a philosophy of culture (Krijnen 2001:86).

¹⁵⁹ For example: "In dieser Verallgemeinerung erscheint nun die 'kritische' Philosophie als die Wissenschaft von den notwendigen und allgemeingültigen Wertbestimmungen. Sie fragt, ob es Wissenschaft gibt, d. h. ein Denken, welches mit allgemeiner und notwendiger Geltung den Wert der Wahrheit besitzt; sie fragt, ob es Moral gibt, d. h. ein Wollen und Handeln, welches mit allgemeiner und notwendiger Geltung den Wert der Güte besitzt; sie fragt, ob es Kunst gibt, d. h. ein Anschauen und Fühlen, welches mit allgemeiner und notwendiger Geltung den Wert der Schönheit besitzt" (Windelband *WiPh* 1915 1:26).

Windelband addresses this question through his logical distinction between judgments (*Urteilen*) and assessments (*Beurteilungen*).¹⁶⁰ Both judgments and assessments are ways in which we exteriorize our thinking, but they present essential differences from the point of view of their logical analysis, and these differences are of crucial importance for the definition of philosophy.

In the case of judgments, the predicate expresses a quality of a certain object, and therefore, it also expresses the relationship between the content of two representations. In the judgment “this house is white,” we relate, according to Windelband’s theory, the representation of an object with a quality that we attribute to this object. Assessments, on the other hand, establish a relationship between an object and our consciousness.¹⁶¹ Windelband’s example of an assessment is “this thing is good.” According to Windelband, the predicate ‘good’ does not express a property of the thing *per se* but the way in which our consciousness ponders that thing. When we make assessments, we do not acknowledge an intrinsic quality of the thing in question, but express ourselves in relation to it, by either approving or rejecting the thing itself. Specifically, we express ourselves based on the accordance between the thing assessed and some standard that we possess prior to the assessment. The assessing act does not increase our knowledge of the object, but it relates the synthesized knowledge of an object to a previously accepted standard. Hence, the assessment involves a comparison between the represented ob-

¹⁶⁰ I take the translation of *Beurteilungen* from Dewalque (2012). Frederick Beiser translates *Beurteilungen* as ‘appraisals’: “Appraisals concern not the object itself so much as the subject’s attitude towards it; they are essentially acts of approval or disapproval” (Beiser 2014b:502). The difference is found as early as Windelband (1873): “So lässt sich das Prädikat der Gewissheit stets in ein zweites Urtheil fassen, worin ausgesprochen wird, dass der Inhalt eines ersten Urtheils wirklich sei, und so liegt in der Gewissheit eine über das Gebiet des Denkens in dasjenige Prädikat, durch welches wir für unsere Vorstellungen einen Werth in Anspruch nehmen, der ausserhalb unseres Vorstellungsprocesses seine selbständige Geltung hat. Dieser Werth, vermöge dessen sich die Erkenntnis identisch mit dem Sein wissen will, wird die Wahrheit genannt, welche danach als das ideale Bilde eines Realen erscheint” (Windelband 1873:7).

¹⁶¹ This topic is also treated in Windelband’s essay from the same year, “Beiträge zur Lehre vom negativen Urtheil” (Windelband 1884b). In this essay, Windelband focuses on the negative judgment in order to show that negation is not a real or objective relation but a peculiar stance taken by our judicative consciousness (Windelband 1884b:169). Here, assessments are described as practical judgments: “Zweite Urtheil ist vielmehr ein practisches Urtheil, eine *Beurteilung*, deren Resultat in diesem Falle die Verwerfung ist: es ist der Ausdruck nicht mehr bloss einer Beziehung von Vorstellungen, sondern eines missbilligenden Verhaltens des Bewusstseins zu dem Versuche einer solchen” (Windelband 1884b:170). Assessments are also described in this context as judgments about judgments, that is, judgments about the value of a judgment (Windelband 1884b:170). In this essay, Windelband also discusses the relation between his own position and the logical doctrines of his contemporaries: Sigwart, Lotze, Brentano, Bergmann, etc. (Windelband 1884b:170; 171). On the discussion of the problem of negation in nineteenth-century logic, see Seron (2006).

ject and an ideal pattern, that is, a value. For this reason, assessments have a teleological structure. Windelband went on to describe this evaluative consciousness as a teleological consciousness. In light of these analyses, Arnauld Dewalque considers that Windelband's logical analysis represents an original formulation of the thetic view of judgments developed earlier by Franz Brentano:

Windelband's concept of epistemic assessment also aims at capturing the positional or thetic dimension of any judgment, since it implies that judging is not properly combining some ideas together, yet rather assessing a given combination of ideas or a propositional content, which has been previously formed and is available for becoming the content of a judicative act. (Dewalque 2012:90)

The distinction is obscured, however, by the fact that Windelband actually gives the term 'assessment' a meaning that was generally associated with the term 'judgment' and advances an odd interpretation of the latter term.¹⁶² It bears keeping in mind that, for Windelband, a judgment is a synthesis between representations derived from the reference to their truth value.¹⁶³ It is precisely the act of tracing the reference to a truth value that turns a mere synthesis of representations into an assessment.¹⁶⁴ What Windelband calls 'judgment' cannot be sought in isolation from what he calls 'assessment.' Windelband highlights this point in his discussion of the concepts of approval and disapproval (*Billigung und Missbilligung*):

In dieser zweiten Thätigkeit sind also jedenfalls Vorstellung und Beurtheilung, theoretische und praktische Function *die beiden nur in der Abstraktion trennbaren, in der Wirklichkeit aber durchaus miteinander verschmolzenen Moment eines und desselben untheilbaren psychischen Actes.* (Windelband 1884b:175 italics in the original)

¹⁶² The terminological discussion is only advanced in Windelband (1884b).

¹⁶³ As Frege would later say, in the field of science, we are never interested in meaning, but in reference (Frege 1892). For this reason, the sciences are also composed of assessments and not pure judgments. It is only easy to differentiate a theoretical judgment from a theoretical assessment in negative assessments: "The house is white" and "it is *false* that the house is white," where the latter clearly expresses the relationship between a content and an evaluating consciousness.

¹⁶⁴ This distinction has several antecedents in the philosophical literature, the clearest one being the theory of judgment advanced by Descartes in his fourth metaphysical meditation. However, Gabriel also signals as important antecedent Ockham's characterization of the *actus iudicativus* as the act by means of which the intellect accepts or denies a certain content (Gabriel 2007:102). In *Prinzipien der Logik*, this antecedent is traced back to the Stoics (Windelband PL 1912:8; also Windelband WW 1909c:11). An analogous difference, not mentioned by Windelband, is outlined by Kant when he typifies the categories of modality. For Dewalque, the elucidation of judgments as acts, decisions, or positions was a common thread in the theories of logic of the late nineteenth century (Dewalque 2012:87).

A judgment, therefore, can be equated with what is usually called “propositional content” (Dewalque 2012:86). Moreover, Windelband presents the idea that ‘pure’ judgments are seldom found in our ordinary epistemic practices. A judgment, strictly speaking, is what Windelband calls a pure or merely theoretical judgment, that is, the expression of a propositional content without attributing to it any value whatsoever. On the contrary, real knowledge requires the movement from the judgment to the assessment. In synthesis, what this argumentative line proves is that knowledge is an “axiological behavior” (Dewalque 2012:89).

However, the importance of Windelband’s logical distinction between judgment and assessment is not confined solely to the context of the nineteenth-century discussion of the theory of judgment, for Windelband employs this distinction to define philosophy and to distinguish philosophy from the empirical sciences.

Windelband’s attempt at distinction is not altogether clear since he tries to distinguish particular sciences from philosophy by claiming that the sciences deal with judgments while philosophy deals with assessments. But Windelband himself claims that the distinction operates strictly at the level of logical analysis while remaining opaque in the concrete process of knowledge. Therefore, it would be impossible to separate judgments from assessments in the concrete practice of scientists and philosophers. It is possible to rephrase his idea by saying that the sciences are not concerned with assessments as such, since scientists are interested in acquiring knowledge of objects, but pay no heed to the evaluative moment of the judging consciousness. On the contrary, the aim of philosophy is to investigate the relationship between consciousness and its object. Philosophy does not attempt to establish which judgments have to be assessed as true or false but tries to understand the meaning of truth and falsity and their relationship to consciousness. In this sense, philosophical research is concerned with the critical aspect of assessments (their relational character) and the particular sciences with their objective aspect.

The quest of philosophy is not merely to identify the values involved in assessments but to consider them from the point of view of the critical method, a still rather loose concept for the moment. In the spirit of the *quid juris* and *quid facti* distinction, it

is still possible to explain assessments and the values involved in assessments in naturalistic or sociological terms. This type of research would imply clarifying, for instance, how a certain group or certain society came to regard something as a value or as a rule for behavior. This would be a scientific task concerned with assessments but not in the way that philosophy does. By studying sociological or naturalistic accounts, we can reproduce the psychological problem at a collective level, but still not know whether the complex of values accepted by a collective group is intrinsically valid or not. Against this type of research, the critical path aims to provide a non-causal account of assessments and values that lead us to a universal level. As Windelband says:

Und doch - das ist die Fundamentaltatsache der Philosophie - bei all dieser Naturnotwendigkeit ausnahmslos aller Beurteilungen und ihrer Gegenstände sind wir unerschütterlich überzeugt, daß es gewisse Beurteilungen gibt, welche absolut gelten, auch wenn sie gar nicht oder nicht allgemein tatsächlich zur Anerkennung gelangen. (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:37).

Apart from any consideration of empirical necessitation of the subject or any relation to an empirical context, assessments often carry the pretension of general validity. This pretension of universality comes from the fact that an assessment expresses something that should hold true not only for the subject that prompts the assessments but also for other subjects in the same way (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:37). Finally, if the pretension of the assessment carries universal validity, then it allegedly presupposes the possibility of an absolute norm of evaluation.

The task of philosophy, derived from the difference between judgment and assessments and from the different ways in which assessments can be handled, is to determine if the pretensions of universal validity of a specific set of assessments are justified or not. Since there are three classes of assessments with pretensions of general validity, corresponding to our capacities of thinking, willing, and feeling, Windelband distinguishes three different questions that articulate the architecture of philosophy. Thus, philosophy seeks to establish if there is a theory of logic, ethics, and aesthetics that can fulfill the demands of necessary and universal validity.¹⁶⁵ These three disciplines do not represent themselves as being the products of chance, but as rationally grounded fields

¹⁶⁵ Insofar as there are three pairs of values for assessment with general pretensions: true and false; good and bad; beautiful and ugly. However, in his essay "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" Windelband provides a different account of the division of philosophical disciplines.

of study. Philosophy is, therefore, a reflection on the possibility of this grounding. As we see throughout this early essay, Windelband is carefully repeating or reinterpreting classical Kantian themes and even follows the division between the three Kantian critiques.

3.2.2. Normative Consciousness

By the end of the essay, once Windelband has established his systematic definition of philosophy and given an account of its object, he shifts his focus to the problem of the method and tries to develop the rudiments of his logic. I present a detailed treatment of the philosophical method, including a thorough consideration of several sources, in the next chapter, but in order to provide a complete reconstruction of the argument, I will mention these passages. They are particularly relevant since they offer a characterization of Windelband's concept of normativity. They constitute, for this reason, yet another step forward in the clarification of the definition of philosophy.

The factual acceptance of norms by subjects or by a community is not enough to grant them general validity. Thus, assessing subjects are always on the search for a connection with the ideal in as much as their assessments must presuppose certain generally valid principles. Windelband names the set of ideal norms 'normative consciousness.' Windelband takes for granted that we are moved to recognize a sense of consciousness that is not empirical but ideal, that is, normative:

Überall sonach, wo das empirische Bewusstsein diese ideale Notwendigkeit dessen, was allgemein gelten soll, in sich entdeckt, stösst es auf ein normales *Bewusstsein*, dessen Wesen für uns darin besteht, daß wir überzeugt sind, es soll wirklich sein, ohne Rücksicht darauf, ob es in der naturnotwendigen Entfaltung des empirischen Bewusstseins wirklich ist. (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:44)

Windelband takes up again a Kantian expression -general consciousness- from the *Prolegomena* in order to refer to those principles that do not function as natural laws but rather as rules for assessments, rules that do not condition but guide the variety of our rational practices (Heinz 2007:76). This normative consciousness is not identified with any single evaluating subject, nor is it an innate mental structure; it is still called 'cons-

consciousness' precisely because it stands for the complex of ideal principles that our consciousness presupposes in order to perform objective assessments. The Neo-Kantian spin on this argument is to transform the Kantian concept of reason into an ideal normative consciousness that is identified with a system of norms, and not with a system of faculties.¹⁶⁶

Windelband's last words regarding the question 'What is philosophy?' are the following: "Nichts anderes nun ist die Philosophie als die Besinnung auf dieses Normalbewußtsein, als die wissenschaftliche Untersuchung darüber, welche von den Inhaltsbestimmungen und Formen des empirischen Bewußtseins den Wert des Normalbewußtseins haben" (Windelband WiPh. 1915 1:45). Philosophy, as the science of normative consciousness, is also a normative ideal. Windelband confronts the collective consciousness with normal or general consciousness, claiming that the former also tends ideally towards the latter without ever reaching a complete identity. The tension between collective and normative consciousness cannot be solved, then, with reference to an absolute consciousness.¹⁶⁷ Collective consciousness could be read as the concrete and progressive development towards normative consciousness, the task of philosophy being to fulfill the ever-unfinished project of transforming what is collective into what is truly universal.¹⁶⁸

Windelband's distinctive take on the rehabilitation of philosophy through its orientation toward a theory of knowledge is characterized by his theory of assessments and the introduction, of the idea of a condition of assessments, or a 'normative consciousness.' However, in contrast with Kant's 'general consciousness,' Windelband's al-

¹⁶⁶ In this way, Windelband avoids the problem of advancing psychologist or naturalist interpretations of subjectivity: "ein Ideal des normalen Menschen" ... "welches nicht im Sinne der faktischen Anerkennung gilt, sondern gelten sollte, -keine empirische Wirklichkeit, aber ein Ideal, daran der Wert aller empirischen Wirklichkeit gemessen werden soll" (Windelband EPh 1914:254); and also "Das Normalbewusstsein stellt ein System von Normen dar, das auf einer über die spezifisch Menschliche Vorstellungsweise in ihrer Geltung hinausragende sachliche Ordnung basiert" (Windelband EPh 1914:255).

¹⁶⁷ This is an important methodological point that will be clarified in chapter 4 and which explains the difference between Windelband and Hegel regarding the method of the history of philosophy, a topic covered in chapter 6.

¹⁶⁸ The characterization of the empirical and the normative consciousness in terms of a progressive realization of the latter will be of extreme relevance for Windelband's conception of the history of philosophy. See chapter 6.

ternative requires that we treat 'normative consciousness' as a Kantian Idea, that is, as something to which we aspire but which is never fully determined.

Hidden behind the fluent prose of "Was ist Philosophie?" the reader can find not one but a set of interrelated definitions of philosophy. The first definition presents philosophy as the measure of the value of science; this is a strictly operational definition and serves the purposes of the historian of philosophy. Nonetheless, this definition reflects the intricate relation between philosophy and the sciences, providing the justificatory grounds for the systematic treatment of the question of the essay. The second definition is characteristic of the South-western School of Neo-Kantianism and identifies philosophy with the study of generally valid values.¹⁶⁹ This definition does not comprise solely theoretical questions but aims to define philosophy in terms of a philosophy of culture. The concept of value is central to the philosophical consciousness of the nineteenth century, and the problem of values comprises the problem of the meaning of human life. This is apparent from the constant implicit reference to Nietzsche and his idea of the "Umwertung aller Werte."¹⁷⁰ The third definition belongs specifically to Windelband and focuses on the problematic relation between empirical and normative consciousness.¹⁷¹

"Was ist Philosophie?" is followed by two historical texts on Socrates and Kant that continue the same discussion but approach it from a different angle. As Windelband claims elsewhere, "es gibt ... bisher nur zwei philosophische Systeme: das griechische und das deutsche - Sokrates und Kant" (Windelband *WiPh.* 1915 1:117). It is time, then, to complement Windelband's abstract definition of philosophy with his own

¹⁶⁹ Another definition of philosophy in terms of a study of values is provided in Rickert's "Vom Begriff der Philosophie": "Es gibt also keinen Teil der Wirklichkeit, der sich den objektivierenden Einzelwissenschaften entzieht. Weil der Philosophie kein reines Wirklichkeitsproblem mehr übrig bleibt, setzt erst bei den Wertproblemen ihre Arbeit ein. So wird die Grenze zwischen ihr und der Spezialforschung scharf gezogen." (Rickert 1910:15).

¹⁷⁰ For example: "Zwar ist es richtig, daß es mit der Umwertung aller Werte glücklicherweise noch nicht so schlimm steht und noch nicht so schnell geht, wie es ihre begeisterten Propheten glauben machen möchten: aber darüber darf man sich nicht täuschen, daß in dieser beispiellosen Aufregung aller Kräfte sich Wandlungen vorbereiten, die an die tiefsten Gründe, an die letzten Inhalte des Menschenlebens greifen" (Windelband *MZ* 1915 1:291).

¹⁷¹ This specific aspect of the definition of philosophy will acquire a deeper determination in Windelband's later equation of transcendental idealism with a critical philosophy of culture; see chapter 7, section 2. For an interpretation of Windelband's philosophy in terms of the cultural crisis of the nineteenth century, see Bonito Oliva (2018).

exposition of these two philosophical systems as different approaches to the task of defining philosophy. I will show that these two essays help us to improve our understanding of Windelband's theory of assessments and his way of conceptualizing normative consciousness.

3.3. SOCRATES AND KANT

It bears thinking that an essay with the title "Über Sokrates" would be difficult to locate in a systematical reconstruction of the philosophical project of Windelband, as it appeared in the first edition of *Präjudien*. However, in my opinion, it would be a mistake to consider this essay a minor piece. In this essay, Windelband goes beyond the analysis of Greek culture and its history.¹⁷² The treatment of this historical figure also indirectly characterizes the spirit behind his philosophical project. This essay is grounded in a discussion on the nineteenth-century social and intellectual background of the philosophy of values and, although it sounds presumptuous, the essay gives the impression that Windelband identifies his own position and quest with that of the Athenian thinker.¹⁷³ This text shows that the theory of values emerges from a specific philosophical and cultural context and not from isolated and technical arguments.

The dichotomy that structures the text is that of cultural formation and dilettantism. Socrates appears as a critic of dilettantism which, in his time, was represented by the sophists. Much in the same fashion, Windelband saw himself as a critic of the cultural simulacrum represented by positivists and the materialist tendencies of his own epoch. This has led several commentators to search for a political commitment against demo-

¹⁷² Something that he describes in detail in his "Geschichte der Philosophie im Altertum" (Windelband 1888). See specifically paragraphs 26 and 27 for the confrontation between Socrates and the sophists.

¹⁷³ Probably to the same extent that this was not available for the German intellectual of the nineteenth-century. It is no coincidence that Nietzsche, an antagonist of the Neo-Kantian philosophers, targeted Socrates, and Socratic culture as objects of his cultural criticism. While Windelband wanted to present himself as a modern Socrates, Nietzsche claimed emphatically that "Die Zeit des sokratischen Menschen ist vorüber" (Nietzsche 1988, 173).

cratic tendencies in Windelband's text on Socrates.¹⁷⁴ But, in my opinion, Windelband's reference to Socrates is not to be seen solely as the critic of false or superfluous culture. Socrates is not exclusively a critic. Through reference to Socrates' figure and practice, the idea of a normative consciousness is explained more vividly than in the abstract presentation included in "Was ist Philosophie?" Moreover, this essay on Socrates is one of the few places in which the reader can grasp the social dimension of transcendental philosophy.¹⁷⁵

In the essay, Socrates' quest for the normative consciousness is directly put in relation to the cultural crisis of Athens:

Sein [Sokrates] Suchen nach Wahrheit aber steht im innigsten Zusammenhang mit dem geistigen Zustand seines Volkes. Die Zersetzung die er vorfindet, beruht auf der Auflösung des allgemeinen Bewusstseins, an welches sich einst alle gebunden fühlten. Wahrheit gibt es nur, wenn über den Individuen ein Allgemeines steht, dem sie sich zu unterwerfen haben. Wahrheit kann deshalb nur gesucht werden, indem die einzelnen über alle Verschiedenheit ihrer Meinungen hinaus sich miteinander auf dasjenige besinnen, was sie alle anerkennen. Wahrheit ist gemeinsames Denken. (Windelband US 1915 1:67).

For Socrates and his contemporaries, it was not possible to go back to traditional ideas and their form of justification. The clothes of tradition were simply no longer suitable for the enlightened inhabitant of Athens. Confronting the traditional type of justification, Socrates developed a method for recognizing the general, a method that was grounded on his understanding of reason. Assuming that Socrates was actually searching for the normative ground of beliefs, searching for those principles that regulate our theoretical and practical behavior, the text posits the relevant idea that this quest is dialogical. Everyone involved in the Socratic conversation has to recognize the necessity of reaching or searching for a trans-subjective stance. This ground is never fully reached in the actual dialogue but is always acknowledged as the underlying presuppo-

¹⁷⁴ The political aspect of Windelband's crisis diagnostic is well described by Bohr (2018), especially, Bohr (2018:138-139). He backs up his interpretation by quoting the following passage from "Über Sokrates": "auf die Demokratisierung des Wissens folgt die Demoralisierung der Bildung; denn demoralisiert ist jede Gesellschaft, welche die Einheit der sittlichen Überzeugungen verloren hat und nach diesem oder jenem greift, um nach diesem Sündenfall ihre Blöße mit den Flittern ihres Wissens zu bedecken" (Windelband US 1915 1:61). Quoted and discussed in Bohr (2018:139).

¹⁷⁵ This justifies Willey's claim that "Windelband's objective norms were a socialized version of Kantian regulative Ideas" (Willey 1978:136).

sition and explicit end of the conversation.¹⁷⁶ This search transforms beliefs. What appears at first sight to be the product of a mere genetic or psychological-historical process, is transformed into something common, shared, and justified. Due to the mediation of the dialogical process, the individual belief acquires a normative status. This is precisely the same turn that originated the *questio juris*, the center of philosophy as Windelband explains in his “Geschichte der Philosophie im Altertum:” “Während die Sophisten den psychologischen Mechanismus studierten, durch den die Meinungen zustande kommen, glaubte Sokrates an ein Vernunftgesetz, das die Wahrheit bestimmt” (Windelband 1888:192)¹⁷⁷.

However, in contrast with modern transcendental philosophy, the common ground of discussion presupposed by the Socratic method is, according to Windelband, the product of an act of faith. Hence, the distinction between rational culture and dilettantism appears under the form of another dividing line, namely, that between nihilism and the divinity of reason:

Die oberste Voraussetzung der erkennenden Vernunft ist die Realität einer für sie kommensurablen Weltvernunft, welche die Macht und das Gesetz der Wirklichkeit sei. Auch die Vorstellung von dieser die Welt beherrschenden Vernunft ist für Sokrates keine in das Besondere gehende Einsicht, sondern ein voller tiefer Glaube an die Gottheit. (Windelband US 1915 1:70)

Apart from replicating the problem of Windelband’s own time, the essay also presents his attempt at a solution. It is for this reason that once again we find the terminological differentiation between the individual, the collective, the normal, and the absolute consciousness.¹⁷⁸

The first two types -the individual and the collective- refer to empirical consciousness. As their names make clear, the individual consciousness belongs to the subjective awareness of the beliefs and values of a single person; this is the consciousness

¹⁷⁶ For Socrates’ concept of dialog, see also Windelband (1888:192).

¹⁷⁷ This distinction is similar to the one traced between the critical and the genetic method, that is, between explanatory science and philosophy.

¹⁷⁸ An exceedingly original presentation of the different meanings of consciousness is provided by the Neo-Platonic scholar Philip Merlan. Merlan traces the conception of collective consciousness or an unconscious consciousness back from Kantianism, including Windelband, to a medieval discussion of the Aristotelian concept of *nous poietikós* (Merlan 1963:114; Merlan 1963:118).

handled in psychological research. The collective consciousness is not meant to imply some sort of shared consciousness but rather the fact that any group of human subjects shares a set of beliefs and values, of which their members are more or less aware. Although social consciousness has a degree of objectivity, what is being implied is that the values acknowledged by a social group are not necessarily grounded on philosophical arguments. Normative consciousness is recognized through the aim of transforming empirical consciousness into a rationally-grounded consciousness, that is, criticizing those values presupposed by our assessing activities in order to grant them reasons. Only in this manner can we, as rational agents, transcend the subjective sphere in order to participate in a community of thinking subjects. Although he speaks of the problem of consciousness in a wider context, Merlan's interpretation of the medieval 'double-consciousness' serves the purpose of clarifying the background of Windelband's theory:

One of the two consciousness which man has, i.e., his empirical consciousness, is the one which he actually has. The other, non-empirical, for which some would prefer the expression 'unconsciousness consciousness' is the one which he should have - and to a certain extent does have, but *mainly in the form of an imperative* to transform his empirical consciousness into a meta-empirical one. His meta-empirical consciousness unites him with other men, while his empirical consciousness separates him from them. (Merlan 1963:121)

Windelband implicitly accepts that this participation cannot stop at collective recognition, that is, at the acceptance of a certain set of values merely because they are recognized by a certain group. They are essentially required to be accepted by all. We can say that, for Windelband, when a principle is recognized as being worthy only for a certain group, its true value diminishes. But the criticism of values cannot succumb to the intuitive access to reason, on the contrary, it is always discursive and mediated. Hence, there is no guarantee that we will achieve, as rational beings, complete certainty about the universality and necessity of our normative principles. This gap is expressed by Windelband through his opposition between a normative and an absolute consciousness. While normative consciousness appears as a Kantian ideal, that is, as the view that there are universally valid principles that we can only partially grasp, the absolute consciousness appears to be a hypostasis, that of considering the critical task as something finished.

Philosophy revolves around the transformation of these different levels of consciousness, aiming towards the problematical concept of the absolute consciousness (here identified with divinity).¹⁷⁹ A methodical procedure carries us from the mere individual or social causally-determined consciousness toward the strictly rational in the form of general or normative consciousness. This consciousness is never fixed but is open to further discussion and revision.¹⁸⁰ The absolute consciousness remains as the only level with true stability, but, for this same reason, it also presents itself as something metaphysically obscure.¹⁸¹

On the whole, Windelband's entire argumentative and critical endeavor aims to explicate the normative commitments of the characters involved in the Socratic dialog, since all of them assume that there are indeed guiding principles, but they are not certain about their exact meaning and articulation.¹⁸² The Socratic method, forerunner of the critical method, is presented in the context of this essay as a collective procedure. Unfortunately, this feature of the method is not conveniently highlighted in other texts, although it plays a key part in understanding the connection between the critical method and history.

Only by the end of the essay do we find Windelband's confession about the scope of the conference:

¹⁷⁹ This is a more or less stable thematic in Windelband. For instance: "Der Gegenstand der Philosophie ist nicht etwa die 'menschliche Vernunft' als ein durch die psychische Entwicklung der Spezies homo sapiens empirisch gegebene Zusammenhang, sondern es ist die Vernunft in ihr überempirischen, allgemeingültigen Bestimmtheit, - die Weltvernunft" (Windelband 1905a:183).

¹⁸⁰ As Bonito Oliva explains: "Das Normalbewusstsein ist also Bedingung und Zweck, es ist mit der jeweiligen gegenwärtigen Erfahrung und 'Kultursystem', aus dem es hervorgeht, verbunden, aber zugleich ist es in seiner Gültigkeitsinstanz transzendent" (Bonito Oliva 2018:105).

¹⁸¹ Windelband says: "Das Ganze erfassen wir nicht; und wir müssen uns bescheiden, wenn uns der letzte Zusammenhang der Dinge dunkel bleibt und wir nur hie und da ein Festes zu ergreifen vermögen, in welchem unsere Besinnung Ruhe findet." (Windelband 1915 1:71). In this text, Windelband shuns the interpretation of the realm of reason. It serves only to attest the scope of his philosophy of values as a foundational program and its roots in the historical situation. Here, the relation between the collective consciousness and the normative consciousness is dynamic -and Windelband even characterizes it as progressive-. This could be taken as a response to Sebastian Luft's accusation of Windelband holding a static interpretation of culture in Luft (2018:93).

¹⁸² The same point is explained in Windelband's *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*: "Aufsuchung der Begriffe war somit für Sokrates das Wesen der Wissenschaft ... Der Begriff sollte das sein, was für alle gilt: es musste also in gemeinsamen Denken gefunden werden... Seine Philosophie ist dialogisch sie entwickelt sich im Gespräch, das er mit jedem, der ihm Rede stehen wollte, zu beginnen bereit war" ... "In dem Austausch der Gedanken sollte sich das Gemeinsame herausstellen, der *dialogismos* war der Weg zum *logos* (Windelband LGPh. 1935:79).

Und wenn die denkende Beobachtung der Gegenwart heute wieder ein Chaos durcheinanderwirbelnder Meinungen, eine Auflösung heiligster Überzeugungen und den Übermut mißverständener Halbbildung vor sich sieht, - - das sokratische Wort unserer Tage ist entweder noch nicht gesprochen, oder die Zeit hat es nicht gehört. (Windelband US 1915 1:75)

Socrates was an innovator in the sense that he did not want to attack traditions but to reshape them through reason. What alternative did Windelband identify to “traditional” Socratic reason on his path to becoming a “new Socrates”? To advance an answer to this question, we have to turn our attention to the other historical pillar of Windelband’s program: Immanuel Kant.¹⁸³

There is a temporal distance of more than two thousand years between the two paradigmatic figures of philosophy chosen by Windelband. Nevertheless, for Windelband, Kant’s philosophy represents the most important transformation of philosophy since antiquity.¹⁸⁴ In both cases, Windelband highlights that philosophy was pursued as

¹⁸³ Windelband’s speech should not be taken as a literal exposition of Kantian doctrines. On the contrary, Windelband focuses on the consequences of transcendental idealism and the way in which Kantian philosophy should be carried out in the future. Windelband wrote several essays and dedicated several chapters to the specifics of Kantian philosophy. Apart from the chapters in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* and his *Die Geschichte der neuen Philosophie*, it is worth mentioning his early essay on the concept of the thing-in-itself from 1877 (“Über die verschiedenen Phasen der Kantischen Lehre vom Ding-an-sich”), and another commemorative essay published in *Präludien*: “Nach hundert Jahren” (1904). A general outline of Kantian philosophy is provided in Windelband (1882). An example evidencing my point is that in this outline, Windelband does not mention the most important consequence of Kantian philosophy presented in the text from 1881; that is, the rejection of the *Abbildtheorie*.

¹⁸⁴ “Diese Gleichartigkeit aller vorkantischen Philosophie beruht auf dem gemeinsamen Ursprung, den sie in der griechischen Wissenschaft hat. Die großen Systeme, der Platonismus, der Aristotelismus, der Stoizismus, hatten sich im römischen Reich über die gesamte Kulturwelt des Mittelmeers als die bestimmenden Mächte der Erkenntnis ausgebreitet und von da aus haben sie mehr als einen Weg genommen, um sich die Herrschaft über das Denken der germanischen Völker zu gewinnen und zu sichern” (Windelband 1915 1:115). This opposition between Greek thinking and the philosophy of Kant is nonetheless of historiographical and systematical relevance. One strategy for facing the identity crisis consisted in developing a peculiar historiographical interpretation that tended to isolate Kant from the post-Kantian thinkers and, on the contrary, to close the gap between Kant and modern authors such as Locke or Leibniz. This paved the way for the construction of a vindictory narrative of the identification of philosophy with the theory of knowledge (Herrelson 2015) while also closing the path from Kant to the post-Kantians. Windelband, without directly acknowledging this path, is in principle denying that specific historiographical reconstruction.

a search for orientation in a time of cultural distress¹⁸⁵; against this shared backdrop of unrest, the reference to Kant adds the treatment of a new set of problems. On the one hand, Kant's philosophy traces the limits of Greek thinking, establishing with certainty the borders of human knowledge. On the other, Kant's critical philosophy reveals that behind every recognition of factual or scientific knowledge, there is a set of rational principles operating as its preconditions.¹⁸⁶ For this reason, the whole discussion of the Kantian doctrine, in the first edition of *Präludien*, is concerned with the formulation of a theory of knowledge. We can say that, in Kant's hands, the metaphysical faith in reason is transformed into logic.¹⁸⁷

In his essay on the centenary of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Windelband proceeds exactly in the same way as in his essays "Was ist Philosophie?" and "Über Sokrates," that is, by deriving the concept of normative consciousness from the concept of objective rule.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ The reference to the opposition between Socrates and the sophists is analogous to that of the unilateral orientation toward the natural sciences that is dominant among eighteenth-century materialists, a rough dogmatical system, against which Kant wrote his *Critique of Pure Reason*. The key concept for the whole treatment of the cultural crisis is the concept of dilettantism. It appears in Windelband's discussions of Socrates and Kant, but also in the essay on Hölderlin (*Hölderlin und sein Geschick*): "Aussers-tande, den Bildungsgehalt der fremden Sphären bis in seine Tiefe und seine Besonderung zu durchdringen, hilft sich das moderne Individuum mit einem oberflächlichen Dilettantismus, der von allem den Schaum abschöpft und den Gehalt liegen lässt. Dieser Dilettantismus ist komisch, wo er sich in den Gesprächen des Salons breit macht; aber wo er auf den Gaffen gepredigt wird, ist er tragisch" (Windelband 1915 1:255).

¹⁸⁶ These features correspond to a summary of Windelband's more detailed description of the shift from Greek to Kantian thinking. In this essay, Windelband repeats a description present in "Was ist Philosophie?" and in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*.

¹⁸⁷ Christian Krijnen, therefore, characterizes Kant not only as the father of modernity but as the first post-metaphysical thinker (Krijnen 2001:22).

¹⁸⁸ Naturally, those shared semantic beliefs that sparked the perplexities in the Socratic dialogues are now coated with the technical terms of Kantian philosophy. An interesting parallelism between Windelband's explanation of the Kantian merits can be traced in the contemporary interpretation of Kant advanced by Robert Brandom. For example, Brandom says: "One of Kant's great innovations was his view that what in the first instance distinguishes judgments and actions from the mere behavior of denizens of the realm of nature is that they are things that we are in a distinctive sense responsible for. They express commitments of ours. For Kant, concepts are the norms or rules that determine what we have committed ourselves to, what we have made ourselves responsible for in making a judgment or performing an action. Judging and acting involves undertaking commitments whose credentials are always potentially at issue. That is, the commitments embodied in judgments and actions are ones we may or may not be entitled to, so that the question of whether they are correct, whether they are commitments we ought to acknowledge and embrace, can always be raised. One of the forms taken by the responsibility we undertake in judging and acting is the responsibility to give reasons that justify the judgment or the action. And the rules-the concepts we apply in judging and acting-determine what would count as a reason for the judgment and the action" (Brandom 2001:78).

The mission of philosophy is to bring to consciousness the general rules that confer validity and worth to our thinking. Returning to Windelband's comparison, while the presentation of Socrates served the purpose of providing us with the meaning of Windelband's program, Kant's presentation leads us directly to the core of the Neo-Kantian theory of knowledge: the claim that knowledge cannot be the production of a mental copy of reality. These are the two points -the concept of rule and the negation of the copy-theory of knowledge- from Windelband's exposition of the legacy of Kant that I want to stress.

Windelband finds the key merit of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in the overcoming of the intellectualist theories of knowledge¹⁸⁹ and by debunking the theory of knowledge as a copy of reality.¹⁹⁰ This interpretation of Kant puts into question Richard Rorty's popular interpretation of the modern theory of knowledge in *The Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*.

The copy-theory of knowledge is strongly rooted in the history of philosophy and also in common language.¹⁹¹ Windelband argues that our use of language leads us to consider that our cognitive faculties belong to the world and, therefore, to consider that knowledge also belongs to the things of the world. This belief permeates even the concepts through which knowledge is thematized, something that, for Windelband, is manifested in the primacy of optic or spatial metaphors used to describe cognitive processes from the Greeks onwards (Windelband 1915 IK 1:126; Windelband SWPh 1912b:8).

Notably, Windelband rejects, in this context, the description of the mind as a mirror of the world as an outright inadequacy. He expresses himself in this respect in strong terms: "Also die Seele ein Spiegel der Welt! Es gibt vielleicht wenig Gleichnisse, welche so hinten wie dieses, und wenig Ausdrücke, welche das, was sie sagen wollen, so schief bezeichnet" (Windelband IK 1915 1:127). But what is that that Windelband finds so disturbing about the mirror metaphor? Firstly, the image in the mirror is always an

¹⁸⁹ On Kant's overcoming of the intellectualist theory of knowledge, see also Rickert (1924b:52, 151).

¹⁹⁰ Windelband offers more precisions about the history of the *Abbildtheorie* in "Über Sinn und Wert des Phänomenalismus" from 1912. On the "Abbild" theory, see Dufour (2003:23), Krijnen (2001:195), and Krijnen (2013).

¹⁹¹ Insofar as our language for the representation of knowledge is built upon sensual metaphors, and more commonly, on optic metaphors. The criticism of Greek philosophy comes precisely from the abuse of these types of metaphors in the interpretation of knowledge.

illusion, a disfiguration of what is being reflected. If knowledge is equated with the formation of an image, then we have to accept that knowledge is always a disfiguration of reality. More importantly, the metaphor of the mirror introduces the problem of comparing reality with an image in the mind, whose correspondence is the condition for its truth. This comparison can only be confirmed from outside the relation of knowledge, and therefore, this potentially illuminating image only serves to add a further layer of problems. These problems lurk in the modern theories of knowledge. Therefore, Rorty's criticism of the modern theory of knowledge would hold for pre-Kantian thinking, but is rendered irrelevant by the transcendental theory of Immanuel Kant.

More concretely, Windelband levels two devastating critiques against the mirror metaphor. Firstly, this model raises the issue of comparing two extremely heterogeneous objects, namely, representations and things, where things are absolutely extraneous to the content of consciousness; secondly, it raises the issue of establishing a secure perspective in order to judge the conformity of representations to things. This point of view cannot be other than the eye of God. Going back to the relationship between the metaphor of the mirror and the modern theory of knowledge, we can see how the primacy of metaphor in early modern thinking explains the nature of the two modern solutions to the problem of knowledge: the skepticism of Hume and Leibniz's theory of pre-established harmony. Either we accept the impossibility of comparing the mind with the world or we appeal to a transcendent God as guarantor of the possibility of knowledge. In the same manner, we understand how the attempt to overcome these two deficient alternatives, skepticism and dogmatism, implies the rejection of the starting point altogether. This is why Kant's philosophy breaks radically with the way in which the problem of knowledge was previously posed.

The conception of knowledge as a mirror of the world is dependent on a specific interpretation of the concept of truth as correspondence, or, as Lotze's explanation in his *Logik* has already shown, on the lack of recognition of the active nature of thought. This theory mistakenly views the knowledge relation as analogous to the real relation between an image and a thing. The casting aside of the false mirror analogy requires a

modification of the notion of truth,¹⁹² which, in Windelband's case, is explained by reference to a core Kantian concept, the concept of rule (*Regel*). This explanation of the Kantian doctrine of knowledge presents a remarkable contrast with the explanations of Kantian philosophy advanced by the representatives of the "return to Kant" movement of the 1860s. Kuno Fischer's conference, for example, establishes the elements for a Kantian rehabilitation of philosophy by stressing the need to change the focus of philosophy; while philosophy had previously attempted to explain objects, it now had to be geared toward the explanation of knowledge. Of course, Fischer said that from a scientific point of view, the sciences themselves were rather obscure disciplines regarding their groundings. But Windelband delved deeper into the understanding of the rehabilitation of Kant by showing that the philosophic point of view was not only necessary to explain certain things but also to prevent a fundamental scientific misconception of reality and knowledge.

The Kantian doctrine, according to Windelband, defines objects in terms of rules toward which we submit the connections of our representations. Therefore, the transcendental turn operates by transforming the idea of truth as coincidence or conformity between an object and set of representations into another, more profound concept, that of the accordance between combinations of representations and a general rule. Casting aside the identification between the modern theory of knowledge and the task of mirroring the world, Windelband claims that "Die Philosophie soll kein Abbild der Welt mehr sein, ihre Ausgabe ist, die Normen zum Bewußtsein zu bringen, welche allem Denken erst Werth und Geltung verleihen" (Windelband IK 1915 1:139).¹⁹³ It is not the identity between a representation and a thing that grants objectivity to a merely subjective representation, but its adequacy to a rule of combination of representations. Only those correctly-combined representations have the capability of compelling other cognitive subjects to acknowledge them. Thus, subjects acknowledge that the validity of cer-

¹⁹² From the adequacy between representation and thing to the conformity of representations to a rule: "Wenn nach der populären Auffassung der „Gegenstand“ das Original ist, mit welchem die für wahr geltende Vorstellung übereinstimmen muß, so ist er, bloß von der Seite der Vorstellungstätigkeit her gesehen, eine Regel, nach welcher sich bestimmte Vorstellungselemente anordnen sollen, damit sie in dieser Anordnung als allgemeingiltig anerkannt werden" (Windelband IK 1915 1:135).

¹⁹³ In the context of this essay, the concept of value is explained by reference to the concept of rule.

tain sets of representations is merely subjective, while others do indeed hold a claim for universality.

Philosophy appears, much like in Windelband's definition from "Was ist Philosophie?", as a clarification of values, values that are understood as the general rules of normative thinking. The claim here is that every peculiar rule of thinking according to which we connect and organize our representations is an instantiation of a more general rule. In the case of theoretical knowledge, the most general rule that rational subjects ought to follow is the value of 'truth.' The systems comprising the most general rules are the system of logic. The interpretation of Kant in Windelband's essay from 1881 is an able companion to "Was ist Philosophie?" insofar as it adds a further explanation of the importance of Kant as a representative of a novel understanding of knowledge to the general outline of the essay.

Moreover, the essay on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* advances the content of the essay on Socrates while also providing a better explanation of the modern form of philosophy. Windelband explains that the same conception of philosophy should be extended to the realms of ethics and aesthetics: "Für die Philosophie aber wird niemals wieder das Ideal verschwinden, daß sie bestimmt ist, das Gesamtbewußtsein von den höchsten Werthen des Menschenlebens zu sein" (Windelband IK 1915 1:142). However, as we can see, the Kantian articulation of the critiques according to faculties and their attendant natures and scopes is replaced by an analysis of the different spheres of culture and their corresponding values¹⁹⁴: truth, good, and beauty.

3.4. TELEOLOGICAL CRITICISM

This chapter has sought to offer a general overview of Windelband's mature philosophical project, as stated in the first edition of *Präludien*. Before moving to the specific discussion of this project and its treatment of the philosophical method, it is

¹⁹⁴ It is important to highlight the difference between Windelband's appreciation of Kant's works in 1881, focused on the significance of his theory of knowledge, and the reevaluation of his legacy in the corresponding essay of 1904 "Nach hundert Jahren." This essay is described in more detail in chapter 5, along with the reevaluation of Kantian philosophy in terms of a philosophy of culture, a topic that will be covered in chapter 7.

worth mentioning a brief polemical text that summarizes Windelband's achievements and deficits. I am referring to the only specific polemical text written by Windelband: his reply to Ernst Laas's¹⁹⁵ review of his *Präludien*.¹⁹⁶ The use of the expression 'teleological criticism' to describe Windelband's philosophy was introduced by Laas in his attack on Windelband's thinking.¹⁹⁷ It is grounded on the structure that Windelband used to describe our assessing consciousness, that is, on the idea that an assessment, the object of philosophical inquiry, is the appreciation, reached by consciousness, of the conformity between the conformity between a connection of representations and a value.

As often occurs with polemical labels of this kind, it has had some fortune as an overall characterization of Windelband's program. It serves basically as a *Leitfaden* to introduce the treatment of the critical method in the next chapter and also to highlight some further clarifications of the texts presented in *Präludien*.

Laas identifies Windelband's book as the last installment of the controversy between idealist philosophy and what he calls the psycho-genetic method (Laas 1884:1). This dichotomy replicates that which inspires the title of Laas' capital work: *Idealismus und Positivismus*.¹⁹⁸ As the title of Laas' book shows, this polemic places us at the heart of the crisis consciousness of philosophy.¹⁹⁹ After the philosophical anarchy that followed Hegel's death (Paulsen 1880:735), idealism and positivism appear as the two contesting alternatives for the reformation of philosophy. For Laas, the review constitutes a continuation of the theoretical discussion of idealism in the third volume of his book,

¹⁹⁵ The review appeared in *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, and was edited by Richard Avenarius under the title "Über den teleologischen Kriticismus" (p.1-17). Laas and Windelband were colleagues in Strasbourg for a short period of time (1883-1885).

¹⁹⁶ "Über den teleologischen Kriticismus. Zur Abwehr" (Windelband 1884c).

¹⁹⁷ Although the term is also related to the philosophy of Lotze.

¹⁹⁸ *Idealismus und Positivismus* was published in three volumes (1879-84).

¹⁹⁹ A point of reference is Paulsen's essay "Idealismus und Potivismus" from 1880, where positivism is chastised as a mode of the epoch. It is also worth pointing out that Windelband was concerned with the interpretation of positivism throughout his philosophical career.

where he defends a positivist stance (Laas 1884:3).²⁰⁰ Laas' critique is relevant insofar as he questions the possibility of Windelband's attempt to renovate philosophy. And the central point of his critique concerns our capacity as human beings to recognize the values or norms that Windelband places at the core of the philosophical endeavor.

Laas focuses his critique on the passages in which Windelband argues for the assumption of a teleological consciousness. In fact, Laas' review quotes extensively from the *Präludien*'s methodological essay "Kritische oder genetische Methode?"²⁰¹

Laas' first critique of Windelband stems from Laas' association of Windelband's philosophical doctrine with the concept of teleology that was originally presented by Plato in his dialog *Phaedo* and later developed further by Fichte. Laas accuses Windelband of restating a type of teleological explanation against the exclusive causal determination of the phenomena in the world. The central passage discussed by Laas is the one where Windelband affirms: "Die Begründung der Axiome und Normen liegt lediglich ... in der teleologischen Bedeutung, welche sie als Mittel für den Zweck der Allgemeingiligkeit besitzen" (Windelband 1884a:278 [KGM 1915 2:131]). Laas takes this passage as a sign of a metaphysical commitment.

Laas' second critique of Windelband is related to the nature of values. While explaining Windelband's definition of philosophy, we saw that Windelband identified values as the object of philosophy. A specific characteristic of assessments is the conformity of our assessing consciousness to some general rule or pattern that allows us to evaluate a judgment. Therefore, our rational behavior would be meaningless unless we assume that there are compelling maxims that regulate our assessments. This is the key issue in Windelband's proposal since he holds, stressing the reflective nature of philosophy, that the necessity of values cannot be grounded in something else; this necessity has to be recognized or acknowledged as belonging to values. This means that it is impossible to rationally deduce normative consciousness. On the contrary, Windelband states on more than one occasion that the belief in universal and necessary values is a

²⁰⁰ While the book comprises a systematical import, the first volume is in its majority occupied with the interpretation of the original divide between idealism and "proto" positivism through the antagonism between Plato and Protagoras. The third volume of the work includes chapter's discussing contemporary figures such as Lotze, Liebmann, or Helmholtz.

²⁰¹ Which will be discussed in the next chapter.

prerequisite of the critical method. In this sense, he confronts the impossibility of offering a complete argument regarding the necessity and general validity of values with the claim that in order to fully grasp experience, we need to recognize necessary and generally valid values. This presupposition is a point of contention between Windelband and Laas.

Laas claims that Windelband simply dismisses without argument the possibility that values presupposed by our assessment activities are the result of biological or cultural evolution (Laas 1884:3). For Laas, what Windelband calls ‘values,’ ‘laws’ of thinking, or ‘axioms’ are the abstract result of a constitutive process that starts with more simple impressions and mental processes. Through a complex process, certain subjective hypotheses involved in our handling of impressions are raised from their status of merely subjective to to the level of regulative maxims of judging and doing, before finally becoming, in view of their effectiveness, acknowledged axioms. The hypotheses that are found to be more productive in the task of explaining and anticipating reality acquire a higher worth, thus becoming values. Laas argues that this schematic solution proves useful when we consider the crucial problem of relating values with the content of experience. Accepting a strong dichotomy, that is, between absolute values and empirical facts leads to what Lotze called the “happy fact” of their concordance. Laas’ positivist approach allows for an explanation of this happy fact of the conformity between impressions and laws of thought as the result of actions of a psycho-mechanical nature. In connection with the prior exposition of Windelband’s definition of philosophy, what Laas seems to suggest is that Windelband’s interpretation of values does not allow for a solution to the predicament of the metaphor of the mind as a mirror of nature. More concretely, while Laas’ stance seems to be Humean through and through, he accuses Windelband of relapsing into a dogmatic thesis, namely, into a pre-established harmony.

Presenting several technical arguments, Laas points out various imprecisions in Windelband’s argumentation. To begin with, Laas considers Windelband’s teleological argumentation to be extremely broad since Windelband does not recognize different types of rational principles. Concretely, Laas claims that Windelband conflates logical, mathematical, and ontological principles without explaining if the role of teleology is

the same for all three cases. Laas considers that certain principles, such as the basic logical principles -the principle of non-contradiction- cannot be proven using logical or teleological arguments, for example. Moreover, he considers that Windelband's description of a teleological consciousness or a teleological necessity is unclear and unjustified (Laas 1884:9). However, what strikes Laas the most is that Windelband appeals to subjective states to ground the necessity of a value.²⁰² Laas' criticism points to the fact that the validity of general values is dependent on a subjective decision made beforehand by the Kantian philosopher. The absolute validity of values does not rest on secure philosophical groundings, but on the type faith that Windelband attributed to Socrates and that he deemed unfit for the demands of modern thinking.

In his riposte, Windelband accuses Laas of having several misconceptions regarding his philosophy (Windelband 1884c:161). The first point noticed by Windelband concerns the obscurities in the meaning of teleology.

In the first place, Windelband restricts the scope of the concept of teleology to the field of the philosophical method²⁰³ and not to metaphysics. Laas criticizes Windelband for advancing a metaphysical interpretation of teleology while, in actual fact, Windelband only affirmed a teleological interpretation of the method of philosophy. Windelband therefore denies that he is proposing some kind of teleological explanation of the world, to replace the modern mechanistic account of nature. There are two reasons for this claim. First, the explanation of worldly events is for Windelband causal or genetic; it involves no teleological component.²⁰⁴ Second, the act of explaining as such does not belong to the task of philosophy but to science. Therefore, Windelband criticizes dogmatic teleology, as it confuses both the nature of explanation and the nature of philosophical inquiry. His use of teleology is not related to the explanation of processes of the world but to the elucidation of the consciousness that constitutes this world. This is

²⁰² "Prof. Windelband zieht es vor, sie durch den Wunsch nach Wahrheit zu begründen. Als ob nicht Wünsche auch chimärisch sein könnten! ... Für die materiale Wahrheit, für die Wahrheit der Prämissen ist natürlich erst recht etwas mehr nötig als bequeme Wünsche" (Laas 1884:9). This criticism prompted a distinction between the recognition of values and the validity of values: while values need to be acknowledged by a subject, their validity rests in themselves.

²⁰³ Windelband speaks of critical-transcendental teleology and opposes it to dogmatic teleology (teleological causality).

²⁰⁴ Windelband shares the empiricist -in his case, strictly Kantian- rejection of traditional metaphysics.

why he affirms that “In jener [metaphysical teleology] handelt es sich um Dinge und ihre Entstehung, in dieser [critical teleology] um Normen und ihre Geltung” ... “in dieser soll die Geltung der Normen durch ihre Angemessenheit zu allgemeingültigen Zwecken einleuchtend gemacht werden” (1884c:162). There are no teleological aspects present or required in the genetic explanation of the origins of representations, only in their assessments as knowledges. Assuming the transcendental turn, i.e., that the traditional interpretation of metaphysics as knowledge of the whole has to be replaced by the metaphysics of knowledge, Windelband thinks that it is this latter type that requires a teleological grounding. Thus, teleology is strictly related to the method of philosophy. In short, the reference to this first criticism helps to stress the transcendental scope of Windelband’s philosophical program. It must be said in Laas’ defense that Windelband does transcend the limits of a purely methodological use of the concept of teleology, insofar as his discussion of the definition of philosophy, allows for a teleological understanding of history. Indeed, the historical process can be described in terms of the gradual tendency toward the manifestation of the ideal normativity. It is not clear in this context if this teleological unfolding is ascribed to reality or to the philosophical consciousness. I will address this discussion in detail in chapters 5 and 6, since this point requires further clarification regarding Windelband’s conception of history and of the history of philosophy. In any case, Windelband unites, in his reply to Laas, the idea of the teleological method with the description of philosophy as an inquiry into the validity of knowledge.

The second criticism derives from Windelband’s description of a normative consciousness. Concretely, Windelband refers to Laas’ criticism of the concept of adequateness (*Angemessenheit*) and its relation to an “*Erfüllung*,” understood as the search for the sources of norms in epistemic inclinations (*Wünsche* - for instance, *Wunsch nach Wahrheit*). The attack, in this case, involves the apparent subjectivist terminology used to describe the aims and procedures of philosophy. Windelband’s use of vocabulary when describing the teleological structure of the grounding of values is dubious, as he mentions the desires or motivations of a particular consciousness. Therefore, this critique calls for a more lucid account of the end implied in the teleological structure mentioned above.

The essence of Windelband's riposte to the subjectivist criticism is as follows. For Windelband, there are absolute norms. However, despite the uncertainty about their existence, we have to acknowledge, at the very least, that there are certain principles that harbor pretensions of absoluteness. These principles can neither be inferred (ableiten) nor proven (beweisen), only shown or exposed (aufsuchen, aufweisen). In this particular case, the fundamental character of values is not proven, but evidence of this character is shown. Norms are brought to consciousness; they are not created or produced by the subject. In this relative sense, it would be simply false to say that Windelband wants to provide proofs of the validity of norms by reference to feelings; Windelband denies the possibility of any proof whatsoever. Windelband cannot possibly offer the proof of a value that depends on something else; on the contrary, norms can, and do, justify themselves. Any reference to inclination or desire is for Windelband merely incidental.

The question, then, is what the teleological method should do in relation to these norms.²⁰⁵ In the first place, says Windelband, the teleological method must set out the norms in a complete and ordered manner (Windelband 1884c:163). In the second place, the task of the method is to isolate or distinguish norms from transitory physical manifestations: "Als Kriterium aber für diese Sonderung habe ich die Thatsache hingestellt, dass die Normen im menschlichen Bewusstsein sich als die Bedingungen der Allgemeingültigkeit des durch sie Bestimmten erweisen" (Windelband 1884c:164). The method is designed to exhibit the function that norms have for the general validity of spiritual functions. It is in the context of this exhibition that Windelband's subjective vocabulary emerges. Although values cannot be subjected to proof, for us, they represent the normality of thinking, willing, and desire. It is this sense that universally valid values are considered norms. Values are valid in themselves, since their validity does not depend on our recognition, but values are also guiding principles for our rational practices, i.e.

²⁰⁵ Windelband's point is that values or norms have a teleological structure and they are characterized by this reason through the reference to a consciousness: "Die logische Gesetzgebung besteht also für uns nur unter Voraussetzung des Zwecks der Wahrheit ... Dasselbe wiederholt sich bei der ethischen und ästhetischen Gesetzgebung; auch hier liegt in der Norm, sofern sie uns einleuchten soll, der Sinn eines Maßstabes für die Beurteilung, welche den Zweck der Allgemeingültigkeit zugrunde legt. Das Sittengesetz verlangt diejenige Motivation, welche mit dem Anspruch auf Allgemeingültigkeit gebilligt werden kann; die ästhetische Regel verlangt diejenige Gefühlserregung, welche unter Voraussetzung allgemeiner Geltung ihren Gegenstand als schön charakterisieren darf" (Windelband *KGM* 1915 2:73).

for us they represent norms or imperatives²⁰⁶. This is why reflecting on values leads to the evidence that these values represent a general command. The method does not offer real or objective foundations but a subjective recognition: “Ihr einziger Zweck ist der, dass durch die teleologische Besinnung ein Jeder sich die absolute Geltung der Normen zu Bewusstsein bringt” (Windelband 1884b:164).²⁰⁷ It is true that this is one of the weakest links in Windelband’s argument; however, it is completely in line with his principles. The philosopher can seek and clarify but never impose a determinate normative content.

The debate between Windelband and Laas finally came down to the opposition between positivism and idealism. While Laas acknowledges the relevance of certain principles for our rational life, these principles are grounded in our subjective constitution. As Laas says, when we think, we can feel or know that we are tied to them (Laas 1884:9), but these principles are grounded in our subjective dispositions. For this reason, Windelband attributes a relativist tendency to this view. On the contrary, Windelband idealistically claims that these principles are grounded in themselves, and we acknowledge them not because they are feelings or thoughts but because of the role that they play in our rational life. Generally valid principles, that is, rational principles, are valid in themselves, but they are acknowledged by rational subjects as imperatives or duties. It is for this reason that those principles are interpreted by Windelband as values or norms. In our concrete life, these principles appear to express an obligation. Under the assumption of the validity of the ideal meaning of norms, the task of philosophy is to allow the whole community of human beings to experience the evidence of this same assumption and, therefore, to allow every subject to freely recognize the force of the normative content just mentioned.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Windelband went back to this distinction in *Prinzipien der Logik*: “Von ‘uns’ aus gesehen, ist das Logische ein ‘Sollen’: aber dies Sollen muss seinen Grund in etwas haben, dessen Geltung an sich besteht und das erst durch die Beziehung auf ein irrensfähiges Bewusstsein für dieses zu einer Norm, zu einem Sollen wird” (Windelband PL 1912:18).

²⁰⁷ About the normative: “Logical laws cannot be based on psychological laws, because they are normative standards, binding for (but not necessarily followed by) the thought processes described by naturalistic psychological law.” (Lanier Anderson 2005:295) Here there is also a connection between objectivity and the normative aspect of logical rules.

²⁰⁸ Rather than a Kantian, this is again a Socratic doctrine.

The methodological process relates two separate poles: the real norms that are present in a concrete person's rational actions or in collectivity's life and the recognition that there should be a criterion for assessments in the form of an ideal, universally valid, norm. The aim of the philosopher is to separate those norms grounded in the mere feeling of acceptance or disgust from those that can sustain themselves independently of their concrete acceptance. Therefore, the concrete consciousness stands amidst its factual motives and the consciousness of an ideal norm toward which the factual motives must fall in line. Concrete consciousness tends towards the autonomy of its own rules.

3.5. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter briefly presented Windelband's general project, highlighting how it was grounded in a peculiar historical situation. As such, I have presented the historical backgrounds and philosophical arguments behind Windelband's several definitions of philosophy. Windelband defined philosophy through a progressively more complex list of characterizations: as a cultural force, as the consciousness of science, as a critical science of absolute values, and as a science of normative consciousness. In this last definition, Windelband affirms that philosophy is an ideal in the Kantian sense. Since normative consciousness is an orienting end, something that is being realized but can never be fully achieved, philosophy's critical endeavor will always remain unfinished. The history of philosophy is therefore presented as the constant struggle to concretize and evaluate the realization of this normative consciousness in the human world.

Although Windelband offers abstract arguments in defense of his stance, like the one based on the distinction between judgment and assessment, overall, his understanding of philosophy is strongly dependent on reflections about philosophy's past and present situation. This opinion is shared by several interpreters, and I deem it to be correct. Rosella Bonito Oliva, for example, affirms that:

Der Philosoph deutet die Gegenwart als Symptom eines Moments der Orientierungslosigkeit, dessen kritisches Verständnis, neben der Beschreibung und der Erklärung, eine Möglichkeit der Überwindung erschliesst, beginnend mit

den in der Tradition der kritische Philosophie und des Idealismus latent vorhandenen Energien, die in der Kultur der Gegenwart vergessen würden. (Bonito Oliva 2018:100)

In addition to these definitions of philosophy, Windelband developed a peculiar type of transcendental philosophy, a conception of philosophy as reflection, in which the concept of transcendental subjectivity is eliminated from the vocabulary related to faculties or potencies of the mind, as proposed by Kant. Philosophy is understood in terms of a method that reveals the structure of rationality, and that requires a reference the collective task of recognizing norms. The next step in my argumentation consists in explaining this particular interpretation of the philosophical method.

CHAPTER 4: HISTORY AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD

In this chapter, I discuss the relationship between the systematic and historical dimensions of philosophical thinking by exploring Wilhelm Windelband's conception of the philosophical method. Following the general hypothesis of this investigation, I will proceed to show that the relationship mentioned above plays a constitutive role in Windelband's Neo-Kantian programmatic.

When discussing his definition of philosophy, Windelband mentions how difficult it is to determine the precise meaning of the critical or transcendental method.²⁰⁹ Nonetheless, he held that this was the correct method for philosophy. Casting aside the obscurities surrounding the original Kantian formulation of the critical method represents, for this reason, a central aspect of the Neo-Kantian agenda. This is the opinion, for instance, of Matthias Kemper, who argues that the discussion on the critical method, "ist der Ausgangspunkt zur historischen Auseinandersetzung mit der kantischen Philosophie und der innerste Antrieb zum eigenen Systembau gewesen" (Kemper 2006:101).

In principle, neither Kant nor Windelband's Neo-Kantian formulation of the critical method presents a direct reference to history. However, as a result of his increasing consideration for historical matters, Windelband introduced a strong historical component in his characterization of the critical method. This increasing relevance of history was finally materialized in his thesis, according to which history plays the role of an organon for critical philosophy. This Windelbandian thesis constitutes the nucleus of Windelband's interpretation of the method and represents Windelband's originality wit-

²⁰⁹ "Und wenn Kant für die Philosophie die 'kritische' Methode festgestellt zu haben glaubte, so sind die Historiker noch heute nicht einmal darüber einig, was er damit gemeint hat" (Windelband 1915 1:10). For Windelband, Kant was much clearer in his opposition to the dogmatic interpretation of the philosophical method -and its relationship to metaphysics- than in his opposition to the empiricist interpretation. This led to a confusion between the critical and the psychological inquiry of knowledge (Windelband (1915 1:10); Morrone (2013:91)). The conceptual clarification of these distinctions is one of the objectives of Windelband's discussion on the method of philosophy. The original interpretation of the critical method is probably a general feature of the Neo-Kantian movement. For a review of how the members of the Marburg School treated the critical method in, see Pollock (2010).

hin the Neo-Kantian camp. It also presents specific interpretative issues that will be discussed in full throughout this chapter.²¹⁰

One distinctive feature of this recognition of history as the methodological guiding principle for philosophical inquiry is that it contradicts the traditional or received view regarding Windelband's engagement with history. In other words, what this interpretation affirmed is that the Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism's interest in history and its problems is identifiable with the task of epistemologically grounding the historical sciences, that is, with the task of establishing a logic of history. The corollary of this interpretation is that the role of history in the philosophy of Windelband is not directly related to the philosophical method. Against this interpretation, I argue in this chapter that the presence of this specific doctrine shows that Windelband's addressing of history was not exclusively motivated by the inquiry into the methods of history. On the contrary, I claim that it was motivated by the discussion of the method of philosophy. This claim leads to a second relevant aspect of the interpretation of the critical method, that is, it prompts us to consider concrete possibilities of harmonizing transcendental philosophy and historical consciousness.

Windelband's interpretation of philosophy's critical organon leads us to the link between transcendental philosophy and historical consciousness. The explanation of this link, and the overall interpretation of the critical method that results from it, represents the positive aspect of this chapter. If I were to trace back the theme of this chapter to the labels previously introduced, I would say that we are dealing here with the possibility of providing a historical philosophy *tout court*.

Regarding the structure of the chapter, I will start by explaining the background and general features of the critical method according to Windelband's interpretation. After this, I will focus on the idea according to which philosophy requires an organon. This requirement is based on special consideration of the relationship between experience and philosophical knowledge. More concretely, it involves the idea that philo-

²¹⁰ One of the few references to the idea that history has to serve as the organon of philosophy can be found in F. Beiser's article "Historicism and Neo-Kantianism" (Beiser 2008). In Beiser's article, this thesis is considered part of Windelband's general strategy against historicism and is therefore evaluated according to this problem. References are also to be found in Krijnen (2001); Kreiter (2002), Kemper (2006), Chang (2012), and König (2018).

sophical reflection needs to be guided by the empirical sciences. The first section of the chapter will focus on the treatment of these two aspects of Windelband's method.

During his philosophical career, Windelband offered two divergent interpretations of his theory of the organon of philosophy. In contrast with what is often assumed, the centrality of history was not a feature of the original edition of *Präludien* but a result of the evolution of Windelband's thinking. As far as the topic of the organon of philosophy is concerned, this is shown in the fact that, in the first edition of the book, Windelband identified another discipline, namely, psychology, as the guiding principle for philosophical reflection. The problems pertaining to the philosophy of history probably acquired relevance gradually. Still, the change in the conception of the organon of philosophy from psychology to history represents a drastic turnaround that had a definitive impact on Windelband's understanding of the critical method. In this context, sections two and three discuss the possibilities of treating psychology and history as the organons of philosophy, respectively. The fourth section discusses certain problems associated with the methodological role assigned to history.

This chapter presents both a diachronic and a synchronic exposition. It attempts to describe Windelband's development and dissects this idea to reconstruct a definition of the method of philosophy based on the reference to history. I offer an analysis of the fundamental passages in which this change is manifested and, against Beiser's interpretive hypothesis according to which the "reasons for [Windelband's preference for history] are rather obscure" (Beiser 2008:560), I show that the theory of the organon of philosophy is not confusing but carefully articulated.

In sum, two questions will be raised throughout the chapter: (1) Why does philosophy have need of an organ? (2) Why should this organon be identified with history? I reconstruct Windelband's early and late interpretation of the method of philosophy and clarify how history became a dominant factor in his interpretation of transcendental philosophy.

4.1. THE CRITICAL METHOD

With the topic of the organon of philosophy, Windelband tried to capture the basic tenets of the Neo-Kantian conception of the method of philosophy. It is worth remembering that the methodological problem was at the core of the ‘identity crisis’ of philosophy. Philosophy was not only deprived of its object but also of its own distinctive procedure. Frederick Beiser uses an aporia to explain the problem of method that all nineteenth-century philosophers allegedly had to face:

Philosophy, it seemed, had no reliable method of its own. There appeared to be only two options: ‘the synthetic method’ of the speculative tradition, which begins with universals and descends to particulars; or ‘the analytic method’ of the empirical sciences, which begins with particulars and ascends to universals. (Beiser 2014a:16)²¹¹

However, given the causes that lead to this ‘crisis,’ the rejection of the dialectical method seemed inevitable, and the only available alternative, in principle, was the method of the empirical sciences, the adoption of which would undermine the pretensions of philosophy (Windelband 1911:363). The adoption of the empirical method would imply the reduction of philosophy, using Kantian terms, to *quid facti* questions. The existence of an alternative path to this dilemma was also obscure. Windelband, who sought such an alternative in his works, considers that even the father of critical philosophy failed to clarify the exact nature of the philosophical method due to excessive dependence on a psychological point of view: “Kant selbst trug Schuld daran, daß der neue Begriff der Apriorität, welchen er aufstellte, sehr bald in die alte Vorstellung psychologischer Priorität herabgezogen und so das Wertvollste seiner Schöpfung verkannt wurde” (Windelband KGM 1915 2:101).²¹² The correct way of interpreting the critical method is not presented as a scholarly issue but a core problem for the future of philosophy. And, while Windelband’s definition of philosophy and his concept of normative consciousness attempts to follow the Kantian formulation closely, his treatment of method undoubtedly aims to overcome the epochal situation of philosophy. Although he

²¹¹ Beiser’s terminology nevertheless is not entirely felicitous, since the opposition between the synthetic and the analytic method is employed as a technical term by Immanuel Kant. For the Neo-Kantians these terms also depict two different paths followed in transcendental investigations that are not to be confused with the dialectical or empirical methods.

²¹² This lack of clarity regarding psychological priority and philosophical apriority is conditioned by Kant’s intellectual context: “Wie zur Zeit der Aufklärung suchte man für die Philosophie, die man nicht hatte, einen Ersatz in der Psychologie, die gerade im Begriffe war, sich mit naturwissenschaftliche Methoden zu modernisieren” (Windelband 1911:363).

recognizes Kant's idea of understanding transcendental philosophy in terms of the search of the a priori presuppositions of knowledge, Windelband's Neo-Kantian understanding of method implies both a new relationship between philosophy and experience and a new conception of the transcendental proof.

4.1.1. Philosophical Background of Windelband's Conception of the Philosophical Method

Windelband's claim about the obscurities of Kant's interpretation of the philosophical method call for a direct examination. This discussion will serve as a gateway to Windelband's conception of the philosophical method.

The philosophical method's importance cannot be downplayed because, as Windelband himself recognizes, the *Critique of Pure Reason* is presented as "ein Traktat von der Methode" (B XXII; Windelband 1915 2:99).

For Windelband, tackling the problem of the critical method starts with the acknowledgment of the limits of psychologism. This is the formulation found in both Windelband's discussion of method in "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" and his historiographical account of Kant's philosophy (Windelband 1915 2:99). Due to this focus on psychologism, a term coined during the nineteenth century, the primary reference point for the development of an interpretation is the opposition between *quid facti* and *quid juris* advanced by Kant in the context of his *Transcendental Deduction*. This focus on the *quid juris-quid facti* opposition is, at first sight, justified due to the significance of the Deduction for the Kantian system. However, on first inspection, it is clear that this focus also deviates from the Kantian treatment of the philosophical method, for Kant paid much more attention to a different problematic, that is, to the shortcomings of applying the mathematical method to philosophical matters.

Evidently, there are many contested points regarding the proper understanding of the methodological procedures of the *First Critique*, and I do not intend to solve them in the context of this investigation. For my present concerns, I will follow Mario Cai-

mi's presentation (Caimi 2012), which offers an insightful reconstruction of the methodological procedure of the *First Critique*.²¹³

Caimi describes the method of the *First Critique* in terms of a process of isolation and integration of elements. According to him, the Kantian starting point is an obscure and confuse concept that is taken for granted and whose precise determination establishes the proper object of philosophical reflection (Caimi 2012:5). Given this obscure and confuse concept, the first analytic step consists in identifying elements in this concept to isolate them. These elements are taken as the minimal constituents of the concept. The objective of this isolation is to render these elements clear and distinct. These isolated elements serve as guides that detect unnoticed aspects of the the concept originally considered confusing and obscure. As Caimi explains, “since on distinctly knowing the elements precisely as elements we may then become aware of their reference to the whole of which they are part of; being a part of a whole, the isolated element demands the existence of other elements of the same whole” (Caimi 2012:6). By finding these references between the elements of the original whole, the philosopher is entitled to proceed from the analysis to the synthesis of these elements. The intention behind this this shift from the analysis of elements to the synthesis of elements is the search for a complete synthesis that could finally transform the original concept into a clear and distinct totality. This final synthesis would amount to a definition and yet never be a perfect definition, as is the case in mathematics (KrV A729/B757). In comparison, while the mathematical method starts with definitions, in philosophy, these appear only at the end of the investigation.

The method of isolation and integration articulates the concrete content and structure of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. According to Caimi's interpretation, the starting concept in the first critique is the concept of “pure speculative reason” (Caimi 2012:10; *KrV* A 13/ B 27). This concept is dissected into its constituent elements. This is shown precisely in the “Transcendental Doctrine of Elements,” which proceeds by by isolating sensibility (*KrV* A 22/ B 36) and understanding (*KrV* A 62/ B 87). From the analysis of these elements partial syntheses are obtained; for example, in the chapter *On*

²¹³ A different explanation of the philosophical method and its development from the pre-critical to the critical period can be found in Baghai (2018), Falkenburg (2018).

the Schematism of Pure Concepts of the Understanding (Caimi 2012:11). However, the final synthesis is only to be found at the very end of the Kantian research, where a proper clarification of the concept of philosophy of pure reason is provided; that is, in the *Architectonic of Pure Reason* (KrV A 841/ B 869).

However, the *Critique of Pure Reason* does not tell the whole history of the critical method. Kant's following theoretical work, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Present Itself as a Science*, presents yet another possible path that is open to transcendental philosophy.

In this work, Kant presents an opposition to the synthetic procedure employed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This reference serves as confirmation of Caimi's account insofar as Kant described the synthetic procedure as the search for the elements of reason and the laws of their employment in the sources of pure reason itself. The alternative procedure presented by Kant is the analytic procedure a fundamental presupposition, a *Faktum*, as Kant says. This method does not delve into the original sources of reason but seeks to determine the requirements for the possibility of the realization of a science (Kant Ak. 2:275). Thus, by taking for granted mathematics and the natural sciences are indeed real and contain synthetic a priori principles, the analytic of regressive method inquires into the necessary conditions of the reality of these sciences.²¹⁴ In this manner, the argumentative line pursued in *Kant's Prolegomena* ranges from the conditioned to its conditions of possibility.

The difference between these procedures is analogous to that between the method of discovery and the method of exposition. Kant presents the difference between a synthetic and a regressive method as a different method of exposition for the same theoretical corpus. Moreover, the regressive method, as a way of presenting transcendental idealism, is dependent on the results of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Contrary to Kant, the Neo-Kantians inverted the weight of both procedures transforming that which Kant presents as a difference in exposition and is dependent on the results of the synthetic or progressive procedure, into a systematic difference.

²¹⁴ Metaphysics is obviously taken into account, but, in the context of this procedure, it is not considered a science but a natural disposition.

An excellent example of the specific Neo-Kantian stance regarding the interpretation of method can be found in Bruno Bauch's lengthy exposition.²¹⁵ In contrast with Caimi's close reading of Kant's texts, Bauch does not start by pointing out Kant's remarks on the method of philosophy in the *Untersuchung* (1763), which, as Caimi shows, constitutes the basis of his *Transcendental Doctrine of Method*. On the contrary, Bauch begins with an abstract characterization of the transcendental method, a term that is not found in Kantian sources:

Die transzendente Fragestellung ist also auf die 'Gründe *a priori* zur Möglichkeit der Erfahrung' gerichtet. Das aber ist das Problem der Erkenntnislehre als philosophischer Disziplin ... Die Methode, die das transzendente Problem in der transzendentalphilosophischen Erkenntnislehre aufzulösen bestimmt ist, heisst darum selbst transzendente Methode. (Bauch 1917:130)

The transcendental method is directed toward the inquiry of the grounds (Gründe) of experience and aims to offer a foundation (Begründung) for experience. Bauch then distinguishes between mere cognition (Wissen) and founded cognition (Wissenschaft), claiming that the aim of the transcendental method is the understanding of what makes certain cognitions science. As becomes apparent, Bauch's primary reference in his initial characterization of the method is the text from Kant's *Prolegomena*:

Und indem sie [die transzendente Methode] in den wirklichen Wissenschaften der Mathematik und Naturwissenschaft deren apriorische, d.h. objektiv gültige, für wissenschaftliche Erfahrung immer schon vorausgesetzt Grundlagen anerkennt und nur nach dem Wie ihrer Möglichkeit fragt, aber auch sie immer schon anerkennen muss, um so fragen zu können, nimmt sie diesen Wissenschaften nicht nur nichts von ihrem wissenschaftlichen Werte und ihrer wissenschaftlichen Würden, wie man sie fälschlich verstanden hat, sondern ist im Gegenteil nur auf deren Festigung gerichtet. (Bauch 1917:131)

Thus, the method takes as its starting point the reality of experience, here identified with mathematics and the natural sciences in order to advance to its grounds, that is, the conditions of possibility of experience (Bauch 1917:132). This exposition does not only

²¹⁵ I take Bauch's book on Kant as a primary reference since it belongs to the circle of the South-west Neo-Kantians. He attended Windelband's classes in Strasbourg, and his book offers a more detailed exposition of the Kantian method in comparison with Windelband's brief reference in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*. I take Bauch's exegesis of Kant as being close in spirit to Windelband's systematic interpretation of the critical method.

follow the *Prolegomena* strictly; it also introduces a fundamental modification. What is missing from Bauch's characterization of the transcendental method is the reference to the problems of classical metaphysics.²¹⁶ Thus, Bauch does not only diverge from Kant with regards to the election of the primary reference to the treatment of method, he also reduces its scope.

This preference for the *Prolegomena* is extremely helpful to understand why the opposition between *quid juris* and *quid facti* took on such importance in Neo-Kantian discussions. This does not deny, of course, that this distinction was also relevant for Kant. However, the close link between philosophical reflection and experience demands a constant reaffirmation of their difference. As Bauch says, the conditions that ground experience cannot be experiential themselves, for this would imply a vicious circle. For Windelband, as we will see, scientific discourse, in as much as it depends on causal principles, cannot account for its own conditions of validity, that is, for the grounding of the principle of causality through reflection. The center of gravity of the interpretation of method is not the differentiation between the method of mathematics and philosophy, as was the case for Kant, who was targeting the procedures of dogmatic metaphysicians, but the differentiation between the methods that belong to experience and the method that belongs to its grounding. The grounding procedure thus seeks the a priori laws or objective rules of experience. As such, we see how Bauch's presentation of the transcendental method connects with Windelband's exposition of Kant's philosophy, which emphasizes, as I have shown in chapter 2, that Kant's new concept of object was dependent on the concept of rule.

4.1.2. Windelband's Interpretation of the Critical Method

As I showed previously, "Was ist Philosophie?" advances a brief characterization of Windelband's conception of the critical or transcendental method, but it is only in the

²¹⁶ "Ist darum *die Wirklichkeit der Erfahrung in ihrer Möglichkeit* der problematische Ausgangspunkt der transzendentalen Methode, so kann man *die Möglichkeit der Erfahrung in ihrer Wirklichkeit* als den Zielpunkt der transzendentalen Methode bezeichnen. Erfahrung ist also Ausgangspunkt und Ziel zugleich" (Bauch 1917:132).

essay “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” that we find a detailed account of its meaning. It is for this reason that this essay stands at the center of my exposition. However, I will endeavor to identify its relationship with other writings to clarify its obscurities and unpack some of its extremely synthetic formulations.

The title “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” problematizes the task of connecting experience with philosophy right from the very start. Regarding the title of this essay, Kemper affirms: “Windelband nennt zwei Möglichkeiten des methodischen Zugangs: kritischen und genetische Methode. Schon am Titel seines Aufsatzes zur Methode der Philosophie ist deutlich erkennbar, dass es zwischen beiden Methoden kein Und, sondern bestenfalls ein oder geben kann” (Kemper 2006:102). This appraisal may be right, but it is not without the following caveat. What has to be stressed in relation to this distinction is the fact that the separation between the critical and the genetic methods does not mean that philosophy is alien to experience, as if both methods implicitly distinguished between experience and pure thought. As Bauch stressed, experience is the starting and final point of the transcendental method (Bauch 1917:132). Recalling the difference between judgment and assessment, the distinction between the two methods is grounded in their differing viewpoints regarding experience. While one method seeks the rational grounds of experience, the other method seeks to explain experience. The irreconcilability of these two methods stems from the fact that they do different things and that one of these methods goes from experience to its conditions while the other remains perpetually contained within the limited field of experience. Put differently, while the genetic method proceeds by offering causal explanations and finding the proper causes for a given occurrence, the critical method seeks to ground our assessments of experience and determine the rational principles to which we are implicitly committed by our own epistemic, moral, or aesthetic activities.

Even though it is possible to study values from the perspective of psychology, sociology, or cultural history, it is only through the a priori reasoning of philosophy that their general validity can be grasped.

This proposal is not limited to the sphere of logic:

In allen diesen drei Teilen steht die Philosophie ihrem Objekt (also im ersten Teil, dem theoretischen, auch der Wissenschaft) nicht so gegenüber, wie die übrigen Wissenschaften ihren besonderen Gegenständen, sondern, kritisch, d. h. de-

rartig, daß sie das tatsächliche Material des Denkens, Wollens, Fühlens am Zweck der allgemeinen und notwendigen Geltung prüft, und daß sie das, was dieser Prüfung nicht standhält, ausscheidet und zurückweist. (Windelband WIPh. 1915 1:27)

The task of philosophy is to establish and systematically justify the set of principles that are involved in our scientific, ethical, and aesthetic judgments: the values of truth, the good, and beauty. Those principles determine the meaning of an underlying consciousness that Windelband, as we have explained in the previous chapter, calls “normal consciousness.” The same is explained in *Prinzipien der Logik*:

Denn im Sinne der kritischen Methode, durch die allein der Philosophie eine eigene Aufgabe und ein eigenes Forschungsgebiet in genauer Abgrenzung gegen die übrigen Wissenschaften bestimmt werden kann, ist das philosophische Denken überall darauf gerichtet, die menschlichen Vernunfttätigkeiten, aus denen im Laufe der Geschichte die Gesamtgebilde des Kulturlebens erwachsen, dar aufhin zu untersuchen, wieweit darin allgemeine, von den spezifischen Bedingungen der Menschheit unabhängige, rein sachlich in sich begründete Vernunftinhalte zum Bewusstsein und zur Geltung gelangen. (Windelband PL 1912:3)

Instead of putting forward a productive logic, the Neo-Kantians identified the task of philosophy with critique. A good example of Windelband’s interpretation of the Kantian meaning of critique is provided in his essay “Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus” from 1910:

Kant hat dies Forschungsgebiet mit dem Namen der Kritik der Vernunft bezeichnet: wobei unter Kritik die Besinnung, die systematische Besinnung auf die prinzipiellen Grundlagen alles Vernunftlebens, die wissenschaftliche Bloßlegung der Grundstruktur aller Kulturfunktionen zu verstehen ist. Das ist tatsächlich der Ertrag der Kantischen Kritiken, wenn auch diese Formel selbst bei Kant nicht zu finden und vielleicht sogar ihr Sinn in dieser Weise ihm nicht geläufig ist. Seine Transzendentalphilosophie ist in ihren Ergebnissen die Wissenschaft von den Prinzipien alles dessen, was wir jetzt mit dem Namen Kultur zusammenfassen. (Windelband 1915 EH 1:274).

In this context, what Windelband is saying is that philosophy is not concerned with the creation of cultural ideals but with the critical reflection on the grounds of our present culture. Broadly speaking, the aim of a critique is to establish the grounds of validity for a certain subset of cognitive products, and, more particularly, the values that are in-

volved in the judgments that constitute scientific theories.²¹⁷ This point had already been made by Kant in the preface to his *Critique of Pure Reason*:

Denn es [the critique of pure reason] ist nichts als das Inventarium aller unserer Besitze durch reine Vernunft, systematisch geordnet. Es kann uns hier nichts entgehen, weil, was Vernunft gänzlich aus sich selbst hervorbringt, sich nicht verstecken kann, sondern selbst durch Vernunft ans Licht gebracht wird, sobald man nur das gemeinschaftliche Prinzip desselben entdeckt hat. Die vollkommene Einheit dieser Art Erkenntnisse, und zwar aus lauter reinen Begriffen, ohne dass irgend etwas von Erfahrung, oder auch nur besondere Anschauung, die zur bestimmten Erfahrung leiten sollte, auf sie einigen Einfluss haben kann, sie zu erweitern und zu vermehren, macht diese unbedingte Vollständigkeit nicht allein tunlich, sondern auch notwendig. (Kant KrV AXX)²¹⁸

The determination of philosophy as critique requires a precise methodological interpretation. We have seen that Kant's methodological procedures require a specific starting point for the development of philosophical reflection. The synthetic method of the *Critique of Pure Reason* requires as its proper starting point an obscure and confusing concept that, if Caimi's interpretation is correct, is the concept of "pure speculative reason" (Caimi 2012:9). The analytic method, on the other hand, starts from the assumption that we possess synthetic a priori cognitions in mathematics and the natural sciences, as well as claims for the possession of such type of cognitions in metaphysics, in order to regress from these given cognitions to their necessary conditions of possibility. Windelband also affirms that the systematic elaboration of a critique requires some sort of material as the starting point of the analysis. It is the organon of critique that provides this material. Leaving the specificities that I will describe in the following pages aside, Windelband's understanding is closer to the regressive proposal of the *Prolegomena* than it is to the synthetic procedure of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

However, there is an important difference regarding the outcome of critique that is manifested in the passage of the first critique quoted above. For Kant, the search for the conditions of possibility of a priori knowledge arrives at a definite point. Moreover, this

²¹⁷ The same model applies to ethical and aesthetic judgments as well. Windelband generally focuses his clarifications regarding the philosophical method on the problems of logic or theoretical philosophy.

²¹⁸ The same expression, "bring to light" appears in a passage from Windelband's *Prinzipien der Logik*: "Denn die Philosophie hat gerade, wie ich in den Präludien [...] gezeigt habe, die Aufgabe, durch empirische Besinnung auf die Funktionen allgemeingültiger Wertung die Normen festzustellen, deren sachlich axiomatische Geltung zwar durch die Tatsachen erläutert und an ihnen zum Bewusstsein gebracht, aber nicht durch sie bewiesen werden kann" (Windelband PL 1912:38).

point is granted by means of a static concept of reason that guarantees the completeness and eternal validity of the elements of the critical system. This also guarantees, for example, that the task of a critique of pure reason will have a proper ending. However, Windelband has a different conception of the “bringing to light” of reason’s structure. Thus, a necessary step in the argumentation requires us to shed more light on this metaphor and to establish how it is related to the scope of Neo-Kantianism. Rather than offering an interpretation of the Kantian method in terms of an analysis of reason’s elements and faculties, the Neo-Kantians understand that Kant’s essential methodological teaching is expressed in the regressive movement from experience to the rational laws that operate as its necessary conditions of possibility. Following this primacy of the regressive procedure, Windelband develops a logic that has, as its starting point, an analysis of the methods of the sciences.²¹⁹

The doctrine of the organon of philosophy is, in fact, directly connected with the problem of relating experience to the transcendental level. The critical method seeks to ground experience in something that cannot be considered empirical. This raises the problem of the access to this different dimension because the only available way of accessing this dimension is through experience itself. In this context, Windelband provides an explicit characterization of philosophy as a “second order” discipline, meaning that the starting point from philosophy has to be a “first order” discipline. In a conference on the logic of sciences, for instance, Windelband claims that the abstract logical reflection of philosophers does not lead to positive results as far as concerns the methods of knowledge (Windelband 1905b:104). In accordance with the just-mentioned ‘identity crisis’ and also in accordance with Kant, Windelband cautions against metaphysics, i.e., against the possibility of a purely rational path of knowledge. Philosophy

²¹⁹ This is stated in a text on the critical philosophy of history: “Das Leben muss gelebt sein, ehe es gedacht wird. Das gilt auch von den Wissenschaften in ihrem Verhältnis zur theoretischen Philosophie, zur Logik. Erst wenn das Leben einer Wissenschaft seine Höhe erreicht, seine Erfolge gewonnen, seine Eigenart bekräftigt und befestigt hat, erst dann wird es die Sache nachkommender philosophischer Überlegung, die gedanklichen Formen zu verstehen, die zu solchen Ergebnissen geführt haben, und die methodische Arbeit analysierend zu formulieren, die mit unmittelbarer Entfaltung an den Gegenständen selbst ihre Früchte gezeitigt hat” (Windelband 1905a:104) and “Die Methoden selbst erwachsen als lebendige Tätigkeiten in der unmittelbaren Bewältigung sachlicher Aufgaben: ihre Formen herauszulösen, zu verstehen und zu begründen, ist die Aufgabe der Philosophie. Abstrakte Überlegung des Logikers hat noch niemals eine fruchtbare Methode des Erkennens ausgeklügelt” (Windelband 1905a:105).

cannot operate as if in a vacuum.²²⁰ Philosophical reflection presupposes the accomplished works of human culture in general, and in particular, of the different sciences. Thus, philosophy's task is defined as a reflection on the intellectual forms that are at work in human cultural production.

Therefore, the discussion on the topic of the organon of philosophy reveals Windelband's attempt to establish the correct mediation between the empirical and the transcendental dimensions of thinking. This is why the topic acquires a prominent place in Windelband's arguments, which is also the reason why its clarification proves to be challenging. Despite the fact that he is not sufficiently explicit about it, it stands at the core of Windelband's philosophy.

The starting point of the philosophical method, in what concerns theoretical philosophy, is the methodology of the sciences. The result of the critical methodical procedure should be the understanding of its presuppositions.²²¹ From a broader point of view, this result would achieve two important philosophical goals: it would prove, on the one hand, the necessary validity of a priori norms, and, on the other, the inadequacy of applying the methods of particular sciences to philosophy, a tendency that was characteristic of positivistic epistemology. Windelband's intended conclusion is that the methods of the sciences, as well as every concrete scientific knowledge, are an attempt to mediate between the particular and the universal components of knowledge (Windel-

²²⁰ This characterization of philosophy is more or less shared by the majority of the Neo-Kantian authors. Hermann Cohen, one of Windelband's contemporaries, traces a similar division between the working materials of the philosopher, provided in Cohen's case by the natural sciences, and the methodical reworking of those materials: "So könnte man denn wirklich meinen, Kant habe nur jene ausgezeichneten Begriffe in Erwägung zu nehmen brauchen, um an ihnen seine Methode zu entwerfen und zu bewähren. Die Sammlung und Prüfung derjenigen Begriffe, welche von Galilei bis Newton teils in offener Diskussion, teils in latenter Anerkennung sich befinden, könnte als die schlichte Aufgabe der philosophischen Methode erscheinen" ... "Indessen ist die Methode keineswegs die Übersetzung der Grundbegriffe aus der geschichtlichen Feststellung in die philosophische Rechtfertigung. Die Feststellung selbst muss zwar von der geschichtlichen Einsicht veranlasst und eröffnet werden, aber sie bedarf eigener philosophischer Prüfungen, bevor noch die Rechtfertigung beginnen kann. Un in diesen Vorbereitungen schon besteht die Schwierigkeit der transzendentalen Methode" (Cohen 1918:96). The concrete existence of science appears as a supposition and starting point of philosophical critique (Cohen 1918:40; also Natortp (1912:196). Therefore, Cohen's philosophical method implied an inversion regarding the Kantian procedure insofar as it claims the precedence of the regressive method of the *Prolegomena* over the progressive method of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Pichè 2000:187).

²²¹ In his *Prinzipien der Logik*, Windelband refers to two starting points: common experience and science. Moreover, Windelband distinguishes between the form given by human nature and the forms of consciousness mediated through history (Windelband 1912:3).

band 1915 2:103). His arguments in this context are not, however, the strongest nor are they developed more extensively in his philosophical writings.

According to Windelband, scientists may employ two different logical procedures, which can be the object of philosophical consideration. Induction and deduction are the two ways in which scientists seek to relate the concrete and the general:

Verfolgt man nämlich alle Unterscheidungen, welche hinsichtlich des wissenschaftlichen Beweisverfahrens überhaupt zu machen sind, so reduzieren sie sich schließlich auf den Gegensatz von deduktiver und induktiver Methode und dieser beruht auf dem Grundverhältnis, welches allem unserem Denken zugrunde liegt: demjenigen zwischen dem Allgemeinen und dem Besonderen. (Windelband KGM 1915 2:102)

The passage shows that both induction and deduction, as scientific methods, presuppose transcendental principles. This represents a further argument for the distinction between *quid facti* and *quid juris* or between explanation and critical reflection. In this case, the argument is stronger. It does not postulate an opposition but presents an explanatory procedure that presupposes a set of principles that cannot be explained but can be clarified.

The different modes of scientific thinking imply different modes of establishing logical relations between the universal, taken as general formulations, and the particular, that is, sensations. Knowledge consists in the establishment of connections between the universal and the particular by the points where they intersect. The truth and certainty of these intermediate steps in the process of relating the universal and the particular is mediated and dependent on other factors. Windelband adopts a foundationalist perspective by claiming that this partial certainty requires an absolute or non-dependent certainty that pertain specifically to the poles, that is, to the sensations and the most general principles of knowledge that Windelband calls axioms in “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” Windelband sums up his position in the following manner: “Nennt man die letzteren, wie es gewöhnlich geschieht, Axiome, so darf man sagen: alle menschliche Erkenntnis besitzt die mittelbare Gewißheit, welche aus der logischen Unterordnung von Empfindungen unter Axiome gewonnen werden kann” (Windelband 1915 2:104).

Given this characterization, Windelband claims that the mediation between the universal and particular elements of knowledge presupposes the affinity, that is, the possibility of coordination between the individual and the universal. This coordination is thus taken as a transcendental presupposition of the explanatory methodologies. The solution to the problem of clarifying this affinity is explained through an explicit reference to Lotze and an implicit reference to Kant's doctrine of reflexive judgment. According to Windelband, the possibility of this relationship does not possess logical necessity but is a subjective requisite for our thinking. However, compared with its predecessors, the problem of combining pure universal form with formless empirical matter appears to be underdeveloped.

After this, Windelband proceeds to show the mutual reference between the inductive and deductive paths and how these types of reasoning always presuppose a set of general principles that act as hidden premises, like the principle of causality. The concrete knowledge of reality is articulated through these principles.

The fact that the methodical procedures of the sciences are based on a more general opposition, namely, that between the general and the particular, points at Windelband's general strategy of grounding the methods of science in more general logical and even metaphysical distinctions. The analysis of the sciences presented here is not directed exclusively toward an understanding of the methodologies of the sciences but the resolution of a transcendental question. Windelband affirms that the certainty of knowledge comes either from the concrete or from the general element in knowledge. As such, the general presupposition of knowledge is the possibility of adequately relating the concrete and the general.

The inductive method tries to ascend to universal principles from given individual facts, while the deductive method tries to subsume those given facts under general laws. However, and this is Windelband's main argument, neither of those procedures work in strict isolation. It is impossible to deduce a particular fact solely from universal laws and it is impossible to arrive at a universal principle on the basis of mere individual facts. On the one hand, the inductive procedure presupposes, as the source of its meaning, a universally lawful nexus of natural phenomena (Windelband KGM 1915 2:103). Windelband holds that induction is possible only under the assumption that any series

of individual events is already ruled by a general principle. Without this presupposition, induction would be a groundless procedure. On the other hand, the deductive path, which in this case takes the shape of a syllogism, always requires a minor premise that mediates between the major premise and the particulars. If Windelband is right, the obvious conclusion is that the analytical or naturalistic method, as described in our quotation from Beiser, must be related, in order to accomplish its objectives, to certain general principles that Windelband sometimes calls ‘axioms’ and sometimes calls ‘values’.²²²

This argument forms the basis of a novel scientific investigation: “Das System dieser Axiome darzustellen und ihr Verhältnis zur Erkenntnistätigkeit zu entwickeln, - nichts anderes kann die Aufgabe der theoretischen Philosophie, der Logik, sein” (Windelband KGM 1915 2:107). Windelband’s characterization also allows us to explain why rational principles cannot be the object of a logical proof, a contested point in his polemic with Ernst Laas. The procedures available for any sort of logical proof may be either deductive or inductive. But rational principles cannot be derived from any high-order axiom since this implies an infinite regress, nor can they result from induction, as this would imply a circular argument. They are the object of a peculiar type of treatment that is entirely specific to philosophy.

Rather than speaking of a peculiar type of scientific proof, Windelband speaks of proving the validity of axioms:

Für die Philosophie kommt deshalb alles darauf an, wie diese unmittelbare Evidenz der Axiome aufgewiesen werden soll. Es gibt keine logische Notwendigkeit, mit der die Geltung der Axiome bewiesen werden könnte. Deshalb ist nur zweierlei möglich: entweder man zeigt die tatsächliche Geltung auf, man sucht nachzuweisen, daß im wirklichen Prozeß des menschlichen Vorstellens, Wollens und Fühlens diese Axiome tatsächlich als geltend anerkannt werden, daß sie in der empirischen Wirklichkeit des Seelenlebens geltende, anerkannte Prinzipien sind, - oder man zeigt, daß ihnen eine andersartige Notwendigkeit beiwohnt, die teleologische Notwendigkeit nämlich, daß ihre Geltung unbedingt anerkannt werden muß, wenn anders gewisse Zwecke erfüllt werden sollen. ... für die kritische Methode sind diese Axiome - ganz gleichgültig, wie weit ihre tatsächliche Anerkennung reicht - Normen, welche unter der Voraussetzung gelten sollen, daß das Denken den Zweck wahr zu sein, das Wollen den Zweck gut zu sein, das Füh-

²²² The term ‘axiom’ is better in this specific context since Windelband later went on to distinguish between the consideration of natural laws and normative principles. The term ‘value’ was reserved exclusively for the latter.

len den Zweck Schönheit zu erfassen, in allgemein anzuerkennender Weise erfüllen will. (Windelband KGM 1915 2:108)

Given the absence of logical proof, there are only two remaining ways of treating axioms, namely, the two ways mentioned in the title of the essay, the genetic-explanatory method and the critical method. The task of the critical method is to clarify the evidence of the alleged universal validity of norms by showing their epistemic role. While the genetic method can only show the factual relevance of values (die tatsächliche Geltung), only the critical method is suited for clarifying general validity. In order to do this, axioms have to be the object of a special type of reasoning that shows that they have a normative nature, i.e., that they have to be recognized as valid because they are presupposed as conditions of the achievement of a rational end. If we attempt to achieve a true thought, then, we need to assume the universal validity of certain norms. As Gottfried Gabriel explains “Die teleologische Notwendigkeit der Grundgesetze ergibt sich demnach aus dem Zweck des Denkens ‘wahr zu sein’, und in diesem Sinne stellt dann die Wahrheit für uns einen Wert dar” (Gabriel 2007:97). This characterization fits the concept of assessment discussed in the previous chapter. As we saw, assessments differ from judgments through reference to a conscious act of acceptance or denial. This act does not belong to a synthesizing understanding but to a practical function, i.e. the will.

Windelband’s peculiar interpretation of the *quid juris* question is directly linked to the introduction of a teleological necessity. The idea behind this teleological procedure is the following. Philosophy has already been defined as the science of generally valid values. But those values cannot be acquired by induction or by mere reference to empirical data, nor can they be derived from metaphysical propositions, since these propositions cannot be philosophically legitimated. On the contrary, Windelband claims that values are the general object of presupposition or recognition by rational beings. The meaningfulness of assessments in either logic, ethics, or aesthetics, presupposes the recognition of the general and universal validity of certain norms: “Die Geltung der Axiome ist überall durch einen Zweck bedingt, der als Ideal für Unser Denken, Wollen und Fühlen vorausgesetzt werden muss” (Windelband KGM 1915 2:111). Hence, the validity of values is defined through their recognition as presupposed ends, i.e., as

ideals of our thinking, willing, and feeling. Without the supposition of a general standard for practical behavior, there would be no point in advancing an ethical assessment of actions. The concept of goodness is neither logically nor metaphysically grounded, but its necessity is brought to consciousness through its role in assessments. It is through this consideration that Windelband introduces the discourse concerning their teleological necessity. As he says in the long passage just quoted: “Oder man zeigt, daß ihnen eine andersartige Notwendigkeit beiwohnt, die teleologische Notwendigkeit nämlich, daß ihre Geltung unbedingt anerkannt werden muß, wenn anders gewisse Zwecke erfüllt werden sollen” (Windelband KGM 1915 2:108). A further argument is presented here for the rejection of the genetic method in philosophical matters. The type of necessity proper to rational norms cannot be grasped through the genetic method since this method produces explanations, which for Windelband are not teleologically structured but based on causality.

The problem with this argument is that it only works when determining the highest goal that guides our practices in each of the aforementioned cultural spheres. Up to this point, we have only the idea of a set of axioms or rules and the claim that our rational practices are guided by a supreme value. What we lack is a way to articulate both. The idea of an organon of philosophy is linked with the attempt to account for this link.

As I have already mentioned, the search for absolute values must be based on a certain given material. While the introduction of teleological necessity pointed to Windelband’s novelty in relationship with the Kantian methodology, his theory of the organon of philosophy represents a rebuttal of the dialectical method. For Windelband, the dialectical method aims to establish a complete system of philosophy through the mere reference to the concept of pure consciousness, the critical method does not. The dialectic method ‘solves’ the problem of the progression of philosophical discourse by appealing to conceptual contradictions that allow us to move from one conceptual determination to the next. Windelband’s criticism is a restatement of his definition of deduction. Particular determinations cannot be deduced from the more general concept of normative consciousness, nor can further particular determinations be acquired through this process. Therefore, Windelband states: “Auch die teleologische Konstruktion bedarf ni-

cht nur der Zweckbestimmung, sondern auch der Berücksichtigung des Materials, in welchem der Zweck realisiert werden soll” (Windelband KGM 1915 2:127).

Our access to the level of normal consciousness is always mediated by experience. We can only recognize the general consciousness through its relation to empirical consciousness. Philosophy has its proper standards of proof and aims, which are completely different from those of psychology or history. Still, it requires a ‘guiding principle’ to be established in both these disciplines as the source not only of the objects it scrutinizes but also to establish the preliminary organization of its materials. I must say in advance that this role, which in 1884 is occupied by psychology, is going to be assumed in the revised edition of “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” by history. I will return to this topic in the following section.

There are, therefore, two different original features in Windelband’s account of the critical method. On the one hand, the introduction of a teleological procedure as the type of proof required to exhibit the validity of rational norms. On the other hand, the interpretation of the *Faktum*, or guiding thread, for the critical method in terms of a distinctive organon.

The relevant passage concerning the organon of philosophy, from the revised edition of the essay, around which my whole exposition is going to be oriented, is the following:

Indessen ist die Hilfe, welche die kritische Methode von der Psychologie zu erwarten hat, in der Hauptsache auf diese Bestimmung der formalen Ordnung beschränkt: sachlich ist sie äußerst gering. Denn im allgemeinen, natürlich bestimmten Wesen des Menschen, auf dessen wissenschaftliche Theorie die Psychologie ausgeht und allein ausgehen kann, ist zuletzt immer nur die formale Möglichkeit für die inhaltliche Entwicklung der Vernunftwerte und damit der normativen Bestimmungen gegeben, um die es sich in der Philosophie handelt. Diese Entwicklung selbst aber ist die Sache und der eigentliche Sinn des historischen Prozesses. Deshalb bildet die Geschichte in noch viel höherem Maße als die Psychologie das Organon der kritischen Philosophie, indem diese die Gestaltung, worin die Normen als tatsächlich geltende Prinzipien des Kulturlebens historisch gegeben sind, zu Gegenständen ihrer teleologischen Untersuchung und damit zum empirischen Anlaß für ihre kritische Besinnung zu machen hat. (Windelband KGM 1915 2:131)

Windelband presents two different types of contributions made by the critical method. The first of the two is characterized as merely formal and comes from psychological research. The second comes from history, and its role is concrete and more important for philosophy. Thus, the next two sections will be directed toward an explanation of these two roles and their meaning. The next section will deal with Windelband's previous reflection the quoted passage, an early version of the essay in which psychology had the role of guiding principle for philosophy. Although this passage was later revised, there are certain elements in this essay that will allow for a better explanation of the posterior doctrine. The third section will deal with the identification of history with the organon of philosophy.

4.2. PSYCHOLOGY AS THE ORGANON OF PHILOSOPHY

Before focusing on the analysis of the aforementioned reference to the methodological role of psychology, in this section, I will discuss Windelband's relation to psychology while also providing a commentary on the key essays in which Windelband dealt with psychology.

One result of the discussion in the previous section is that, for Windelband, the philosopher can only recognize general consciousness through its relation with empirical consciousness. Experience is the starting point of the critical method. As such, Windelband sought to establish this connection by studying the relationship between psychology and philosophy. This strategy is characteristic of the early years of Windelband's philosophical career, ranging from his first writings of the 1870s to the first edition of his *Philosophical Preludes* in 1884. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, psychology represents the heart of the problem of the critical method in the Kantian formulation. For Windelband, its psychologistic vocabulary represents the source of its many obscurities, obscurities that remained operative in the early Neo-Kantian movement. As Chang expresses: "Psychologie um diese Zeit wird dann als ni-

chts anderes als kritische Philosophie auf empirischer Basis verstanden” (Chang 2012:32).

As in the case of Kant, the relationship between Windelband and psychological knowledge is extremely difficult to assess. Although long denied, the importance of psychology for Windelband has been recently recognized in the specialized literature. The most significant of the scholarly references that touch upon this topic are Kusch (1995), Kemper (2006), Chang (2012), and Gundlach (2018a; 2018b). For example, Kusch summarizes the early tendency of Neo-Kantianism in the following passage:

The position of neo-Kantian philosophy towards the new psychology changed radically between the 1860s and the turn of the century. Initially, i.e. during the 1860s and 1870s, neo-Kantian philosophy aligned itself closely with both the physiology of the senses and the new experimental psychology. Wilhelm Windelband (1848–1915) and Hermann Cohen (1842–1918), the father figures of the two main neo-Kantian schools, studied under Lotze and Steinthal respectively, and both published in the *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*. On that forum both expressed their support for a psychological study of ontological, epistemological and logical questions. (Cohen 1866, 1868; Windelband 1875) (Kusch 1995:166)

However, these same Neo-Kantian philosophers condemned this early affinity between philosophy and psychology. The ground for this distancing is probably given by the uncertainties surrounding the nature of psychology. Beiser explains that:

It was not clear then whether psychology was a unique kind of science having its own methods, or whether it was just another empirical science with methods like those of physiology and biology. The more psychology progressed in the later half of the century, however, the more it seemed to be just another empirical science, reaching its results through observation and experiment, and having as its goal the formulation of general causal laws. (Beiser 2014:210)

The same uncertainty regarding the nature of psychology is manifested in Windelband’s conception of the discipline. While earlier he was more inclined toward a philosophically-oriented understanding of psychology, he progressively moved toward an interpretation closer to that of Beiser’s quotation, that is, in terms of an experimental science. In Windelband’s own terminology, psychology is an explanatory and nomothetic science.²²³

²²³ This will be an important aspect of Windelband’s discussion of Wilhelm Dilthey’s concept of *Geisteswissenschaften*.

The first document regarding Windelband's engagement with psychology is his essay from 1875, "Der Erkenntnislehre unter dem völkerpsychologischen Gesichtspunkte." In this essay, Windelband tackles for the first time the problem of the nature of norms, addressing, in particular, the relationship between the nature of norms and their 'embodiment' in psychological processes. The literature that deals with this early phase tends, as I have mentioned, to highlight the opposition between Windelband's early psychological texts and his later works on the philosophy of culture. For example, Kemper even considers that these psychological works represent an interpretation of the philosophical method in terms of what Windelband later called the genetic method.²²⁴ This text, then, is not only an example of Windelband's early phase but comprises a completely different position regarding his mature program: an altogether different Windelband (Schlaudt 2018:63).²²⁵

However, in my opinion, the key essay for the treatment of my topic is Windelband's *Eintrittsrede* as professor of *Inductive Philosophy* at the University of Zürich: "Regarding the Contemporary Situation of Psychological Research" [*Über den gegenwärtigen Stand der psychologischen Forschung*]. This essay anticipates Windelband's original position in "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" and I will try to complement the the position he adopts in this early essay with the thesis that psychology is the organon of philosophy from 1884.

Considering the occasion that gave rise to this speech, it is not surprising that the text revolves around the relationship between philosophy and empirical research: the label 'inductive philosophy' seems to hint the possibility of a productive coming together and collaboration between philosophy and experience (Windelband 1876:1). Confusions aside, Windelband's idea does not involve a juxtaposition of both disciplinary fields; on the contrary, the search for this productive relation presupposes the critical delimitation of empirical research and philosophy (Windelband 1876:4). I will consider

²²⁴ "Mit starker Polemik macht Windelband Front gegen die genetische Methode der empirischen Wissenschaften, für die er ein paar Jahre zuvor selbst noch in der Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie geworden hatte" (Kemper 2006:103). It is an important text for the early definition of norm: "Ethische und logische Gesetze sind Zweckgesetze, sie sind nicht Gesetze, die erfüllt werden müssen, sondern solche, die erfüllt werden sollen, um einen bestimmten Zweck zu erreichen: sie sind nicht Gesetze im Sinne von Naturgesetzen, sondern sie tragen in sich eine normative, imperativische Gesetzgebung" (1875:168).

²²⁵ "Ich meine, dass Windelband seine relativistische Lektion ein für alle mal gelehrt hatte und zeitlebens an der Umsetzung eines relativistischen Programms arbeitete" (Schlaudt 2018:63).

whether the aforementioned methodological role, the organization, or the configuration of philosophical activities through psychology, are the way in which such a productive collaboration could be carried out.

Against a tradition in which philosophy presents itself as the master, the idea of inductive philosophy is that philosophy has to learn from -and wants to work in tandem with- the empirical sciences. This attitude raises, however, the necessity of a previous critical limitation of both the empirical sciences and philosophy. Furthermore, Windelband says that there is no other field in the empirical sciences where the problem of the relationship with philosophy is posed as acutely as in psychology. While psychology still formed, in Windelband's time, a discipline included in the Faculty of Philosophy, psychologists became increasingly convinced that theirs was an autonomous research field. A field obviously independent from metaphysical presuppositions.²²⁶ And, therefore, it can be said that the situation of psychological research at the time underwent a progressive turning toward the primacy of the empirical; in this same direction, Windelband mentions at the beginning of his conference the benefits that psychology stands to gain from its independence from philosophy. Regarding this pernicious role of philosophy for psychology, Windelband says:

Es ist der grosse Fortschritt in der neueren empirischen Psychologie, dass sie nach dieser Richtung hin den Standpunkt des vorigen Jahrhunderts weit überschritten, dass sie -dank der vernichtenden Kritik Herbart's -alle jene Vermögen und Kräfte, mit denen man die Seele bevölkerte, über Bord geworfen und ihre Aufgabe dahin präzisiert hat, die Gesetze aufzusuchen, nach welchen sich die einfachsten psychischen Phänomene mit einander zu höheren Gebilde vereinigen. (Windelband 1876:11)

²²⁶ The reference here is to Lange's proposal of a psychology without the soul: "Und sich deshalb auf die Erkenntnis der Gesetze des psychischen Lebens zu beschränken, und man schuf auf diese Weise, wie Albert Lange es sehr treffend genannt hat, die 'Psychologie ohne Seele'" (Windelband 1876:6). Also: "Die Begründung und Befestigung der empirischen Methode in der Psychologie hängt deshalb auf das Innigste mit ihrer Befreiung von den Fesseln der Metaphysik zusammen" (Windelband 1876:6). The complete passage from Lange is the following: "Aber heisst denn Psychologie nicht Lehre von der Seele? ... Diese Name ist überliefert aus einer Zeit, in welcher man die gegenwärtigen Anforderungen strenger Wissenschaft noch nicht kannte. Soll man ihn verwerfen, wie sich das Object der Wissenschaft geändert hat? Das wäre unpraktische Pedanterie. Also nur ruhig eine Psychologie ohne Seele angenommen!" (Lange Geschichte II: 474). The quotation is probably no coincidence since Lange held the chair of Inductive Philosophy just three years before it was occupied by Windelband. An account of Lange's psychological theory can be found in Teo (2002).

The specific and, consequently, contentious point of contact between the two fields lies in the definition of psychology.²²⁷ The consolidation of psychology as a scientific discipline is directly linked to the abandonment of the burdensome concept of the soul. But for Windelband, it is also true that psychological concepts require a conceptual and methodological grounding.²²⁸ Unregulated contact obstructs both disciplines insofar as they represent metaphysical presuppositions, while explaining what lies behind the array of subjective experiences hides the inner problematicity of metaphysical hypotheses and the need for further empirical investigation. This involves an ‘inversion’ of the typically ground-laying, constructive procedure, often attributed to philosophy:

In der That ist es nun auch niemals das Interesse der Psychologie gewesen, welches dieselbe bei der Metaphysik festhielt: sondern es brachte vielmehr lediglich der Umstand, dass die Metaphysik und die mit ihr zusammenhängende Erkenntnistheorie sich wesentlich auf die Resultate der Psychologie zu stützen haben, die sehr begreifliche Folge mit sich, dass die Philosophen mit besonderer Energie sich dieser Wissenschaft bemächtigten und die für ihr Interesse auszubeuten suchten. (Windelband 1876:12)

Philosophy as such does not pursue the development of the whole psychological enterprise; she is just interested in some parcels of psychological research. In this context, Windelband names the study of representations and of decision making, and adds that that psychology must operate with independence from -or in a relation of primacy with respect to- metaphysics.

Contrary to a psychologistic grounding of philosophy, what Windelband addresses in his lecture is the possibility of determining the tasks of philosophy by reaching the limits of psychological knowledge.

The first example provided by Windelband is the limitation of the explanatory point of view of the physiology of the brain. Experimental psychology, which for Windelband comprises psycho-physical research, can attempt to explain the correlation

²²⁷ Besides more technical arguments regarding the notion of subjectivity, it is necessary to remember that psychology was still not an autonomous research discipline at the time. While the psychological classes were mostly taught by philosophy teachers, there was an increasing emphasis on the experimental nature of psychology, an emphasis which was at odds with the general nature of the philosophical approach. For a detailed narrative on the institutional role of philosophy and psychology at the end of the nineteenth century, see Kusch (1995) and Gundlach (2018).

²²⁸ Defining the task of psychology is a task for philosophy: “Die Gesetze aufzusuchen, nach welchen sich die einfachsten psychischen Phänomene mit einander zu höheren Gebilden vereinigen” (Windelband 1876:11).

between impressions and physical stimuli in the nervous system, but it cannot go beyond the elementary processes, meaning that the strictly empirical investigation cannot account for the unity between the different components of the psychological process in internal consciousness. The study of the nervous system cannot explain the unificatory role of consciousness.²²⁹ Following this line of argument, there is a point in which psychology has to move alone and abandon the company of physiology, in order to develop a strictly psychological investigation on the features of the simple characters of consciousness. Therefore, philosophy judges the limitation of the application and scope of the diverse scientific principles and research methods. Windelband consequently sums up the results of his judgment on the current situation of psychology:

Was aber die Psychologie, ebenso Wie alle übrigen Wissenschaften von der Philosophie schon jetzt und immer fordern darf, das ist ausser der Rechtfertigung der Methoden der wissenschaftlichen Forschung auch die Begründung der prinzipiellen Formen des Begreifens und des Erklärens. (Windelband 1876:24)

Philosophy is called to evaluate and judge the general validity of the principle of causality, it also has the task of limiting this principle to provide space for another, teleological, mode of explanation.

To sum up the content of Windelband's essay, I can say that, in his conference, the relationship between psychology and metaphysics is established anew, inverting the traditional grounding direction. Philosophy is forced to accept the contribution of psychology. Philosophy is guided by psychology since philosophy finds its starting point where empirical psychology finds its limits. Therefore, this model does not imply a grounding of philosophy in psychology but something different. Philosophy clarifies the limits of the different psychological approaches in order to avoid typical excesses. In reaching the limits of psychology through its conceptual clarification, philosophy finds its own disciplinary space. This conclusion reveals the paradoxical character of Windelband's incursion in "inductive philosophy." Rather than the elaboration of an

²²⁹ "Hier stehen wir an einer prinzipiellen Kluft, an einer totalen Differenz zwischen der äußeren und der inneren Erfahrung: in der Resultate, zu der sich zwei körperliche Bewegungen vereinigen, ist die Eigenart jeder der beiden letzteren verschwunden; in der psychischen Resultate ist der besondere Inhalt jedes einzelnen Elementes unversehrt erhalten. Deshalb muß eine nur physiologische Psychologie vor dieser einheitlichen Bildung komplexer psychischer Zustände völlig ratlos stehen bleiben" (Windelband 1876:17).

experimental philosophy, the content of the address is designed to offer a conceptual delimitation between the philosophical and the empirical disciplines (Windelband 1876:4).

What remains a mystery about Windelband's exposition is determining what aid psychological research could be to philosophy in the context of the discussion of the critical method. The 1876 conference stressed the role that philosophical research could play in the elaboration of scientific psychology while remaining unclear about the specific contribution psychology could make to philosophy. I consider it to be a preparatory and formal aid.

The preparatory character of psychological research is stated briefly in Windelband's essay *Prinzipien der Logik*:

Sie [die psychologische Behandlung der logischen Probleme] muß auf alle Fälle die erste Grundlage bilden. Denn zweifellos sind uns Erkennen und Wissen zunächst in der Form von seelischen Vorgängen bekannt, und wie auch immer die Philosophie ihnen ihre besondere Behandlungsweise zuwenden möge, so muß sie doch jene einem Jeden bekannten Erlebnisse in festen und genauen Bezeichnungen voraussetzen. Diese Anforderung ist um so unerläßlicher, je unbestimmter in allen Sprachen die Ausdrücke für die einzelnen Arten und Phasen der seelischen Tätigkeit sind. (Windelband PL 1912:6)

Firstly, psychology provides a terminological aid: "Das erste Verlangen, das deshalb die Logik (und analog auch Ethik und Aesthetik) an die Vorarbeit der Psychologie zu stellen hat, ist die Schaffung einer sicheren und eindeutigen Terminologie" (Windelband PL 1912:5). This is something similar to what Windelband expressed in his 1876 conference, thus showing that there is a sense of continuity between his conception of the role of psychology in his earlier and later texts.

But "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" represents somewhat of a break from his previous work. In "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" the role of the organon of philosophy is rather harder to place, since the text was published in two editions. The earlier version, from 1884, only contains a reference to psychology while the later version, from 1907, mentions both history and psychology as playing the role of guiding thread for philosophy. Thus, the relationship between philosophy, history, and psychology acquires a new level of treatment that has to be carefully reconstructed. In contrast to the literature, I strictly distinguish the writings from 1870 from those of 1890-1900.

The first edition of “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” undoubtedly stands midway between the emphasis on psychology and history. As far as I know, no reference has been made in the literature to the amendments in the text and their philosophical meaning. There is, as we will see, a significant ambiguity in Windelband’s rejection of psychologism. The incorporation of history as the true organon does not render the role of psychology strictly false, but its role does become diminished. Psychology’s contribution is strictly formal.

When Windelband speaks about this aid, he refers primarily to the way in which the distinction between thinking, willing, and feeling conditions the division of philosophy into three distinct parts. The division is not originated, for Windelband, in philosophy itself (in an eternal structure of reason) but in the current state of psychological research. It is, therefore, a heuristic distinction:

So entnimmt die philosophische Betrachtung der empirischen Psychologie z. B. die Dreiteilung der psychischen Funktionen, welche sich in der Dreizahl der philosophischen Disziplinen wiederholt, und dabei ist es ganz klar, daß diese Einteilung für sie nirgends einen Erkenntnisgrund, sondern eben nur einen Leitfaden darstellt, dessen sie in Ermangelung des deduktiven Verfahrens zur Aufsuchung der Normen bedarf. (Windelband KGM 1915 2:131)

The theory of basic functions of the mind clarifies the systematic organization of philosophical studies. Windelband reminds us of this doctrine in his *Die Prinzipien der Logik*:

Für jede dieser Disziplinen [here Windelband refers to logics, ethics and aesthetics] aber ist empirisch gegeben die Gesamtheit der ihr zugehörigen psychischen Funktionen und ihrer historischen Gestaltungen im Gesamtleben der Menschheit, und von dieser erfahrungsmäßigen Grundlage hat die kritische Besinnung der Philosophie zu der Entscheidung darüber aufzusteigen, ob und wie weit in den Leistungen dieser natürlichen und geschichtlichen Gebilde des Menschentums Vernunftinhalte von übergreifender Geltung zum Durchbruch gelangen. (Windelband PL 1912:3).

It is assumed that psychology is also relevant not just for the recognition of the three main fields of philosophical investigation and the three higher-order values (truth, good, and beauty), but also for the discovery of subsidiary principles. However, since those values, once discovered, are recognized as absolute and necessary, they are no

longer dependent on any psychological statement whatsoever. Once we are aware that ‘truth’ is a fundamental value for our cognitive purposes, we can claim its necessity, according to Windelband, with independence from a theory of the concrete functions of thinking. Moreover, the fact that the divisions of philosophy are built upon the psychological classification of psychic phenomena means that, against Kantian architectonics, the threefold division of philosophical disciplines into logic, ethics, and aesthetics is empirically grounded.

In a later stage of his philosophical career, Windelband talked about his emphasis on psychology as belonging to an early development or stage of Neo-Kantianism²³⁰, identifiable by its psychologistic tendencies and its biased interpretation of the Kantian corpus. The role of this emphasis is never fully explained, neither in the 1876 conference nor in the first version of “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” Considering that the critical method follows a regressive pattern, we have to assume that psychology is philosophy’s starting point, that is, it is the experience that the philosopher seeks to ground. The final version of “Kritische oder genetische Methode?” drastically limits the extent of psychology’s usefulness, namely, to a mere formal aid. Windelband’s position in its final form is that psychology is not only incapable of fully recognizing the validity of norms but that the psychological guideline does not suffice for the discovery of norms itself. Thus, history must be taken into consideration. In discussing the role of history, we will find Windelband’s most in-depth account version of his theory of the organon of philosophy.

4.3. HISTORY AS THE ORGANON OF PHILOSOPHY

I will now proceed to explain what role history plays for the method of critical philosophy (and, therefore, for transcendental logic). This reconstruction involves a brief selection of materials since the references to the organon of philosophy are scattered throughout different texts with different points of view and aims. The fact that Win-

²³⁰ Windelband (1909), in this work, Windelband refers to Neo-Kantianism in general, but I believe it can also be read as a judgment of his own evolution.

delband's identification of history and the history of philosophy with the organon of philosophy appears on several occasions does not render it clearer, although it shows the importance that it bears for the author. This further precision will be the object of analysis in chapter 6.

The first thing to notice regarding the role of history in the method of philosophy is the praise that Windelband bestows on the philosophy of history:

[...] Von einer Geschichtsphilosophie hat, wie das ganze Altertum, so auch die Mehrzahl der metaphysischen Systeme vor Kant nichts gewußt: heutzutage ist sie eine der wichtigsten Disziplinen geworden. (Windelband WIPh. 1915 1:6)²³¹

In his mature phase, Windelband considers that the philosophical progression from Kant to Hegel represents a necessary path, a topic to which I shall return in chapter 5. However, in this context, this progression is relevant since the first discussion of the idea of making history the organon of philosophy appears via this specific historiographical hypothesis. Accepting the necessity to revise Kant's path toward the identification of a priori principles, Windelband compares the alternatives presented by Jakob Friedrich Fries and Hegel.²³² It is precisely after comparing the systems of these two philosophers that Windelband chooses to oppose psychology and history as possible guiding disciplines for philosophy.

Windelband describes their philosophical stances in the following terms:

Das war die methodische Grundfrage der nachkantischen Philosophie, und es gab für sie im Grunde nur zwei mögliche Antworten, und diese sind von den beiden Philosophen gegeben worden, die nacheinander auf dem Heidelberger Katheder gestanden haben: Fries und Hegel. Nach dem einen erfolgt diese Erforschung aus der Erfahrung des individuellen Seelenlebens mit allen seinen Auszweigungen, nach dem andern aus der Erfahrung der menschlichen Gattungsvernunft in allen ihren historischen Gestaltungen. Nach dem einen ist das Organon der Philosophie die Psychologie, nach dem andern die Geschichte. Beide Philosophen sind im Prinzip gleich weit entfernt davon, die tatsächliche Geltung jener Vernunftwerte, die sie, psychologisch der eine und historisch der andere, vorfinden, mit der philosophischen Geltung zu verwechseln, die es erst durch die Kritik aus der sachlichen Selbstverständlichkeit zu begründen gilt: beide verfahren also in der

²³¹ This passage, dating from 1907, was the only addition to Windelband's key essay, "Was ist Philosophie?" The younger Windelband was indeed skeptical about the value of the philosophy of history.

²³² A confrontation that goes back to Fischer's *Die beiden kantischen Schulen in Jena* from 1862. For a commentary on this text, see Noras (2013).

Absicht, das empirisch Festgestellte nur als das Material für die kritische Bearbeitung zu benutzen. (Windelband EH 1915 1:280)²³³

According to this passage, the necessary overcoming of Kantian philosophy is represented by these two alternatives both of which stem from post-Kantian philosophy. The primacy of psychology as the organon of philosophy is represented by the philosophy of Fries, and one could add, by the young Windelband. The primacy of history is found in the writings of Hegel. Regardless of the correctness of these ascriptions, what is important is the theoretical content of the opposition that Windelband establishes between the roles of psychology and history.

According to the psychologically-oriented interpretation of the critical method, the basis for philosophical critique is humankind, here taken exclusively as a naturally given essence.²³⁴ Windelband considers that psychological laws rule only the formal relations between the contents of consciousness, thus leaving aside any consideration of the meaning of this content, i.e., any relation to the sphere of normativity. Thus, he concludes that as a natural science, psychology cannot help us in our search for rational values, which are not portrayed in the form but in the content of consciousness. History is thus preferred as it represents a richer source. This specific argument is only sketched in “Kritische oder genetische Methode?”. A better articulation of this argument, nevertheless, is presented in “Der Wille zur Wahrheit”.²³⁵

In “Der Wille zur Wahrheit” (Windelband WW 1909c) Windelband discusses, in the context of his general philosophical argument, a possible psychological treatment of the problem of the will to truth. This psychological treatment places the will to truth inside the whole of psychic life, i.e. immersed in a current of representations, impulses,

²³³ As becomes apparent, Windelband offers a controversial interpretation of Hegel as he tries to diminish the philosophical gap between the philosophical positions of Kant and Hegel, thereby transforming the latter into a critical philosopher. This creates the further interpretative difficulty of establishing a clear differentiation between the Kantian and Hegelian systems, as I will explain in chapter 7.

²³⁴ In the next chapter, more precisely, in section 4, I will touch upon Windelband’s contrast between the concept and the idea of humanity. This distinction is presented in Windelband’s final texts on the philosophy of history and provides another angle into Windelband’s opposition between psychology and history as orienting aids for philosophy.

²³⁵ This shows again the difficulties of reconstructing Windelband’s philosophical arguments. His reasons are not intrinsically obscure but they are dispersed through different essays, even essays outside *Präludien*.

and desires. In this current, states of mind are interrelated at the point that every impulse emerges in relationship with other previous states of mind and in a constantly changing relation. What appears as an end transforms immediately into a means for something else (Windelband WW 1909c:6). The value of truth does not show its primary character from this psychological point of view, that is, as a value in itself, but it only appears as a value in relationship with something else. The psychological point of view is the origin of pragmatism: truth is posited as a value for its help in our exchanges with the world. Windelband does not contend this conclusion but he thinks that, in view of the constant transformations of ends into means, it is not possible to ascribe a concrete meaning to an alleged final end.

Windelband offers a rather complex example comparing greediness with moral attitude. Through the process of transformation of means and ends, money can become an end in itself, i.e. one becomes greedy. Money is essentially a means for the acquisition of diverse things, which, in turn, can be again exchanged for money. But money can acquire its own proper value independently from the representation of the plurality of things that can be obtained with it. It is precisely the formal character of money what allows its transformation into an end in itself. In the case of the moral attitude, it is undoubtedly an end in itself. However, psychologically, it is acquired through the same process of transformations of means and ends. In this case, as a result of an education based on rewards and punishments in which our actions are means for the achievement of rewards and for the evasion of punishments. But deep down, the desired result of the educational process is the formation of a moral being that recognizes duty as a value in itself. This comparison results in the following theoretical interpretation:

Gerade daraus aber folgt, dass diese empirische Entstehung des auf die Werte gerichteten Willens für den Inhalt dieser Werte und für ihr Geltungsrecht niemals bestimmend und entscheidend ist. Derselbe psychische Prozess der Übertragung kann zu völlig irrationalen und ebenso zu höchst rationalen Ergebnissen führen ... Die psychogenetische Struktur ihres empirischen Werdens im individuellen und gesellschaftlichen Bewusstsein ist formal genau dieselbe: aus Mitteln werden Zwecke, die nicht mehr als Mittel, sondern nur noch selbst als Zwecke gewollt werden, völlig unabhängig von jenen primären Zwecken, ja vielleicht in vollem Gegensatz zu ihnen. Die teleologischen Vermittlungen werden vergessen und vernichtet. So liebt der Geizige sein Geld, so liebt der sittlich erzogene Mensch seine Pflicht (Windelband WW 1909c:6)

The psychological process behind greed and moral education is structurally the same. Both processes result in the assertion of a value in itself. In one case, the value turns out to be irrational. In the other case, it is the pinnacle of moral thought. In conclusion, to judge the rationality of these ends we need a resource that is not present at the level of psychological explanation. The psychological origin of the acceptance of values is not directly related with the internal content of those values (Windelband WW 1909c:7).

Windelband's rejection of psychology is therefore based on two different, although related, premises: psychology only deals with natural laws, while the critical method requires the grounding of critique in concrete rather than formal aspects of reason. Rational contents are indeed presented in the stream of psychic life, but the conceptual tools of psychology are not sufficient to isolate them from the mere empirical contingency. Moreover, it is true that psychology deals with the development of the conditions of reason but only in a formal sense, for example, in the sense that having a brain is a condition for thinking. But psychological research cannot decide, based on scientific methods and principles, that is, based on natural necessity, which conditions are to be distinguished as articulating different aspects of the development of reason. In other words, these sciences arrange their explanations as a structure of causes and events, while the expressions of reason in human life appear as tasks, objectives, and difficulties. The recognition of reason's contents involves, as we will see, a structure of finality, which is better suited to the type of narratives presented in historical explanations. This stance, however, should not be mistaken for a commitment to a metaphysical explanation of history. On the contrary, it means that rationality does not appear in human life as something given and finished but as an ideal toward which we aspire.

From a negative viewpoint, it seems more promising to appeal to a different sort of scientific material. From a positive viewpoint, on the contrary, Windelband has to explain the benefits of history. In the search for the strongest possible argument in relation to this problematic context, Windelband tries to show identifying certain contents in consciousness depends on the historical dimension of human life.

“Der Wille zur Wahrheit” also offers an entry point into Windelband's positive solution. It must be remembered that the conference only addresses the tasks of theoretic-

tical philosophy. The fundamental concept of the Kantian theory of knowledge is the concept of synthesis. For Windelband, this concept of synthesis is directly related to the will to truth:

In dieser Aktivität des synthetischen Bewusstseins, die den Grundbegriff der kritischen Erkenntnistheorie ausmacht, steckt nun offenbar etwas durchaus Willenhaftes. Wenn die Welt, die wir zu erleben meinen, unsere Tat ist, wenn die Auswahl und die Zusammenfügung der gegebenen Momente zu dem, was wir unsere Gegenstände nennen, von der Tätigkeit des Intellekts selbst abhängt, so dürfen wir darin zwar keine Willkür der Individuen, aber doch eine Selbständigkeit der geistigen Funktion sehen, die zum wenigsten dem Willen verwandt ist. (Windelband WW 1909c:13)

Following Kant's suggestion in the *Second Preface* to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Windelband claims that this view of synthetic activity is also confirmed by the results of the scientific method. A scientific fact is not a mere given but the result of a conceptual work guided by the epistemic purpose of each science.²³⁶ But each science has an epistemic purpose directly related to its peculiar problems and the peculiar logical form of its solutions. Although our will to truth is what ultimately directs our desire to know, the realization of this impulse does not depend on our will but on the objective content resulting from scientific research.²³⁷ Therefore, there are different concepts of truth depending on the specificities of the particular sciences.²³⁸ In this manner, the concrete articulation of the meaning of truth requires a general consideration of the different methods and concepts of sciences and not a study on the way in which the concept of truth emerges in the stream of consciousness. Windelband's approach in this conference is synchronic but it offers an important clue regarding Windelband's understanding of how the the theory of knowledge should proceed. This synchronicity comes from the

²³⁶ This characterization will be central for Windelband's demarcation between natural sciences and history. See, chapter 5, section 2.

²³⁷ This affirmation is directed to deny that the will to truth leads to a reduction of science to an arbitrary will (Willkür).

²³⁸ Windelband speaks specifically about modes of validity of truth: "Die Art des Geltens der Wahrheit ist für jede Wissenschaft durch die Art der von ihr bestimmten Gegenstände gegeben, und nur aus den Argumenten ihrer eigenen Einsichten ist diese Geltungsart für jede festzustellen. Anders gelten die Wahrheiten der Mathematik, als die der Naturforschung, und anders wieder diese als die der geschichtlichen Wissenschaft." (Windelband WW 1909c:16)

emphasis on the comparison of various methods and their forms of conceptualization, but there is no contradiction between this approach and the claim that each of these methods must be understood from its formation throughout history. As we will see in the next chapter, the problems of the historical method are dependent on the history of sciences. In addition, the interpretation of the problems of the theory of knowledge, that is, of the philosophical reflection regarding the truth, does require a consideration of the history of science.²³⁹

Our will for truth is a necessary presupposition of scientific knowledge. Without recognizing the value of truth as a regulative ideal of theoretical knowledge, this undertaking could not take place. On the other hand, the concrete articulation of the meaning of this value inevitably requires a reflection on the real course of science. The reasoning so far only lacks a clearer reference to the role of history.

The identification of history with the organon of philosophy is dependent on the claim that cultural values do not find their origin in natural-type laws but in a progressive temporal unfolding, which is not governed by necessity. Following his reappraisal of Hegel against Fries, Windelband adds:

Denn der eigentliche Herd für unser Wissen von den Kulturwerten ist eben die Geschichte, in der sie mit der fortschreitenden Zusammenschmelzung der Völker zur Menschheit durch das Ringen der Gesamtheit erworben werden — Wissenschaft, Moral und Recht ebenso, wie Kunst und Religion. Der Mensch als Vernunftwesen ist nicht psychologisch gegeben, sondern historisch aufgegeben. Nur als geschichtliche Wesen, als die in der Entwicklung begriffene Gattung haben wir Anteil an der Weltvernunft. Darum ist die Geschichte das wahre Organon der Philosophie: hegelsch zu reden, der objektive Geist ist die Wohnstätte des absoluten Geistes. (Windelband EH 1915 1:238)

Windelband includes a further argument related to the definition of philosophy. In an idealist fashion, Windelband defines philosophy as the process of self-knowledge of humanity.²⁴⁰ But this self-knowledge is presented through history, both as a self-forma-

²³⁹ As the interpretation of the Kantian theory of knowledge reveals: “Auf dem logischen Gebiete haben wir in dieser Hinsicht das hervorragendste Beispiel an Kant selbst, dessen ganze Erkenntnistheorie wesentlich auf den Begriff der mathematisch-naturwissenschaftlichen Theorie und die Art ihrer Wahrheit derart eingestellt ist, dass dabei die andern Wissenschaften, insbesondere die historischen, sichtlich zu kurz gekommen sind” (Windelband WW 1909c:17).

²⁴⁰ This feature will acquire more clarity and prominence in the discussion of Windelband’s conception of the history of philosophy in chapter 6.

tion process and a self-understanding process. Windelband presents this movement as labor and departure from our natural condition. While the starting point of this process is an undetermined and unfinished condition, the evolution of humanity represents the completion and enrichment of the contents of consciousness. As we see, this explanation complements the characterization of philosophy as the ideal science of normative consciousness. It is precisely in this sense that the theory of the organon of philosophy represents both a continuation and an innovation in Windelband's thinking.

The representation of humanity in history is, then, more complex and complete, providing a more suitable basis for philosophical reflection. But rationality does not manifest itself only in philosophical matters, but also in the sciences, religion, arts, and politics. Therefore, the self-knowledge of humanity is not attained merely by explaining our capacity to think and the evolutive history of this capacity, but through the reconstruction of the development of the principles and contents operating in all our cultural formations.²⁴¹ These are the working materials of the critical philosopher. The interpretation of transcendental idealism in terms of a philosophy of culture, a characteristic feature of Windelband's Neo-Kantianism, is grounded precisely in this interpretation of history's relevance for philosophy.

Windelband's arguments still allow the possibility of an additional determination. Windelband ascribes a special status among the historical disciplines to the history of philosophy. If, as Hegel claims, philosophy is the epoch grasped in thought, then the history of philosophy is precisely the most useful discipline for the critical philosopher, since it is in this field that the synthetic expression of the different attempts at self-knowledge of humanity is found. As such, for both Hegel and Windelband, the history of philosophy is a part of the system of philosophy, but, while in the case of the former, the history of philosophy is the conclusive moment of the system, for Windelband, the history of philosophy represents the system's starting point. Thus, the meaning of a philosophical history of philosophy changes. As I will explain in chapter 6, during the polemic on the history of philosophy at the end of the eighteenth century, the formulation of a philosophical history of philosophy was achieved only under the presupposition of a determinate system of philosophy, the Kantian, the Hegelian, and so on. In Windel-

²⁴¹ This explains the reference to the cultural context in Windelband's historiography of philosophy.

band's case, the philosophical status of the history of philosophy is determined by the exact opposite reason; namely, the absence of a presupposed systematic philosophy, which allows, paradoxically, a historical endeavor to transform into a philosophical endeavor. Without a constructive presupposition, the history of philosophy becomes a field in which the logical necessity of problems, the historical context, and the idiosyncratic factors introduced by every philosopher appear intricately connected.²⁴² The historian's labor becomes more subtle since she cannot limit her task to classifying past philosophies according to a pre-given schema, but has to conceptualize them as possible guiding threads for our systematical endeavors. The elements are given to consider that the true organon of philosophy is not merely history, but the history of philosophy.

4.4. HISTORY AND HISTORICAL RELATIVISM

In this section, I will attempt to clarify what philosophy should do with history and also to determine whether Windelband's solution is entirely trivial or not. If history is the organon of philosophy, we have to deal with the possibility that philosophical knowledge might be dependent on history, thus lapsing into a form of historical relativism. In this case, we would be compelled to acknowledge the collapse of the spheres of historical facticity and philosophical validity (destroying Kant's central opposition between the *quid juris* and the *quid facti* types of questions). However, if we can use history much like the famous metaphorical ladder and then get rid of it once we have climbed it, we will have lost the sense in which history has to play the role of an organon. The situation can be expressed in terms of the following dilemma: if philosophy can provide an autonomous proof, the role of history is diluted; if philosophy cannot provide an autonomous proof, the question of validity is reduced to the question of the genesis. This dilemma represents a renewed formulation of the distinction between ra-

²⁴² These three factors articulate Windelband's exposition in his *Handbook of the History of Philosophy*. See, W. Windelband, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* (ed. By Heinz Heimsoeth) (Tübingen: Mohr, 1935), p. 9. And also, the discussion of this articulation in P. Ziche, "Indecisionism and Anti-Relativism: Wilhelm Windelband as a Philosophical Historiographer of Philosophy", in *From Hegel to Windelband. Historiography of Philosophy in the 19th Century* eds. G. Hartung and V. Pluder (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 207-226.

tionalism, which casts experience aside, and empiricism, which fails to acknowledge the demands in favor of the autonomy of thinking. The problem specifically resides in the non-Kantian claim that the genetic process plays some kind of role in philosophical argumentation (although Kant only acknowledged that the genesis was a possible topic of a posteriori inquiry). In my opinion, for a Kantian like Windelband, this difference could not have remained unnoticed.

Gottfried Gabriel provides one possible answer to this conundrum. His idea is to transform the methodological reference to a given material into a heuristic resource.²⁴³ This reference to the heuristics of knowledge is productive in our context, for it comes from the ‘Methodenlehren’ of logic. In fact, Gabriel introduces history as a heuristic variant:

Heranzuziehen ist auch die Geschichte der Wissenschaften, sofern diese erkenntnistheoretisch und nicht bloss institutionengeschichtlich oder soziologisch ausgerichtet bleibt. Eine Wissenschaftsgeschichte, welche die Genese der Erkenntnisgewinnung in den Blick nimmt, kann zwar keine Geltungsfragen entscheiden, sie kann aber sehr wohl durch die narrative Vergegenwärtigung und methodologische Analyse von Beispielen kreativen Denkens zu einer exemplarischen Schulung des heuristischen Vermögens der reflektierenden Urteilskraft beitragen.” (Gabriel 2012:477)

Interesting as it is, this heuristic proposal does not capture the whole of Windelband’s perspective. With his idea of an organon, Windelband is not trying to improve our own creative capacity as philosophizing subjects but point toward an internal (objective) relation between history and philosophy. Windelband’s proposal seems to be that, although a decision regarding the general validity of a principle must be taken exclusively on the basis of philosophical reasons and not on the basis of empirical facts, the formality of the philosophical method demands the mediation of experience. More than with a heuristic capacity, the inclusion of a historical moment comes from the need to provide concrete grounds for the movement from one conceptual determination to the next.

²⁴³ “Die Berechtigung der genetischen Perspektive ist ansonsten gleichwohl zu sichern und kommt innerhalb der Erkenntnistheorie besonders in der Heuristik zu tragen” (Gabriel 2012:476). Gabriel indeed provides an analogon or an example with his reference to H. Reichenbach’s famous distinction between the context of discovery and the context of justification. Although the examples -the general stance of Gabriel- refer to the psychological process of thinking, they can be extrapolated to the problem of considering history as a “field” of discovery.

Another interpretive possibility is to claim that historical narratives are not important for their explanatory role, they do not constitute an explanatory moment. In this sense, there cannot be a confusion between the *quid facti* and the *quid juris*. Regarding the organon of philosophy, Windelband says: “Insofern die Philosophie prinzipiell die Selbstbesinnung auf das Wesen der Vernunft und ihrer allgemeingültig notwendigen Betätigung ist, muss sie damit rechnen, dass dies ihr Objekt selbst in historischer Selbstverwirklichung und Selbsterfassung begriffen ist: daher ihre stetige Veränderlichkeit und dabei doch ihre stetige, constante Einheit.”²⁴⁴ History does not merely occupy the role of psychology; it changes the distinction between genesis and validity. Both concepts should be re interpreted in order to understand Windelband’s differentiated overview of the ways in which reason is given to us.

In Windelband’s methodology, neither history nor pure reasoning provide constructive proofs; instead, they offer “regulative” recognition of cultural norms. Therefore, the problem is not history but the interpretation of history in terms of evolutionary explanations (the type of history present in the *Völkerpsychologie* model) and the strict interpretation of the universal validity of norms. For Windelband, the prerequisite of the usefulness of history is linked to the possibility of disentangling the multiple dimensions of historical reality to achieve philosophical validity from historical materials. In sum, the circle of engagement of history is depicted as more concrete, more complex, and more suited for philosophy’s methodological purposes, thus making it a better candidate for the role of organon of philosophy.

There are, I think, two historiographical conclusions to be drawn from my exposition. The first conclusion from the reconstruction of Windelband’s thesis is that the traditional interpretation of South-West Neo-Kantianism, specifically the claim that history does not play a role in philosophical methodology, is unfair to the texts. Secondly, I have shown that Windelband’s identification of history with the organon of philosophy is a more complex and articulated idea than previously has been thought. Windelband presents this idea on several occasions, but never in a systematic and ordered way. As such, this idea had to be thoroughly reconstructed. Moreover, the main obscurities in Windelband’s exposition were explained as a result of the development of his

²⁴⁴ Windelband’s reply to Emil Boutroux in Boutroux 1905:

thinking, more concretely, following the change from his emphasis on psychology to his emphasis on history.

But Windelband's treatment of history raises philosophical issues. Windelband clearly acknowledged the novelty of scientific history and the consequent relevance of the philosophy of history. But should philosophy be measured by the standards of history? Or, to use a term that has become popular, should philosophy be historicized? If the answer is yes, then the danger of historical relativism becomes evident. It is plain that Windelband sought to clarify the role of the historical dimension of thinking without abandoning the claim for the universal validity of rational principles. The incorporation of the historical dimension of thinking has important consequences for the interpretation of transcendental idealism. Gerald Hartung says, regarding the relationship between Kant and Windelband, that "the Kantian a priori is historicized but not relativized. There is no going back behind the level of developed forms of thinking and acting. The *questio facti* (what has become) and the *quaestio juris* (what is valid) coincide".²⁴⁵

Far from claiming that rational values have to be grounded in history, the identification of history with the organon of philosophy amounts to an anti-rationalistic thesis. Rather than dealing with the merely possible, the critical philosopher has to set out the link between concepts and experience. Windelband grounded this link in a particular philosophy of history. Although he did not develop a full-fledged theory of historical time in his writings, he presented a theoretical argument to establish the mediating role of history for transcendental philosophy. Moreover, Windelband pursued historiographical works in order to display the process by which the meaning of philosophical concepts is articulated over time. Thus, while the validity of philosophical concepts should not be confused with mere historical validity, philosophical concepts do require a reference to history. History works as the source of our knowledge and as the medium through which the validity of philosophical concepts is not grounded but exhibited.

I would venture to conclude that history and philosophy stand in a twofold relationship, according to Windelband's model. In the first phase, history is identified as a necessary reference for the philosophical method. History cannot be equated in this

²⁴⁵ G. Hartung, "Ein Philosoph korrigiert sich selbst - Wilhelm Windelbands Abkehr vom Relativismus," in *Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915)*, eds. P. König and O. Schlaudt (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2018), p. 57. The translation is my own.

sense with the object of philosophy since what philosophy seeks are rational principles operating in experience. History is the medium required for this task. And the elaborations of the philosopher always must refer to the experience that she is analyzing. I employed the term ‘exhibition’ in precisely this sense in the previous paragraph. Any principle allegedly ascribed as belonging to the normative consciousness has to be shown as having been manifested through a historical process. This second relation concerns the historicity of philosophy: “For philosophy, to make history an organon, has to proceed historically, i.e., by way of the historical sciences” (Kreiter 2002:156) and therefore proceeds by adopting a position like the so-called hermeneutical circle.

4.5. CONCLUSIONS

The first conclusion of the chapter is the aforementioned historiographical thesis held by Southwest Neo-Kantianism: history does play a role in philosophical methodology. Throughout a large part of his philosophical career, Windelband recognized the novelty of the philosophy of history: this period belongs to the post-Kantian movement. This is best explained in relationship to Windelband’s assessment of post-Kantian philosophy.²⁴⁶ In a conference in 1908, he claims that Fichte is the founder of the philosophy of history in modern times and, for this reason, the man that established one of the major features of German Idealism (Windelband 1908). The same goes for the assessment of Kant’s philosophy. In parallelism with the changes found in “Critical or genetic Method?”, we find a new evaluation of Kant and Neo-Kantianism. As I said, the original emphasis on the appropriation of the critical philosophy was the so-called “negative result” of the *First Critique* (see Windelband IK). In a later phase, the systematic character of the “positive results” is fully acknowledged. For instance, he declares that the main result of Kantian philosophy was the formulation of a complete and scientific worldview. But this new “Kant” creates new paths that travel beyond his own works: on the one hand, the difficulty of establishing the relation between theoretical and practical

²⁴⁶ See chapter 7.

reason, between ideas and postulates; on the other hand, the insufficiency of the formalism of ethics (Windelband NHJ). Between 1884 and 1904, Windelband's idea of history and its relation to philosophy mutates. The concept of historical worldview impacts on his understanding of the manifestation of absolute values and the individual. Furthermore, the role assigned to history, and the meaning of the philosophical reflection it elicits, does not seem to fit with the question of the possibility of history as a science.

The second conclusion is that this change is best explained through the complex idea of the organon of philosophy. The alleged obscurities of the theory are explained by reference to Windelband's development and the change in focus from from psychology to history. The most important obscurity still to be discussed is Windelband's conception of history and the conflation, in his explanation of the organon of philosophy, between history and the history of philosophy, which are the topics of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 5: THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

While dealing with Windelband's conception of the critical method, the previous chapter has shown not only that this method is related to history but that Windelband's emphasis on historical consciousness is motivated by difficulties stemming from his philosophical theory. Windelband was not concerned with the theory of history at the start of his philosophical career; thus, it is the result of his Neo-Kantian attitude, i.e., going beyond the formulations of Kantian philosophy. Windelband's philosophical reflection on history became nothing other than the distinctive trend of his take on Neo-Kantian philosophy and the distinctive focus of the members of the Neo-Kantian Baden School.

Now that we know that history, according to Windelband, plays a relevant role in the methodological reflection characteristic of transcendental philosophy, it is the time to discuss Windelband's conception of history in detail. As I will explain throughout this chapter, Windelband's philosophy of history does not merely amount to the elaboration of a philosophical sub-discipline subsumable under the label of critical philosophy of history, i.e., a theory of historical knowledge. On the contrary, I will show how Windelband's conception of the philosophy of history is related to his formulation of teleological idealism. In this respect, while the previous chapter attempted to determine the role of history for the critical method, this chapter proceeds analogously by clarifying the relationship between Windelband's conception of history and his interpretation of the proper object of philosophy. Hence, the investigation comprised in this chapter seeks to elucidate the relationship between history and transcendental norms. Therefore, this chapter complements the previous chapter while also offering further precisions regarding Windelband's definition of philosophy as the critical science of absolute values.

However, Windelband's interest in the philosophy of history is not only a relatively late development in his career, it also represents a novel discipline, an authentic manifestation of nineteenth-century thinking, and a specific contribution made by the Ger-

man intellectual world.²⁴⁷ Windelband acknowledges this novelty, devoting several essays to clarify the meaning and impact of this discipline for the general conception of philosophy.²⁴⁸ This has prompted several interpreters to consider that Windelband's systematic philosophy attempts to include history in the scope of the critical enterprise. As early as 1915, Bruno Bauch framed Windelband's entire philosophical project in terms of the Kantian question: "How is history possible as a science?" (Bauch 1915:XII). The general characterization of Windelband's program regarding history is therefore defined as an expansion of the famous set of questions posed by Kant in his *Prolegomena*.²⁴⁹ To the questions regarding mathematics, the natural sciences, and metaphysics, the Neo-Kantian author adds the inquiry into the conditions of possibility of history as a science. And indeed, Windelband insisted on the need to reform the Kantian theory of science in view of the new reality represented by the historical sciences (Windelband GL 1915 2:13). Thus, against the positivist tendencies of his epoch, Windelband advocated the methodological autonomy of the historical sciences, offering novel and categorical arguments for this position, among which stands out his defense of the possibility of a knowledge of the individual (de Boer 1998:101). This line of interpretation has certainly sparked many discussions of Windelband's philosophy, but, as I will argue, it has also led to a one-sided interpretation of Windelband's philosophy of history.

In the first chapter of this investigation I advanced my general objections against what I consider to be a misunderstanding of the scope of Windelband's conception of history. This confusion involves a problem inherent not only to the Neo-Kantian philosophy of history, namely, the ambiguous meaning of the discipline. A peculiarity of the

²⁴⁷ As the German historian Hajo Holborn explains, "In the discovery of history, which has added a new dimension to Western thought, the Germany of the first half of the nineteenth century made its most original intellectual contribution to the modern world" (quoted in Zielkowski (2004:ix).

²⁴⁸ There are plenty of passages in which Windelband acknowledges the novelty of the historical sciences, especially in relationship with the necessity of transforming critical philosophy. In his 1904 essay, "Nach hundert Jahren", he says, for example: "Wir haben jetzt die Geschichte als Wissenschaft, die Kant noch nicht gekannt hat." (Windelband *NHJ* 1915 1:154]). A similar remark is found in a conference on the logic of history from 1905: "Das ist die wissenschaftliche Originalität dieses Zeitalters; die Geschichte ist eine Wissenschaft geworden, und damit hat die heutige Logik und Erkenntnistheorie als mit dem neuen Problem zu rechnen, das ihr durch den tatsächlichen Befund des wirklichen Wissens und Forschens unserer Zeit gestellt wird" (Windelband 1905b:106).

²⁴⁹ It is worth noting the difference between this interpretation and my results regarding the meaning and scope of Windelband's program based on the first edition of *Präludien*. This insight is presented in chapter 3, where no appeal to such a question is made.

philosophy of history is its multiplicity of meanings. This proves to be evident when we consider, for instance, today's distinctions between critical and substantive understandings of the discipline (Little 2016). While the former is oriented toward epistemological problems, the latter emphasizes metaphysical queries such as the meaning of history as a whole. One of the alleged deficits of the Neo-Kantian conception of the philosophy of history is precisely its reduction of this plurality to a single meaning. The philosophy of history is thus identified with a philosophy of historiography. As I have said previously, this thesis does not stack up with Windelband's preliminary characterization of the philosophy of history.

The present chapter offers concrete evidence supporting my view. Against the backdrop of a possible reduction of the Neo-Kantian interpretation of the philosophy of history to a logic of historical sciences, I show that Windelband distinguished a set of specific ethical and metaphysical problems at the core of the philosophy of history. These unaccounted facets of the philosophy of history, are far from unusual, and seem to be a common thread in the reflection on history from the end of the eighteenth century onwards (Rüssen 2013:332). Windelband himself offers some hints about the multiplicity of levels in the domain of historical reflection. In a passage from his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, for instance, Windelband identifies both theoretical and practical questions as belonging to the inner field of the philosophy of history:

Die philosophische Betrachtung der Geschichte gehört in den Rahmen der theoretischen Philosophie formell, sofern das Wesen historischer Forschung methodologisch und erkenntnistheoretisch untersucht wird, material dagegen nur insoweit als sie auf Erforschung der im historischen Leben der Völker obwaltenden Gesetze gerichtet sein soll: da aber die Geschichte das Reich zweckmäßiger Handlungen der Menschen ist, so fallen die Frage der Geschichtsphilosophie, sofern sie den Gesamtzweck der historischen Bewegung und seine zu ihrem Gegenstande machen will, unter die praktischen Probleme. (Windelband LGP 1935:17)

These spheres of problems pertaining to the philosophy of history, clearly distinguished in the passage just quoted, are constantly intertwined in Windelband's concrete handling of arguments. Windelband's epistemology of history bears ethical conno-

tations that are difficult to overlook.²⁵⁰ Even though Windelband affirms that the questions raised by historical consciousness can only be solved through a discussion of methodological issues, these problems do not find their ultimate purpose in the solution of methodological problems (Morrone 2013:90). The theoretical or formal reflection on the methods of history is the doorway to the treatment of issues that belong to practical philosophy (Vieillard Baron 2008:163; Staiti 2014:20). Likewise, a hidden but fundamental metaphysical motive regarding the constitution of a historical worldview surfaces from time to time in Windelband's texts. In due course, this investigation will clarify the correspondence between the theoretical and practical sides of the philosophy of history. For now, let it suffice just to place this network of theoretical, practical, and metaphysical facets brought about by the development of a logic of historical sciences in connection with the diagnostic of philosophy's identity crisis. While for explanatory purposes, it is easy to define this crisis in terms of the problem of defining philosophy, that is, of identifying its proper object and method, another, more subtle way to describe this crisis is to emphasize the perilous consequences of the positivist spirit of the epoch: the disintegration of the meaning of reality in the flux of historical time. In the face of this disintegration, the philosophy of history has the task of bringing together the disjointed poles of reality and rationality, the factual and the ideal.

I shape my reconstruction of Windelband's conception of history according to the following division. Sections 1 and 2 deal with the theoretically-oriented aspects of the philosophy of history, that is, with the logic of historical sciences. Windelband presents the blueprints for his logic of history in two notable texts. Firstly, in his 1894 *Rectorial Address*, titled "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaften". This speech is probably Windelband's most famous philosophical piece. Secondly, in a less-quoted conference given in 1905: "Die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Logik und Erkenntnislehre in Bezug auf Natur-

²⁵⁰ I have found a better understanding of these connotations in texts that discuss the broader panorama of the controversy on the distinction between the natural sciences and the humanities. In this respect, Jalbert's text dealing with Husserl's stance on the debate between Windelband and Dilthey is quite accurate: "The debate has to a certain extent engendered the erroneous impression that what is really at stake is primarily an epistemological and/or ontological matter. What has been obscured is the larger, more fundamental problem that spawned the debate in the first place. The main issue, conceived broadly, is an ethical one and concerns the possibility of a genuinely human, that is, rational and ethical, life" (Jalbert 1988:280). Thus, our task as historians of philosophy is to make explicit those fundamental problems that lie behind the methodological discussion, avoiding its reduction to a discussion on the taxonomy of sciences.

und Kulturwissenschaft". This second conference expands on some fundamental ideas from "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaften", allowing us, for example, to draw a relationship between the philosophy of history and ethics.²⁵¹ While the focus of the first section is on the general aspects of the logic of historical sciences, the second section offers a reconstruction of the arguments advanced by Windelband in his *Rectorial Address*.²⁵² This text deserves and demands a detailed examination for three specific reasons. The first and fundamental reason is that a thorough analysis of its content will allow me to show the inadequacy of the common interpretation of Windelband's philosophy of history, that is, the interpretation that reduces Windelband's contributions to a theory of historical knowledge. The second reason is that this text offers a decisive clue for handling the relation between the theory of history and transcendental philosophy. Finally, more than any other text, "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaften" presents Windelband's theory as an impulse rather than as a complete doctrine. While provocative in its formulation, Windelband's explanation of the knowledge of the individual remains incomplete, at least as far as concerns certain concrete details.

The third section of the chapter deals with the concept of norm and the idea that history presents itself as a progressive realization of norms. While the treatment of the method of history leads us toward a consideration of the consciousness of values, the practical side of the philosophy of history serves to articulate an explanation of the realization of those values in the world framed in the concept of historical development. Windelband's philosophy of history does not represent a strictly Kantian approach, and manifests the same progressive movement toward a Hegelian appropriation that I have found in his conception of the philosophical method.

The fourth section delves into the idea of the aforementioned shift from Kant to Hegel in Windelband's philosophy by examining his later texts on the philosophy of history: the chapter on history from the *Einleitung in der Philosophie* from 1914 and

²⁵¹ A third, but less relevant text that can be mentioned in this context is "Philosophie und Methodologie der Geschichte" (1894). Windelband's article illustrates, through a brief survey, different nineteenth-century theories of history. Despite not offering a positive contribution to the topic matter, it presents Windelband's views and comments on his contemporaries.

²⁵² Analogous commentaries on this speech can be found in Bambach (1995:66), de Boer (1998), Farin (2006), Beiser (2011:380), and Staiti (2014:21).

Windelband's posthumous book *Geschichtsphilosophie. Eine Kriegsvorlesung* from 1916.

Overall, this chapter attends three different objectives: (1) to amplify the conception of history introduced in the discussion of the critical method; (2) to understand Windelband's contribution to the historicist discussions of the nineteenth century; (3) to determine the relationship between the theoretical and practical aspects in Windelband's conception of history. By fulfilling these tasks, I expect to be able to clarify how these different aspects of the philosophy of history are related to Windelband's definition of philosophy. Finally, I will also take up again the exposition commenced in the previous chapter. While chapter 4 explained the grounding for the methodological relevance of history, this chapter explores different concrete aspects of Windelband's conception of history.

4.1. THE LOGIC OF HISTORY

The laborious process that led to the consolidation of history as a proper scientific discipline cannot be discussed here in full detail.²⁵³ This process was definitively cemented by the time that Windelband started to develop his theory of history. Repeating the topic of the critical method, but in a different theoretical context, Windelband says that the philosophical reflection on history presupposes this process of consolidation as its outcome: "Die Methoden [here, the methods of sciences] selbst erwachsen als lebendige Tätigkeiten in der unmittelbaren Bewältigung sachlicher Aufgaben: ihre Formen herauszulösen, zu verstehen und zu begründen, ist die Aufgabe der

²⁵³ There is plenty of literature on the transformation of history into a science (Iggers 1984; Beiser 2011; Zielkowski 2014). There are several milestones in this process. One of them is undoubtedly the opening of the university in Berlin and the creation of the Faculty of History (Beiser 2014a: 137). I take the liberty of not treating this theme here, given the fact that Windelband's development of the theory of history belongs to a different context. Windelband's struggle was neither concerned with distinguishing between scientific history and the speculative philosophy of history *à la* Hegel or Schelling, nor with securing an institutional position for history. On the contrary, his task was linked to the interpretation of the scientificity of history and its philosophical consequences. Windelband himself offers a brief exposition of the history of the problem of history in paragraph 45 of his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*. There, he focuses on the naturalistic interpretations of history and discusses the ideas of Comte, J. S. Mill, Buckle, Spencer, and others.

Philosophie” (Windelband 1905b:105).²⁵⁴ Although it is not possible to deny that reflection, indeed, philosophical reflection, was involved in the transformation of history into a science (Dickey 2012), Windelband remains adamant in his championing of the conceptual difference between the moment of the concrete material work of the historians and the posterior moment of the logical reflection of the philosopher. The works of historians are thus a condition of philosophical reflection. According to Windelband, this moment of reflection, prompted by the nineteenth century’s transformation of history, is analogous in nature and magnitude to the Baconian project of grounding natural sciences. Thus was defined the specific agenda of nineteenth-century philosophy (Windelband AUF 1905b:106). It is precisely in this sense that that I here speak of the logic of historical sciences.

Windelband’s logic of history is, at its most basic level, a descriptive enterprise. As such, it opposes itself to the prescriptive position advanced previously by positivist thinkers.²⁵⁵ One of the works most likely targeted by Windelband in his methodological remarks is a classic reference in the literature: John Stuart Mill’s naturalistic account of historiography.

Mill’s proposal in his *Logic* was to rescue historical disciplines from their sorry state “still abandoned to the uncertainties of vague and popular discussions” (Mill 1843 [1974:833 –4]) by employing the methods that were guaranteeing the constant and undeniable success of the natural sciences (Anderson 2008: 222). The adaptation of philosophy to the method of the natural sciences implied an authoritarian transformation of history into a law-seeking discipline. This positivist approach did not fit well with the

²⁵⁴ Windelband makes a similar assessment of the relationship between philosophy and the particular sciences in Windelband (*GN* 1915 2:138).

²⁵⁵ The same position is taken by Rickert in the preface to the fifth edition of *Die Grenzen der Naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung* from 1902.

basic presuppositions of the historical disciplines, at least in the way that they were being built in German Academia.²⁵⁶

A rather more interesting reference point is the work of a precursor of the Neo-Kantian movement: Hermann von Helmholtz (Anderson 2008:223; Bouterse and Karskens 2015:344).²⁵⁷ Helmholtz's 1862 conference, "Über das Verhältnis der Naturwissenschaften zur Gesamtheit der Wissenschaft", is probably as important an antecedent as Mill's naturalistic approach for the debate on the division between the natural and the historical sciences, at least as far the German intellectual world is concerned. Moreover, its content is closer, at least from the point of view of the problems raised in the conference, to Windelband's *Rectorial Address*.

For Helmholtz, the partition between natural and historical sciences cannot be consistently erased since it is grounded both in a difference at the level of their objects and in a difference at the level of the scientific treatment of their materials (Helmholtz 1995:81).

Regarding the objective criterion of demarcation, Helmholtz, a natural scientist himself, offers a rather colorful characterization:

There is no denying that, while the moral sciences deal directly with the nearest and dearest interests of the human mind, and with the institutions it has brought into being, the natural sciences are concerned with dead, indifferent matter, obviously indispensable for the sake of its practical utility, but apparently without any immediate bearing on the cultivation of the intellect. (Helmholtz 1995:81).

In a comparison that resembles Windelband's distinction between psychology and history, treated in the previous chapter, Helmholtz opines that, while the natural scien-

²⁵⁶ From positivism, in its Comtean or Millian expression, the German historical tradition absorbed the emphasis on concrete empirical research, meaning the opposition between the historical sciences and the philosophy of history (in its idealistic interpretation). However, against positivism, there was a strong rejection of the naturalistic interpretation of the historical word and the interpretation of historical explanations in terms of general laws (Mancini 2000:31; Beiser 2014a: 154). For Windelband, the philosophy of history is at the core of the fight against positivism. While the reign of positivism over the historical sciences would appear to be its highest achievement, Windelband claims that this discipline will bring about its fall (Windelband 1894b: 107). Windelband was well acquainted with Comte's philosophy and even planned to write a book on the topic. For references to Comte's works, see Windelband (1907), Windelband (1916:33), and, as already mentioned, paragraph 45 from the *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*.

²⁵⁷ Helmholtz's conference bears on a specific issue that I don't thematize in this dissertation, namely, the organization of university institutions, and the relevance of mathematics and the technical disciplines for higher education. Helmholtz defends the complementarity between both types of sciences. This was also a relevant topic for Windelband, who discusses this pedagogical issue in a conference from 1908: "Über Wesen und Wert der Tradition im Kulturleben" (Windelband 1915 2:244-269).

ces display a higher degree of formal perfection, the historical sciences have a richer material, as they are connected with our vital interests as human beings (Helmholtz 1995:90).

In what respects the intellectual process characteristic of the contending camps of scientists, the more formal aspect of the division, Helmholtz distinguishes between the primary employment of logical induction, the procedure of natural scientists, and what he calls aesthetic induction, which is specific to artistic creation. Artistic creation seeks to “reproduce by words, by form, by color, or by music, the external indications of a character or a state of mind, and by a kind of instinctive intuition, uncontrolled by any definable rule, to seize the necessary steps by which we pass from one mood to another” (Helmholtz 1995:85). Psychological instinct, memory, and sympathy are the concepts framing Helmholtz’s description of historians’ work, not the positivistic search of general rules governing the course of history. When perchance we find such rules, like in the case of the study of legal theory, these rules operate as dictates with normative force, hence, in a different mode than the causal laws of nature.

Helmholtz’s conference, incomplete and problematic as it is due to the nature of the topic and its partial form, nevertheless sets the tone for later interventions. The relationship between science and human life, the aesthetic element in historical disciplines, the way of grounding a demarcation criterion for sciences, and the possibility of establishing a true science of individuals configure a specific constellation of questions that, held together, constitute the core of Windelband’s logic of historical sciences. Windelband’s project inserts itself in this context, and, although it is accurate to say that it “powerfully shaped the way turn-of-the-century philosophers thought about the philosophy of historiography” (Bambach 2009:480),²⁵⁸ it is clear that what Windelband offers is not a completely new paradigm but an original articulation of certain conceptual elements and argumentative strategies that were already operative in the discussions of his contemporaries.

Following Kantian premises, Windelband understood that, before attempting to clarify the objective side of the demarcation between sciences, a previous discussion on

²⁵⁸ Bambach takes care to limit this contribution. It is as central as it is incomplete: “Windelband never really produced a new logic of historiography worthy of its Kantian heritage” (Bambach 2009:480).

the theory of knowledge was required. No metaphysics without the corresponding critique: no metaphysical divide between nature and history without previously inquiring into the effective modalities of knowledge deployed in the concrete natural and human sciences. In contrast to Helmholtz, Windelband thus prioritized intellectual procedures over the material difference of objects.

However, Windelband's concern regarding the theory of knowledge is the lack of resources to deal with the concrete works of the historical disciplines. According to Windelband, Kantian epistemology revolves around the identification of experience with the physical and mathematical sciences. While Kantian philosophy places some restraint on the excesses of materialism and positivism, proving to be an indispensable resource in the development of early Neo-Kantianism (Windelband GL 1915 2:8), the Kantian concept of science, upon which Kant's transcendental logic was erected, is hopelessly limited in view of the pretensions of the historical sciences. The idea of merely expanding the critical endeavor by bringing the historical sciences into its reach is extremely naive, and, in my opinion, unfit for Neo-Kantianism. Strictly speaking, it would not be faithful to the spirit of Kantianism. This is precisely the type of confusion that lies behind the question: "How is history possible as a science?"

Windelband's 1905 conference "Die Gegenwartige Aufgabe der Logik und Erkenntnislehre in Bezug auf Natur- und Kulturwissenschaften" introduces with clarity the different tasks that Windelband assigns to the philosophy of history.²⁵⁹ Besides his distinction between theoretical and practical problems in relation to the philosophical treatment of history, he distinguishes between the analysis of the methodological aspects of the historical disciplines and the analyses of the conceptual, or objective, presuppositions of those sciences. The second type of analysis inquires into the meaning of the basic principles of historical thinking. Windelband speaks with striking clarity about the two facets of the logic of historical science:

²⁵⁹ Rickert also distinguishes between several meanings of the philosophy of history in Rickert (1924b), showing that it is false to reduce the Neo-Kantian philosophy of history to a logic of historiography. Following a different characterization of philosophy than the one advanced by Windelband, Rickert distinguishes three meanings of the philosophy of history: as universal history, as the science of the principles of history, and as the logic of historical knowledge. The confusion comes from the systematical priority assigned to the logic of historical knowledge, which, no matter what, cannot be confused with the totality of the discipline (Rickert 1924b: 5-6).

Nach zwei Richtungen lassen sich diese neuen Probleme der theoretischen Philosophie schon jetzt, wie ich meine, deutlich übersehen. In der einen Hinsicht wird es sich darum handeln, die formal-logische Struktur der historischen Forschung und ihrer einzelnen Hilfsmittel herauszuarbeiten und im Zusammenhänge zu charakterisieren; das ist die methodologische Seite der Angelegenheit. Aber die Lösung dieser Aufgabe führt von selbst zu der zweiten Reihe von Problemen, die, tiefer und wichtiger für die letzten Fragen der Philosophie, im Gebiete der Erkenntnistheorie liegen: es müssen die sachlichen Voraussetzungen analysiert werden. (Windelband AUF 1905b:108)²⁶⁰

In one of its two forms, the logic of history is strictly concerned with the problems of the methodology of history.²⁶¹ Assuming, nonetheless, the relevance of a critical philosophy of history, the scope of this discipline is completely misunderstood when the discipline is reduced to the philosophy of a particular science. The fundamental meaning of the historical question is obscured when it is treated in strict analogy with the questions regarding the possibility of mathematics and physics.

The logic of history does not represent an addition to the critical enterprise, but it demands a transformation of logic.²⁶² As such, it affects our previous understanding of the questions regarding mathematics and physics, for it puts into question the meaning of the concept of science. For this reason, I think that the best way to summarize the Neo-Kantian understanding of history is not through the question “how is history possible as a science?”, but by asking what it means that history is also a science.

My argumentative strategy is not uncontested. For instance, Charles Bambach’s excellent book on Heidegger and the historicist tradition presents a view opposite to mine. According to him:

²⁶⁰ Windelband’s examples of presupposed concepts are evolution (or development), progress, and regress (Windelband 1916:23).

²⁶¹ As is apparent from the previous quotation, Windelband was not alien to the ontological problem of the meaning of historical being. I will discuss this topic in the following section of this chapter.

²⁶² This interpretation of the Neo-Kantian approach to the theory of historical knowledge can be confirmed, for instance, by referring to Cassirer’s “Forword” to the first volume of *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*. Here Cassirer raises exactly the same point present in Windelband’s conference on the tasks of the logic of historical sciences: “Bei dem Bemühen, das Ergebnis dieser Untersuchungen, die sich im wesentlichen auf die Struktur des mathematischen und des naturwissenschaftlichen Denkens bezogen, für die Behandlung geisteswissenschaftlicher Probleme fruchtbar zu machen, stellte sich mir immer deutlicher heraus, daß die allgemeine Erkenntnistheorie in ihrer herkömmlichen Auffassung und Begrenzung für eine methodische Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften nicht ausreicht. Sollte eine solche Grundlegung gewonnen werden, so schien der Plan dieser Erkenntnistheorie einer prinzipiellen Erweiterung zu bedürfen” (Cassirer 1923:V).

Even as Windelband succeeded in making problems of history more genuinely ‘philosophical’ that is, more epistemologically self-consciousness, both he and Rickert ultimately contrived to alienate historical existence from its own vital origins thought an almost blind concentration on the formal-logical definition of historical method. In their scheme, history became a purely formal technique of research, a model for approaching the unique and individual development of culture [...] the Baden Neo-Kantians managed to rob history of its vital, experiential core, leaving only the desiccated husks of an abstract theory of method. (Bambach 1995:58)

Despite being repetitive, it is not true that the “formal-logical definition of the historical method” represents all that Windelband said about history.²⁶³ Of course, arguing that Windelband’s logic of history indeed has a material dimension related to the presuppositions of historical thinking, or stressing the practical background of this logic, does not provide a sufficient argument against the general idea that the Baden Neo-Kantians’ whole approach has a “narrowly epistemological focus” (Bambach 1995:5). But it is the start for a reassessment of their doctrines.

The key to introducing Windelband’s presentation of the logic of history is to interpret this logic as directed toward a transformation of theoretical philosophy. At least on the level of the explicit description of his task, Windelband is not trying to explain the historical sciences with doctrines borrowed from modern epistemology. On the contrary, he criticizes this epistemology for equating science with natural science. This false identification determines the limits of the Kantian version of critical philosophy and the difficulties to explain the scientific character of history from a strictly Kantian perspective. Therefore, it is not an attempt to envelop history within the folds of logic but to produce a transformation of logic in the direction of historical thinking: to understand history and our own understanding of history at the same time. In this respect, Windelband’s line of argument resembles Collingwood’s stance regarding the need to reform philosophy from the point of view of the philosophy of history, broadly conceived. The previous theory of knowledge was unilaterally directed toward understanding the modes of conceptualization of the natural sciences. But the emergence of a

²⁶³ Windelband explicitly rejects this type of interpretation in his posthumous book, *Geschichtsphilosophie*: “Die Erkenntnistheorie der Geschichtswissenschaft ist somit ein nicht mehr der Geschichtsforschung selbst angehöriger Vorwurf der Philosophie und damit in der Tat ein notwendiger Teil der Geschichtsphilosophie, wie sie auch behandelt werden wird. Eine Frage ist nur, ob das die ganze Geschichtsphilosophie ausmachen soll.” (Windelband 1916:24).

new type of knowledge requires not the elaboration of an appendix but a general revision insofar as the theory built around the model of theoretical knowledge is not sufficient to clarify the possibility of historical knowledge. This impossibility is shown both in the constant classification of history as a type of *belles-lettres* and not a proper science and in the attempt to introduce the methods of the natural sciences in historical investigations. The role of the logic of the historical sciences is to develop an adequate formulation of the modes in which historians elaborate reality through specific types of concepts and then establish the relationship between the way concepts are formed in the natural sciences and history.

History is seen again as an impulse that calls for a of several key concepts of philosophy. Moreover, while the philosophers from early modernity focused their energy and effort on understanding and grounding the advances of natural science, the task of nineteenth-century philosophy is to carry forward the required understanding and grounding of history. Thus, the new situations of the sciences of the nineteenth century demands a reconsideration of the content or basic directions of thinking. As Windelband explains: “Diese große neue Tatsache der Existenz einer historischen Wissenschaft verlangt nun von der kritischen Philosophie in erster Linie eine Erweiterung des kantischen Begriffs vom Wissen: die Historie fordert neben der Naturforschung ihr Recht in der theoretischen Lehre” (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:154). As is apparent from this passage, the discussion comprises nothing less than the general concept of knowledge.

The next section discusses Windelband’s 1894 *Rectorial Address* and therefore deals in detail with the arguments that Windelband offered to sustain this characterization of the logic of history. However, its 1905 edition provides a condensed summary of his criteria of demarcation between sciences. Rather than defining two types of sciences by referring to their materials or their divergent intellectual procedures, Windelband considers that the most important aspect, as far distinguishing the natural sciences from the historical sciences is concerned, is determining their respective purposes. His conference from 1905 presents his famous criterion for the differentiation of science in the following terms:

Unter diesen [gegebenen Tatsachen] aber bestimmt sich der methodologische Grundgegensatz wiederum durch die logische Verschiedenheit ihrer Ziele, d.h. ihrer Erkenntnisaufgaben. In dieser Hinsicht kann die Verarbeitung des Erfah-

rungsmaterials entweder auf die Feststellung der allgemeinen Zusammenhänge gerichtet sein, die darin gelten, oder auf die Sicherstellung besonderer Tatsachen oder Gruppen von Tatsachen. Dieser Unterschied ist zugleich begrifflich und zeitlich: das Allgemeine fällt mit dem dauernden Bestand der erfahrbaren Wirklichkeit, das Besondere mit dem unwiederholt Einmaligen zusammen. (Windelband AUF 1905b:109)

Experience can be thus treated according to two cognitive objectives. The distinctive feature here is the avoidance of the classical ontological grounding based on the duality between mind and matter, or the more epistemologically-oriented duality between inner and outer experiences.²⁶⁴ If Windelband's proposal can be typified as methodological, it is due to his idea of placing the criterion for demarcation at opposite ends of the epistemological spectrum. These two different epistemological goals lead us to two different ways of elaborating our knowledge of the world: the subsumption of phenomena under a general law and the formation of meaningful particularities. However, this synthetic statement leaves several details included in Windelband's position unclear or neglected altogether. Briefly speaking, the distinction between the sciences' epistemic goals is categorized as dependent on two different modes of conceptuality and two different modes of temporality. The logic of the historical sciences has to provide grounds for these differences. However, this passage only serves a preparatory purpose. Taken in isolation, it substantiates the criticisms that several prominent philosophers leveled against Windelband's distinction, and, when placed in its correct context, it allows us to find the answers that stem from his theory.

4.2. HISTORY AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES

It is time to analyze Windelband's most famous philosophical piece, his address as Rector of the University of Strasbourg in 1894: "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaften."

²⁶⁴ As will become plain, Windelband's main target in his *Rectorial Address* is a specific interpretation of the divide between the natural sciences and the sciences of the spirit [Geisteswissenschaften]. This rejection is not merely terminological; it is based on an interpretation of this difference as grounded in an ontological dualism inherited from Descartes.

Windelband starts by describing inquiry as a quest for general frameworks and principles that may help solve particular scientific queries. But, while the different sciences normally arrest their search for principles at a certain given point, the singularity of philosophy is that its principles are meant to be the most general ones. There are no upper principles to ground philosophy in, and, for this reason, philosophical problems have the highest degree of generality (Windelband GN 1915 2:137). There is no higher ground from which we can contemplate philosophy than philosophy itself.

Against the backdrop of this characterization of philosophy, the fact that a representative of philosophy chose such a specific, even minute, problem as the demarcation criterion between history and natural sciences appears paradoxical. The assumption that Windelband's solution to the demarcation of the sciences is formal and taxonomical only strengthens the apparent inconsistency between the nature of philosophy and the content of Windelband's speech. The discussion of demarcation criteria can be difficult to carry forward, but it resembles a technical problem rather than the "obscure mystery" [*dunkle Geheimniss*] that Windelband's speech pretends to be. But Windelband's promise in "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft" is to transform an apparently restricted question into a true enigma of life.²⁶⁵ The topic of the distinction between the historical and the natural sciences has to be seen as a ladder that can help to reach higher levels of reflection. Hence, any discussion of Windelband's famous concepts of *ideographic* and *nomothetic* sciences has to place these concepts in relationship with an underlying theory of knowledge and an underlying metaphysical inquiry into the meaning of a historical worldview. The obscurities that riddle this shift from one level to the other call for a patient reconstruction of Windelband's argumentative line and not a mere reference to a taxonomical distinction.²⁶⁶

Windelband's logic of the historical sciences starts, as I have mentioned, with a methodological formulation. The scientific nature of history is determined by its met-

²⁶⁵ Of course, in the nineteenth century, this specific question had broader connotations, as Helmholtz's own discourse has shown. My controversial remark is meant to express the necessity of retrieving those implications if Windelband's discussion of *ideographic* and *nomothetic* sciences is to be interpreted as something more than an old and dull polemic.

²⁶⁶ In this sense, I disagree with Charles Bambach, who, following Heidegger, affirms that "Rickert's and Windelband's taxonomical approach to history had wholly obscured the historicity of human being which Dilthey's work had tried to open up" (Bambach 19915:15).

hod, a method characterized by the specific epistemic finality of the discipline. By treating this methodological problem, Windelband stresses the fruitfulness of philosophical considerations for the development of particular sciences (Windelband GN 1915 2:139). As a critical endeavor, i.e., as a discipline of limits, philosophy stands against a widespread methodological tendency toward monism:

Viel wurde dabei Durch die universalistische Tendenz gefehlt, welche, mit Verkennung der Autonomie der einzelnen Wissensgebiete, alle Gegenstände dem Zwange einer und derselben Methode unterwerfen wollte, so dass für die Gliederung der Wissenschaften nur noch sachliche, das hiess metaphysische Gesichtspunkte übrig blieben. (Windelband GN 1915 2:139)

The belief in a unified system of sciences is denounced as dependent on a presupposition that must be metaphysical by necessity. This hypothesis is evidenced by Windelband's list of examples. Throughout Western history, we find different proposals for a monistic approach of this sort: the geometrical, the psychological, the historical-evolutive, the mechanical, and the dialectical methods.²⁶⁷ It is evident that a painstaking argumentative effort is required to unite the sciences into a system using one of the methods outlined above. And it is the uncritical commitment to metaphysical doctrines, characteristic of these unificatory attempts, that motivates the discussions on the autonomy of the historical sciences. However, the solution to this problem is not to dethrone monism by replacing it with a metaphysical dualism. As Windelband explains, the task of philosophical critique is to reconcile conflicting parties and to argue for a limitation of the different methods to their proper sphere of competence (Windelband GN 1915 2:139). Thus, Windelband's approach consists in granting every valid scientific method its proper role.

Windelband proceeds by recognizing the claims of philosophy, mathematics, the natural sciences, and history. The most general opposition in the classification of sciences is that between formal (or rational) and empirical sciences, the latter being defined by their reference to the knowledge of reality through observation (Windelband GN

²⁶⁷ I explicitly mention this list to show the relevance of the discussion. It does not involve innocuous arguments regarding the technical procedures used in the sciences but a decision about our handling of reality: "Dabei haben sich die verschiedenen Verfahrungsweisen vielfach ineinander verästel, und wenn dann doch jede einzelne für sich eine herrschende Stellung in der allgemein Welt- und Lebensansicht unserer Tage verlangt" (Windelband GN 1915 2:140).

1915 2:142]). Empirical sciences are popularly classified, Windelband continues, according to an opposition between the natural sciences and the sciences of the mind. ‘Sciences of the mind’ here translates the German term *Geisteswissenschaften*, which could be rendered literally as sciences of the spirit, and which is often translated simply as “human sciences.”²⁶⁸ Regarding this dichotomy, Windelband says:

Ich halte sie [the dichotomy] in dieser Form nicht für glücklich. Natur und Geist - das ist ein sachlicher Gegensatz, der in den Ausgängen des antiken und den Anfängen des mittelalterlichen Denkens zu beherrschender Stellung gelangt und in der neueren Metaphysik von Descartes und Spinoza bis zu Schelling und Hegel mit voller Schroffheit aufrecht erhalten worden ist. Sofern ich die Stimmungen der neuesten Philosophie und die Nachwirkungen der erkenntnistheoretischen Kritik richtig beurteile, so würde diese in der allgemeinen Vorstellungs- und Ausdrucksweise haften gebliebene Scheidung jetzt nicht mehr als so sicher und selbstverständlich anerkannt werden, daß sie unbesehen zur Grundlage einer Klassifikation gemacht werden dürfte. (Windelband GN 1915 2:142)

Two things are worth noting from Windelband’s comment. The first is that the problem posed by this dichotomy is its lack of formality. As it stands, it depends on the ontological categories of nature and mind.²⁶⁹ The second is that this dichotomy is based on a long and contested metaphysical tradition. These, of course, are not in themselves sufficient reasons for dismissing the term “sciences of mind” [*Geisteswissenschaften*] altogether, but they show the grounds on which Windelband will deploy his arguments.

Windelband’s first argument proceeds by providing the most important counterexample against the concept of “sciences of the mind”. This counterexample is none other than psychology. Terminologically, it is perfectly clear that psychology has to be counted among the sciences of the mind. It is the science of the mind *par excellence*. However, as far as its method is concerned, there is a sharp contrast between psychology and the rest of the pretended *Geisteswissenschaften*. For Windelband, “ihr [psy-

²⁶⁸ As is well known, the term *Geisteswissenschaften* is a German neologism used by the translator of J. S. Mill’s *Logic* to render the English term “moral sciences.” The term “human sciences” is used, for example, by the English translators of Dilthey’s *Einleitung in der Geisteswissenschaften*. I will not follow this employment of “human sciences” because, as a neutral term, it does not portray Windelband’s justified invective against *Geisteswissenschaften* as a psychologically-oriented term.

²⁶⁹ Windelband is also dismissive of the possibility of grounding the dichotomy upon a distinction between two types of faculties, i.e., perception and reflection, an alternative that he associates with the philosophy of John Locke but which has reminiscences of Dilthey’s treatment of the matter.

chology] ganzes Verfahren aber, ihr methodisches Verfahren ist vom Anfang bis zum Ende dasjenige der Naturwissenschaften” (Windelband GN 1915 2:143).

The division between natural and mind sciences is rejected due to the impossibility of ascribing psychology to either side: its object is definitely the mind, but it follows the procedures of the natural sciences. From a logical point of view, there are at least two consistent paths to solve this discrepancy. Either we can offer a different treatment of psychology,²⁷⁰ or we can insist on counting psychology among the natural sciences by offering a characterization of the historical disciplines that dispenses with the concept of mind. But, considering Windelband’s overall conception of philosophical reflection, it would be pointless for him to advance a prescriptive definition of psychology. The logician’s task is not to construct or create new empirical sciences but to understand their methods and analyze their presuppositions. Thus, only the second path, dispensing with the material distinction, is compatible with Windelband’s Neo-Kantian stance. It can be further said that the division between history and natural science represents, in this conference, the concrete issue that has to be understood and grounded by philosophical reflection. Be it as it may, for Windelband, psychology is not casually but essentially a natural science, and Windelband employs the shared nature of the natural sciences and psychology in order to show the fruitfulness of his proposal (Windelband 1916:46).

Windelband explains this connection in the same manner as in his essay on the “Aufgabe der Logik” from 1905. In “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft,” he says:

Offenbar darin, daß jene wie diese ihre Tatsachen feststellt, sammelt und verarbeitet nur unter dem Gesichtspunkte und zu dem Zwecke, daraus die allgemeine Gesetzmäßigkeit zu verstehen, welcher diese Tatsachen unterworfen sind. ... alle diesen sachlichen Differenzen [between psychology and other natural sciences] treten weit zurück hinter der logischen Gleichheit, welche alle diese Disziplinen hinsichtlich des formalen Charakters ihrer Erkenntnisziele besitzen: es sind immer Gesetze des Geschehens, welche sie suchen, mag dies Geschehen

²⁷⁰ This argumentative line is the one chosen by Dilthey. Both Windelband and Dilthey agree that psychology, as it was understood at the time, belongs to the natural sciences. However, Dilthey does not aim to ground the historical sciences on that type of psychology, which he calls explanatory psychology, but on a novel discipline characterized as descriptive psychology. This strategy is also characteristic of Simmel’s and Husserl’s treatment of the problem. In this sense, Jalbert explains: “We should recall at this point that Husserl bases his critiques of Windelband and Rickert to a large extent upon their failure to recognize the possibility of psychology as a study of intentionality and the correlations between personality and personal productions.” (Jalbert 1988:284). Windelband critiques Simmel’s interpretation of historical knowledge in Windelband (1894b:111).

nun eine Bewegung von Körpern, eine Umwandlung von Stoffen, eine Entfaltung des organischen Lebens oder ein Prozeß des Vorstellens, Fühlens und Wollens sein.²⁷¹ (Windelband GN 1915 2:143-144)

What unites psychology with the rest of the natural sciences is the scientific purpose that structures the discipline. The purpose of these sciences is the comprehension of the relationship between a certain fact analyzed by a scientist and a general law, under which that fact ought to be subsumed. Sciences as different as physics, chemistry, or psychology share this feature, for, despite the difference in objects of study and particular techniques, their researchers are engaged in the search for general laws and the subsumption of facts under them.

Another group of sciences, grouped under the unreliable labels of ‘sciences of the mind’, historical sciences, or humanities, follow a completely different path:

Demgegenüber ist die Mehrzahl derjenigen empirischen Disziplinen, die man wohl sonst als Geisteswissenschaften bezeichnet entschieden darauf gerichtet, ein einzelnes, mehr oder minder ausgedehntes Geschehen von einmaliger, in der Zeit begrenzter Wirklichkeit zu voller und erschöpfender Darstellung zu bringen [...] Immer aber ist der Erkenntniszweck der, daß ein Gebilde des Menschenlebens, welches sich in einmaliger Wirklichkeit dargestellt hat, in dieser seiner Tatsächlichkeit reproduziert und verstanden werde. Es ist klar, daß hiermit der ganze Umfang der historischen Disziplinen gemeint ist. (Windelband GN 1915 2:144)

This group of sciences seeks to provide an exhaustive description of a single and timely restricted aspect of reality, in order to reproduce it in its full vividness, and to interpret it accordingly. There is no subsumption, no reference to laws, but the attempt to comprehend what makes this parcel of reality something truly unique. Among these sciences, we do not find different problems and techniques, but the shared interest displayed in the elaboration of knowledge. Their objective is the apprehension of a single event in all its individual physiognomy, in its entire configuration as a single structure. These objectives represent two ideal poles toward which knowledge is directed, thus

²⁷¹ This triad comprised of representing, feeling, and willing is constantly put forward in Dilthey’s discourse on his psychological grounding of the historical sciences as a feature shaping the totality of human conscious life (Linden 2018:282). This process cannot serve the purpose of the methodological autonomy of the human sciences if the only treatment at hand is exclusively nomological.

allowing an orienting opposition between the natural sciences and the humanities, while the multiple concrete methods find themselves at different ends of the spectrum.²⁷²

Thus, Windelband's demarcation between the sciences is based on a purely formal aspect of their epistemic procedures. More precisely, it is based on the epistemic ends of sciences. In broad terms, one group seeks to know the general and the other seeks to know particulars. Windelband thus concludes:

So dürfen wir sagen: die Erfahrungswissenschaften suchen in der Erkenntnis des Wirklichen entweder das Allgemeine in der Form des Naturgesetzes oder das Einzelne in der geschichtlich bestimmten Gestalt; sie betrachten zu einem Teil die immer sich gleichbleibende Form, zum anderen Teil den einmaligen, in sich bestimmten Inhalt des wirklichen Geschehens. (Windelband GN 1915 2:145).

This last remark suggests that, from these two different methodological procedures, a further determination of reality emerges. The old opposition between the general and the particular is instantiated, in the discourse on empirical sciences, by reference to an opposition between natural laws [Naturgesetze] and historical formations [geschichtliche Gestalten]. History as a science is distinguished from the rest of the sciences by the constitution of historical structures or historical individuals. The concept of event that emerges from Windelband's description is thus highly undetermined, since, contrary to what concept of particular may suggest, historical events²⁷³ are rather complex articulated wholes.

As a substitute to the distinction between the natural sciences and the sciences of the mind, Windelband introduces his novel terms: *nomothetic* and *idiographic* sciences. This distinction is one of Windelband's most renowned contributions to the philosophy of history. These terms depict divergent modes of elaborating knowledge.

Windelband's concepts are formed by compounding pairs of Greek words: in *nomothetic*, we find the conjunction of the Greek nouns νόμος and θέσις, which understood in terms of a cognitive process could be rendered as the setting or placing of the

²⁷² See also Windelband (1916:45).

²⁷³ A passage that supports this interpretation is present in Windelband's *Geschichtsphilosophie*: "Alle Geschichtskunde, so naiv oder so künstlerisch sie verfahren mag, gibt uns kausale und teleologische Reihen von Ereignissen. Alle diese einzelnen Tatsachen sind Bestandteile des Gesamtgeschehens, die erst in der Erinnerung für sich herausgehoben und auf einander derart bezogen werden, daß daraus sinnvolle und wertbestimmte Gesamtgebilde sich gestalten." (Windelband 1916:42)

law;²⁷⁴ in this context, the laws of nature.²⁷⁵ Therefore, the terms reflect both the methodological action of the scientist, the placing of something, and the result of that action, i.e., the law of nature. *Idiographic*, contrary to the straightforward appearance of the term ‘nomothetic’, presents specific difficulties. It is also a neologism created from two Greek nouns: ἰδέα and γραφή; ἰδέα²⁷⁶ means ‘form’ or ‘semblance,’ which relates to Windelband’s emphasis on formation (Gestalt), while γραφή signifies ‘representing by means of lines’, and hence, ‘drawing’ or ‘delineating’, ‘scratching lines,’ and ‘writing’. Therefore, *idiographic* could be freely explained as the depiction of a semblance of reality through written words. The art of writing expresses the main epistemic action of the researcher and the idea or form resulting from that activity.²⁷⁷ *Idiographic* sciences are not merely sciences of the particular event, but the term already points toward a specific procedure and a certain interpretation of what a historical event is.²⁷⁸

Moreover, it is necessary to add that Windelband distinguishes laws from events through cognitive activities and through their temporal dimension. While the laws of nature are eternal, events have a fixed and limited timespan. Moreover, natural phenomena are repeatable while historical ones are not; in this sense, they are unique. To stress the formal nature of his distinction, Windelband relativizes the material determi-

²⁷⁴ While the term “θέσις” presents divergent uses, in philosophy it is employed in the context of logic as an assumed position that requires a further proof. The expression “νόμων θέσεις,” belonging to juridical contexts, means ‘lawgiving.’

²⁷⁵ All according to *LSJ Greek Dictionary*.

²⁷⁶ The term “ἰδέα” is derived from the verb “ἰδεῖν:” to behold. It is etymologically related to “seeing.”

²⁷⁷ From this point of view, it would be possible to associate the term “idiographic” with the German word “Ereignis” (event) as placing something before the eyes.

²⁷⁸ The *locus classicus* for the problem of the scientific nature of history comes from Aristotle’s *Poetics*. The passage in question is the following: “It is also evident from what has been said that it is not the poet’s function to relate actual events, but the kinds of things that might occur and are possible in terms of probability or necessity. The difference between the historian and the poet is not that between using verse or prose; Herodotus’ work could be versified and would be just as much a kind of history in verse as in prose. No, the difference is this: that the one relates actual events, the other the kinds of things that might occur. Consequently, poetry is more philosophical and more elevated than history, since poetry relates more of the universal, while history relates to particulars. Universal means the kinds of things which it suits a certain kind of person to say or do, in terms of probability or necessity: poetry aims for this, even through attaching names to the agents. A particular means, say, what Alcibiades did or experienced” (Aristotle *Poetics* 1451^a36). Poetry is closer to philosophy, and therefore, to true knowledge because it handles universal principles. History, on the contrary, only depicts particular situations. Since this knowledge does not directly reflect human nature, nor can it be securely used in different situations, it boasts a lower epistemic value.

nations associated with his own criteria of demarcation, and, therefore, he shows little motivation to advance a proper theory of historical time.²⁷⁹

This distinction has been the object of several criticisms. I will begin with some general remarks before moving on to the specifics. In the first place, some authors have claimed that, since the distinction does not attend the objective aspect of scientific inquiry, the same object could be treated by nomothetic or idiographic procedures. Thus, there would be no certainty as to which group of sciences certain objects belong. A second criticism states that the concepts of the particular and the general cannot be formulated in formal isolation, as Windelband seems to believe. As in the previous case, Windelband claims that his dichotomy ranges between ideal poles and serves the purpose of logical analysis. In reality, the concrete sciences develop a corresponding methodology that involves a higher or lesser degree of proximity with the ideal of a pure nomothetic or idiographic science. A third common critique states that the actual techniques of the idiographic sciences tend, in most cases, to be based necessarily on the nomothetic sciences. History, for example, borrows knowledge from economy and psychology, which are for Windelband nomothetic disciplines. Thus, nomothetic and idiographic aspects are necessarily present in historical explanations.

These criticisms are somewhat out of place, as they disregard Windelband's claim that the distinction between idiographic and nomothetical procedures is both a formal and a guiding distinction. Windelband's example of the formal character of the division is the scientific investigation of a Roman coin. On the one hand, it can be studied as an exemplar of a certain metal, let's say copper, and used to determine the fusion point of copper or any other chemical property. But, as a Roman coin, this coin can also be viewed as a representative of a particular historical formation, namely, the Roman empire. Studying the coin would reveal how the relevant figures of the empire were represented, what materials and what quality of finish were employed in the minting of coins, how money circulated in Antiquity, etc. A further problem with this example, but one that is not often raised, is whether a chemist could tackle the full reality of the Roman coin. By treating the coin as a mere piece of copper, the chemist leaves aside the pro-

²⁷⁹ Distinguishing between natural and historical time would be against this general strategy, but Windelband suggests elsewhere that such a theory of historical time could be necessary (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:163).

perties that make the coin what it is, a coin and not a piece of certain metal; however, in order to understand the reasons for this impossibility, at least inside the framework of Windelband's theory, we would need to introduce the concept of value as the ground of the particular reality of a historical entity.²⁸⁰ These abstract criticisms of Windelband's theory became ubiquitous in the specialized literature. However, I think that, for this very reason, they have also been trivialized. Nevertheless, the study of the original sources of these criticisms sheds light not only on Windelband's position but also on the alternatives to it.

An example of the criticism just described is advanced by Ernst Cassirer. I think that Cassirer's criticism of Windelband's dichotomy between nomothetic and idiographic sciences actually misses the strong affinities between the general position of Cassirer and that of Windelband. In the chapter on history in *Essay on Man*, Cassirer, says:

But it is not possible [as Windelband does] to separate the two moments of universality and particularity in this abstract and artificial way. A judgment is always the synthetic unity of both movements; it contains an element of universality and particularity. These elements are not mutually opposed; they imply and interpenetrate one another. 'Universality' is not a term which designates a certain field of thought; it is an expression of the very character, of the function of thought. Thought is always universal. On the other hand, the description of particular facts, of a 'here' and 'now', is by no means a privilege of history. The uniqueness of historical events had often been thought to be the character distinguishing history from science. Yet this criterion is not sufficient. A geologist who gives us a description of the various states of the earth in different geological periods gives us a report on concrete and unique events. These events cannot be repeated; they will not occur in the same order a second time. In this respect the description of a geologist does not differ from that of a historian ... But the historian does not merely give us a series of events in a definite chronological order. For him [the historian] these events are only the husk beneath which he looks for a human and cultural life- a life of actions, and passions, of questions and answers, of tensions and solutions. (Cassirer 1944:235)

In these passages, Cassirer levels three criticisms against Windelband's theory. The first criticism belongs to epistemology. Knowledge, both in the natural sciences and in history, contains a universal and a particular aspect. In the previous Kantian terminology, all forms of knowledge require the conjunction of intellectual and sensible elements. As such, opposing the knowledge of the universal and the knowledge of the par-

²⁸⁰ A counterexample to this is that of a planet with several features that stem from a unique event but is generally studied by a nomological discipline such as astronomy.

ticular is inappropriate. In my opinion, Cassirer's reference to geology is of a methodological nature. Windelband's division may be countered by the method of geology, a natural science whose procedure is fundamentally based on the description of events. Thirdly, after introducing the counterexample that is geology, and without taking into account Windelband's possible answer, Cassirer affirms that the epistemic objective of historians is not the description of events but the understanding of the thoughts -here used in a broad and undetermined meaning- conveyed by the description of events.

A more interesting line of criticism is presented in *Zur Logik der Kulturwissenschaften*. In this book, Cassirer refers to the investigations of the art historian Heinrich Wölfflin as a vehicle to understand the epistemological specificities of the cultural sciences. Wölfflin's 'Kunsts geschichtlichen Grundbegriffe' can neither be classified as nomological, because it does not seek general laws from which we could deduce artistic phenomena, nor is it ideographic, since it cannot be reduced to the description of past events. Wölfflin's theories, on the contrary, are based on the configuration of forms or styles. Wölfflin's analyses combine the universal with the particular insofar as Wölfflin presents the linear (Lineare) and painterly (Malerische) styles as general modes of seeing. As such, Wölfflin's research is not limited to the description of concrete artistic manifestations, but it seeks the elaboration of general artistic concepts which are, as Cassirer says, illustrated but not grounded on these manifestations (Cassirer 1942 [2007]:419). What Cassirer highlights in Wölfflin's theory is the necessary reference to a type of general concept that is neither a concept of class nor a natural law. The linear and the painterly styles are structural concepts (Cassirer 1942 [2007]:420). Cassirer's reconstruction of Wölfflin's History of Art offers the concrete counterpart to his criticism of the opposition between nomothetic and idiographic sciences, thereby clarifying the scope of his critiques.

Cassirer grounds his criticism in the fact that Windelband's vocabulary sometimes suggests a crude opposition between the general and the particular, however, a close reading of the text will show that events are not isolated indivisible pieces of reality but complex formations. Although Windelband opposes events and laws, he also affirms that the events elaborated by historians are not particulars but formations. In his posthumous *Geschichtsphilosophie*, this specific point is clarified by Windelband when he

distinguishes between a mere event and a properly historical event and then acknowledges that history also deals with universals, albeit of a different kind than those considered natural laws. Regarding the difference between events and historical events, Windelband makes a point similar to that of Cassirer: “Das Geschehen nämlich, von dem die Geschichtskunde nicht bloss als Geschichtswissenschaft, sonder auch als Geschichtsphilosophie handelt, also das geschichtliche, das ‘historische’ Geschehen, ist immer auf den Menschen bezogen, es ist das Geschehen im und am Menschen” (Windelband 1916:37). The different geological strata depicted by the geologist do not belong to the same group of events as the historical ones because they lack the reference to human culture: “Historisch bedeutsam also ist das Individuelle dann, wenn es für ein übergeordnetes Ganzes in der menschlichen Gemeinschaft Bedeutung besitzt. Diese Wertbeziehung auf eine Menschliche Gemeinschaft ist das Entscheidende, was dem einzelnen Geschehen den Charakter des Geschichtlichen, des Historischen verschafft” (Windelband 1916:39). The particular becomes historical only in its relationship with human communities, and this relationship is present in terms of values, that is, general concepts that differ from natural laws.²⁸¹

Comparing both points of view, we find that Cassirer’s position is actually closer to Windelband’s than previously expected. Cassirer’s critique also becomes more nuanced. Cassirer tacitly reduces the scope of his critique to the idea of the idiographic method solely to present his true case against the position of the South-west Neo-Kantians (Cassirer 1942 [2007]: 420). This critique can only be stated by contrasting the different ways of handling the universal factor in the historical sciences:

Wir haben behauptet, dass die Form- und Stilbegriffe der Kulturwissenschaften sowohl von den naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffen wie von den historischen Begriffen deutlich geschieden sind, dass sie eine Begriffsklasse sui generis darstellen. Aber lassen sie sich nicht vielleicht auf einen anderen Typus: auf den Typus der *Wertbegriffe*, zurückführen (Cassirer 1942 [2007]:420). [Highlighted in the original]

²⁸¹ This reading is confirmed in Windelband’s posthumous lesson on the philosophy of history, a lesson to which I will return in the last section of this chapter: “So ist darauf zu antworten, dass auch die Geschichte in ihrem Ergebnis ihre eigene Art des Allgemeinen besitzt. Aber sie hat es nicht in der Form des Begriffes oder des Gesetzes, sondern in der des Gesamtbildes und der Gesamtgestaltung” (Windelband 1916:48).

As is patently clear, the crux of the autonomy of historical sciences, and therefore, of the logic of history, is determining a form of universality that cannot be identified with natural laws. Cassirer refers again to Wölfflin's styles and claims these structural concepts are described and, therefore, not normative concepts. For this reason, structural concepts cannot be taken as values. Apart from Cassirer's dependence on Wölfflin's 'Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe,'²⁸² there is a further aspect of Cassirer's argument that bears questioning, namely, the fact that styles do present a normative level. The linear and painterly styles are employed as descriptive tools, for Wölfflin does not want to establish a hierarchy between them, but both are presented as normative ideals in themselves.²⁸³ Although each style purports its own ideal of beauty, the styles themselves still harbor an ideal of beauty, that is, a normative standard.

Naturally, the difference between Cassirer's defense of styles or forms and Windelband's defense of values as the proper universal concept of the historical sciences can be further developed. For the reasons provided, I consider that the difference between Windelband and Cassirer lies in the nuances regarding how they elaborate a logic of historical sciences, not in the broad conception of science's task. Moreover, Cassirer's line of argument shows the close connection between Windelband's logic of history and the concept of value, which we have already seen as constituting the proper object of study of philosophy.

Another important line of criticism is to be found in Collingwood's *The Idea of History*. Collingwood does not show much sympathy for Windelband's distinction between nomothetic and idiographic sciences, which he considers pompous and worthless (Collingwood 1993:166). On a first instance, Collingwood affirms that Windelband's "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft" misses the philosophical problem of historical sciences:

²⁸² In the context of his criticism of Windelband and Rickert, Cassirer also refers to Humboldt's studies on language.

²⁸³ This is apparent in Cassirer's selected quote from Wölfflin's book: "Die malerische Art ist die spätere und ohne die erste nicht wohl denkbar, aber sie ist nicht die absolut höherstehende. Der lineare Stil hat Werte entwickelt, die der malerische Stil nicht mehr besitzt und nicht mehr besitzen will. Es sind zwei Weltanschauungen anders gerichtet in ihrem Geschmack und ihrem Interesse an der Welt und jede doch in dem Instande, ein vollkommenes Bild des Sichtbaren zu geben ... Aus dem verschieden orientierten Interesse an der Welt entspringt jedesmal eine andere Schönheit" (Cassirer 1942 [2007]:422).

All that Windelband is really doing in his discussion of the relation between science and history is to put forward a claim on the part of historians to do their own work in their own way and be let alone; it represents a kind of secessionist movement of historians from the general body of a civilization in thrall to natural science. But what this work is, and what is the way in which it can or should be done, Windelband cannot tell us. Nor is he conscious of this inability. When he speaks of an 'idiographic science' he is implying that there can be scientific, i.e. rational or non-empirical, knowledge of the individual; but, strange as it may seem in so learned a historian of thought, he does not realize that the whole tradition of European philosophy from the early Greeks to his own day had declared with one voice that this knowledge is an impossibility: the individual, as a fleeting and transient existence, can only be perceived or experienced as it occurs and can never be the object of that stable and logically constructed thing which is called scientific knowledge. (Collingwood 1993:167)

It is fair to assume that this attack on Windelband's position is not grounded in a thorough reading of Windelband's texts, which may not have been available to Collingwood. Windelband's view, as I have shown by reference to his 1905 conference, emphasizes the need for developing a new theory of knowledge that can account for the knowledge of the event. This theory calls for a revision of the modern theory of knowledge, which, as Collingwood says, "declared with one voice that this knowledge [of the individual] is an impossibility." I have also explained how Windelband's idiographic concept refers not to a metaphysical individual but to articulated structures.

Nevertheless, Collingwood's critique offers us elements that complement the insight gained through the consideration of Cassirer's preference for styles. Collingwood's second criticism is directed toward the ethical component in Windelband's logic of history:

So far as Windelband dealt at all with the question how there can be a science of the individual, he answered it by saying that the historian's knowledge of historical events consists of judgements of value, that is, pronouncements on the spiritual worth of the actions which he is investigating. Thus the historian's thought is ethical thought, and history is a branch of morals. But this is to answer the question how history can be a science by saying that it is not a science. In his *Introduction to Philosophy*, Windelband divides the whole subject-matter into two parts: the theory of knowledge and the theory of value, and history falls in the second part. Thus history ends by being extruded from the sphere of knowledge altogether, and we are left with the conclusion that what the historian does with the individual is not to know or think it, but somehow to intuit its value; an activity on the whole akin to that of the artist. But, once more, the relation between history and art is not systematically thought out. (Collingwood 1993:168)

The value of this specific criticism is more difficult to assess since it reflects Collingwood's and Windelband's differing backgrounds in the field of the philosophy of history. Windelband's theory of history is rooted in his Kantian background, and, for this reason, it is closely connected with the problems of practical philosophy. But its close connection to the sphere of ethics does not necessarily imply the neglect of the scientific character of history. This means that the general principles of history do not belong to the sphere of our knowledge of nature but to the sphere of our practical behavior. Therefore, the philosophical grounding of history does not rest on a critical elucidation of our theoretical concepts, those concepts required for our conceptualization of nature, but on the critical elucidation of human freedom.

The two quoted passages from Collingwood allow to emphasize Windelband's Neo-Kantian attitude. On the one hand, Windelband advocates a reform of the theory of knowledge in order to secure the possibility of historical knowledge. On the other hand, Windelband continues the spirit of Kantian philosophy by linking the problems of history with those of practical philosophy.

Going back to the criticism of the abstract character of the division of procedures, I think that Windelband agrees that the historian employs, in his concrete works, knowledge borrowed from nomothetic disciplines such as psychology or economics. But this does not undermine the fact that the historian's interest lies in the reconstruction of a historical formation rather than the discovery of a general law. The reference to general laws is subsidiary to an exclusively ideographic purpose, which is all that matters from Windelband's point of view.

Now that these criticisms of the dichotomy between nomothetic and ideographic have been explained, we can move on to the core issue of the discussion, an issue that leads back to the 'genealogy' of modern metaphysics:

Fragen wir, wie sich zu diesem entscheidenden Gegensatz unter den Spezialwissenschaften bisher die logische Theorie verhalten hat, so stoßen wir genau auf den Punkt, an welchem diese am meisten reformbedürftig bis auf den heutigen Tag ist. Ihre ganze Entwicklung zeigt die entschiedenste Bevorzugung der nomothetischen Denkformen. (Windelband GN 1915 2:147).

Having addressed this specific question and its attendant diagnosis, we will now set aside the methodological discussion in order to tackle the problems of the theory of knowledge.

According to Windelband, there has been, from the beginning of Greek philosophy, a primacy of the conceptual dimension of thinking. Since the greatest developments in human culture were tightly tied to the advancement of natural science and technology, logical reflection served the necessity of these fields. This situation created a logical myopia for the historical mode of presentation, causing the logic of history to be underdeveloped. But the historian's work is no less methodological nor less difficult. The difficulties are manifested, for example, in Windelband's description of this work:

Für den Historiker besteht die Aufgabe, irgend ein Gebilde der Vergangenheit in seiner ganzen individuellen Ausprägung zu ideeller Gegenwärtigkeit neu zu beleben. Er hat an demjenigen was wirklich war, eine ähnliche Aufgabe zu erfüllen wie der Künstler an demjenigen, was in seiner Phantasie ist. Darin wurzelt die Verwandtschaft des historischen Schaffens mit dem ästhetischen, und die der historischen Disziplinen mit den *belles lettres*. (Windelband GN 1915 2:150)

The dominant component in this methodological procedure is of the imaginative, and therefore, non-conceptual kind. However, Windelband does not want to group history among the arts. On the contrary, his aim is to argue that this imaginative faculty is no less related to knowledge than its classic conceptual counterpart. The methodological dichotomy between nomothetic and idiographic sciences gives rise to an epistemological dichotomy between *abstraction* and *perceptuality* [Anschaulichkeit] (Windelband GN 1915 2:150).²⁸⁴

Windelband's definition of *Anschaulichkeit* is daunting: "Anschaulichkeit, d. h. individuelle Lebendigkeit der ideellen Gegenwart für das Auge des Geistes ganz ebenso gibt, wie für das des Leibes." (Windelband GN 1915 2:150). To begin with, although the opposition resembles the Kantian dichotomy between concepts and intuitions, or between intellect (or understanding) and sensibility, Windelband's perceptuality is not a passive but a spontaneous faculty. Moreover, as inner perception or as a faculty for the ideal, it contains a dubious "mystical" nuance. However, it seems that this perceptual

²⁸⁴ This opposition between concept and perceptuality is often overlooked in the literature. Morrone (2013) is an exception.

spontaneity is what allows the historian to transform the mere materials of experience into a proper historical object, that is, a vital formation.²⁸⁵ While theories are the result of the natural sciences, historiography produces concrete pictures of the past. As expressed earlier, this vision is highly characteristic of German historical thinking. But Windelband's originality, nevertheless, lies in the way in which this divide is explained, namely, through a specific methodological and epistemological mainframe.

Once the passage from methodology to the theory of knowledge has been covered, Windelband takes a step further by introducing a categorization of two different *world-views* [Welt- und Lebensansicht].

Both tendencies in our scientific thinking are associated in the *Rectorial Address* with specific conceptions of the world. The idea of a naturalistic worldview was lurking in the text; Windelband suggests that our aim to master the world is directly linked with the development of nomothetic knowledge. However, human activity is no less connected with the evolution of historical consciousness. Thus, Windelband rhetorically defines humans as a "historical animal" (Windelband GN 1915 2:152). The increment in our understanding and dominion of natural processes is moderated by the process of historical creation that carries us forward in the formation of an ever more complex cultural nexus. The positivist philosophy of history, with its attempt to introduce general laws of history, makes the error of confusing these principles, thereby offering an untenable solution. Based on his previous equation of the historical sciences, the knowledge of the event, and our historical images, Windelband advances to equate the historical

²⁸⁵ Windelband also describes this formation in the following terms: "Und was sie liefert, das sind Bilder von Menschen und Menschenleben mit dem ganzen Reichthum ihrer eigenartigen Ausgestaltungen, aufbewahrt in ihrer vollen individuellen Lebendigkeit. So reden zu uns durch den Mund der Geschichte, aus der Vergessenheit zu neuem Leben erstanden, vergangene Sprachen und vergangene Völker, ihr Glauben und Gestalten, ihr Ringen nach Macht und Freiheit, ihr Dichten und Denken" (Windelband GN 1915 2:151).

event with something valuable.²⁸⁶ Therefore, while nomothetic sciences subsume their materials under the laws of a totality of extension called nature, idiographic sciences arrange their materials as an organic totality based on human values. Against the view of nature as a homogenous and lawful general structure, human history is presented as a complex of unique single formations. This, Windelband continues, is the metaphysical law and the metaphysical lesson that we have to learn from history.

Windelband's conclusion in the *Rectorial Address* is the irreducibility of the two contending worldviews:

Sonderstellung nebeneinander bleiben: den festen Rahmen unseres Weltbildes gibt jene allgemeine Gesetzmäßigkeit der Dinge ab, welche, über allen Wechsel erhaben, die ewig gleiche Wesenheit des Wirklichen zum Ausdruck bringt; und innerhalb dieses Rahmens entfaltet sich der lebendige Zusammenhang aller für das Menschentum wertvollen Einzelgestaltungen ihrer Gattungserinnerung.

Diese beiden Momente des menschlichen Wissens lassen sich nicht auf eine gemeinsame Quelle zurückführen. (Windelband GN 1915 2:157)²⁸⁷

In the end, we are left with two different levels of problematicity. The methodological problem of the demarcation of sciences has been (more or less) settled. Convincedly or not, Windelband advances a plausible criterion to differentiate natural sciences from historical disciplines. This difference is grounded in two scientific procedures: the nomothetic and the idiographic. However, in conjunction with this precise methodological dichotomy, there are also questions regarding epistemology and metaphysics. In these two fields, Windelband develops unclear or fragmentary arguments. Specifically,

²⁸⁶ Dem gegenüber muß daran festgehalten werden, daß sich alles Interesse und Beurteilen, alle Wertbestimmung des Menschen auf das Einzelne und das Einmalige bezieht." ... "Wie aber alle lebendige Wertbeurteilung des Menschen an der Einzigkeit des Objekts hängt, das erweist sich vor allem in unserer Beziehung zu den Persönlichkeiten" (Windelband GN 1915 2:155). This idea reappears in "Nach hundert Jahren:" "Ebenso aber sind die Beziehungen, in die der Historiker die Tatsachen zu bringen hat, wesentlich durch dasselbe Interesse bestimmt: er sucht nicht Gattungsbegriffe, sondern Gestalten und Gestaltenkomplexe, die durch solche Wertbeziehungen bedingt sind" (Windelband GN 1915 2: 157), and in Windelband's posthumous *Geschichtsphilosophie*: "Was ist es also, das ein Geschehen zu einem geschichtlichen macht? Es muß in seiner Besonderheit irgendwie für den Menschen überhaupt, für die Gattung von Bedeutung sein." ... "Historisch bedeutsam also ist das Individuelle dann, wenn es für ein übergeordnetes Ganzes in der menschlichen Gemeinschaft Bedeutung besitzt"(Windelband 1916:39).

²⁸⁷ This runs contrary to Kant's claim in the preface to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* regarding the common source of sensibility and understanding.

the concept of *perceptuality*²⁸⁸ is not carefully explained, nor is the insurmountable divide between naturalistic and historical worldviews.²⁸⁹ In this final sense, nature and history appear to be two incommensurable ways of constituting reality; laws and events are not only logical poles or the result of the careful methodological craft of scientists but rich metaphysical concepts.²⁹⁰

These epistemological and metaphysical uncertainties represent sterner tests for theory than the regular objections that we have mentioned previously. Ten years later, in the aforementioned “Ausgabe der Logik,” Windelband affirms his intention of grounding the dichotomy between nomothetic and idiographic sciences -now labeled natural and cultural sciences-²⁹¹ in a distinction between laws and events, but he does not mention a spontaneous perceptual faculty. In this lesser-known text, Windelband casts aside, at least momentarily, the notion of faculty and instead employs the key notion of value and a new argumentative relevance for the practical side of the philosophy of history. More concretely, instead of than subsuming his logic of history under the epistemological concept of *perceptuality*,²⁹² Windelband attempts to improve his theory by stressing

²⁸⁸ Morrone opines that perceptuality could be a reference to Lotze’s *Logic*, especially to paragraph 355: “Dunque la Anschaulichkeit é la cifra di una problematica più vasta che percorre e connota l’intera filosofia windelbandiana” (Morrone 2017b:127) ... “La specificità metodologica delle scienze storiche può essere ribadita solo a patto di relegarle nella dimensione dell’ intuitività, a patto cioè di consegnarle a una relazione soggetto - oggetto pensata secondo modalità estetiche, e riproponendo al contempo una concezione sostanzialmente realistica della conoscenza” (Morrone 2017b:127). However, I do not find this reference convincing.

²⁸⁹ Windelband makes a relevant point on this topic in his introduction to Bergson’s *Matière et mémoire*: “Auch dort, wie jetzt bei uns, ist darin die Einsicht maßgebend, daß eine Weltanschauung, wie sie ein gesteigertes und dabei sich vertiefendes und auf sich selbst besinnendes Kulturleben bedarf, durchaus der geistigen Wirklichkeit gerecht werden muß, und daß dafür das naturwissenschaftliche Denken allein weder seiner Form noch seinem Inhalte nach ausreicht. Sachlich war deshalb die Abwendung vom Materialismus das erste sichtbare Zeichen der neuen Bewegung.” (Windelband 1908:III). This later passage presents the conflict between world-views as central to the understanding of contemporary culture, linking the historical world-view with the resurgence of metaphysical thinking. This text on Bergson also confirms that the limitations of Kantian criticism are due to its unilateral orientation toward a naturalistic world-view.

²⁹⁰ Again, this is stated with clarity only in the preface to Bergson’s *Matière et mémoire*: “Ein rein intellektualistisches Denken, wie es die Griechen inauguriert haben, mag sich in einer Weltansicht beruhigen, die das Geschehen zu einem unwesentlichen Erscheinen an der Realität herabsetzt: eine voluntaristische Philosophie — und das will die moderne sein — steht unter dem unausweichlichen Gebote des Willens, die Welt so zu denken, daß in ihr etwas geschehen, daß in ihr etwas Neues geschaffen werden kann” (Windelband 1908:XV).

²⁹¹ *Kulturwissenschaften* is a term employed by Rickert. It is reasonable to think that, following the dismissal of the concept of *perceptuality*, the term *idiographic* also loses its grounds.

²⁹² This probably led him to introduce allegedly psychological concepts in his grounding of the historical sciences, such as the concept of *understanding*.

the connection between events and norms. This connection was hinted at in Windelband's *Rectorial Address*, but remained undeveloped. Therefore, the scientificity of history depends now, not on a strict methodological procedure, but on a reference to a type of general principle (Windelband 1916:46)²⁹³. Windelband affirms:

Geschichte als Wissenschaft, d.h. als Kulturwissenschaft ist also nur möglich, wenn es allgemeingiltige Werte gibt, die den Grund für Auswahl und Synthesis der Tatsachen in ihr enthalten. Die philosophische Wissenschaft von den allgemeingiltigen Werten aber ist die *Ethik*, und insofern gilt es, was sachlich zuerst Schleiermacher erkannt hat, dass die *Ethik die Erkenntnistheorie der historischen Wissenschaften* ist. (Windelband 1905b: 117)²⁹⁴

Norms are required in order to transform raw experiential material into a complex historical object. The discussion of the logic of history leads us directly to the treatment of the concept of value or norm, and, as I have shown already in chapter 3, these are central terms for the articulation of Windelband's definition of philosophy. In this sense, Windelband goes on to associate the historical way of thinking with the system of values, thus presenting an obscure equation between idiographic sciences and the philosophy of values. Of course, in view of Windelband's identification of history as the organon of philosophy, this equation becomes more easier to foresee but no less in need of explanation.

However, in comparison with chapter 3, this chapter will now proceed from a new angle. While chapter 3 presented Windelband's definition of philosophy as grounded in the concept of normal consciousness and chapter 4 showed that the uncovering of this consciousness requires a reference to historical materials, chapter 5 has, so far, explained the key features of Windelband's conception of history. The most important point in

²⁹³ The determinant factor of this gestalt is its meaning. "Andererseits ist der spezifische Gegenstand aller Geschichtsforschung stets ein in seiner Einmaligkeit bedeutsames Gebilde, das aus seiner Verzweigung mit den benachbarten Gleichgültigkeiten herausgehoben werden soll" (Windelband PL 1912:43).

²⁹⁴ The same connection between the theory of historical knowledge, ethics, and metaphysics: "Indem so der Geltungsbereich der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung begrenzt und der des historischen Denkens in seiner Eigenart festgestellt wurde, bestimmte und begrenzte sich die Erkenntnisart und die Erkenntnisleistung jeder besonderen Wissenschaft durch die Zielbestimmtheit ihrer begrifflichen Arbeit: und da sich auf diese Weise alle Wirklichkeitserkenntnis als eine zweckbedingte Auswahl aus dem an sich unbegrenzten Tatsachenmaterial herausstellte, so wandelte sich auch die kritische Erkenntnistheorie als die Lehre von den allgemeingültigen Prinzipien dieser Auswahl in eine Philosophie der Werte: damit konvergierte sie zu den unmittelbar metaphysisch gerichteten Versuchen, die aus ethischen oder religionsphilosophischen Interessen die Welt als ein System der Verwirklichung geistiger Werte zu begreifen auf dem Wege sind" (Windelband 1908:V).

this matter is Windelband's refusal to recognize historical laws,²⁹⁵ which is, in my opinion, his way of indirectly claiming the connection between history and his normative conception of philosophy. That there is such a connection is apparent from Windelband's texts on the philosophy of history:

Aber ein solches Gesamtbewußtsein ist noch im Werden, in der Umgestaltung von Zeit zu Zeit und von Volk zu Volk. Und das ist jedenfalls schon etwas, worin wir einen vernünftigen Sinn der Geschichte sehen dürfen. (Windelband 1916:12)

Now it is time to move to the reconstruction of a positive articulation of this connection. The constitution of a historical event represents an act of synthesis, not grounded in constitutive laws but teleological normative principles (Windelband 1916:43). Leaving aside certain issues -perceptuality and historical world-view- for the moment, Windelband's methodological proposal motivates a discussion of two distinct problems of the philosophy of history: the relationship between historical events and their referred values, and the way in which these events make up an ordered historical structure.

4.3. HISTORY AND NORMS

The main reference for the concept of norm is Windelband's essay "Normen und Naturgesetze," from the first edition of his *Präludien*. The problem of this essay is the relationship between natural deterministic rules and imperatives and, therefore, between causality and freedom.²⁹⁶ As Beiser explains: "The problem of freedom arises regarding

²⁹⁵ The other relevant topic in the *Rectorial Address* is related, of course, to the conception of psychology, which leads us back to the discussions covered in chapter 4.

²⁹⁶ Beiser distinguishes four meanings of the nature/norm distinction: "There are many formulations of that all-important distinction. (1) The most basic is that between two forms of necessity: natural necessity, which is about what must be the case, and normative necessity, which is about what ought to be the case. (2) Another formulation is between two kinds of principles or laws: those that explain facts and those that evaluate them. There are laws that determine causal regularities and laws that judge performances. Norms are essentially rules of judgment (Regeln der Beurteilung). (3) Yet another formulation is between two forms of consciousness: empirical consciousness of a specific individual and consciousness in general, which stands for the ideal for all individuals. (4) Finally, two distinct methods of justification of fundamental axioms: the factual method, which shows how they are actually involved in how we know, value, and taste; and the teleological method, which shows how they are necessary means to achieve the end of a discipline" (Beiser 2011: 387).

the interconnection between the normative and the natural, because the issue is whether we can do what we ought to do” (Beiser 2011:388). Windelband first needs to clarify the concept of norm and only then the relationship between the ideal and the real.

The consciousness of the ideal is provided by a specific feeling: “Es [the problem of freedom] wurzelt im Gefühl der Verantwortlichkeit” (Windelband NN 1915 2:60). Windelband grounds the distinction between law and norm in a difference between the first-person and the third-person point of view. As mentioned before, values find their source of validity in themselves, but they appear to us as normative principles, that is, raising this feeling of responsibility towards them. This feeling is the first, non conceptual, manifestation of normativity. To save the meaning of our feeling of responsibility in the face of certain self-imposed imperatives, we acknowledge a distinction among different general principles. The feeling of responsibility is the basic psychic phenomenon for the ascription of norms to the sphere of logical, ethical, and aesthetic behavior, i.e., for normative consciousness (Windelband NN 1915 2:63; Windelband WW 1909c:6).²⁹⁷ Windelband thus repeats his definition of norm from “Was ist Philosophie?”²⁹⁸ His strategy to make compatible both dimensions, the natural and the normative, is similar to his strategy for defining philosophy. While psychology proceeds as an explanatory science, determining mental phenomena according to the laws of the mind, philosophy treats those phenomena as normative rules of assessments. But “Normen und Naturgesetze” adds to the previous exposition of “Was ist Philosophie?” a discussion on the compatibility issue between norms and natural laws. Moreover, this essay, written several years earlier than “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft,” operates

²⁹⁷ Windelband says: “Für den reifen Kulturmenschen gibt es nicht nur ein sittliches, sondern auch ein logisches und ästhetisches Gewissen” (Windelband NN 1915 2:67). Here, again, we see the cultural and later historical dimension of normative consciousness. He opposes culturally-educated consciousness to the savage and instinctive one. Leaving aside the value of this comparison, I stress the early connection between normal consciousness and elements of the philosophy of history. Windelband also argues that logical rules display the specific nature of normative rules more appropriately since they cannot be easily grounded in emotions or ‘impulses.’

²⁹⁸ For example: “Die ‘Gesetze’ dagegen, welche wir in unserem logischen, ethischen und ästhetischen Gewissen vorfinden, haben mit der theoretischen Erklärung der Tatsachen, auf welche sie sich beziehen, nichts zu tun. Sie sagen nur aus, wie diese Tatsachen beschaffen sein sollen, damit sie in allgemeingültiger Weise als wahr, als gut, als schön gebilligt werden können. Sie sind also keine Gesetze, nach denen das Geschehen sich objektiv vollziehen muß oder subjektiv begriffen werden soll, sondern idealen Normen, nach denen der Wert dessen, was naturnotwendig geschieht, beurteilt wird. Diese Normen sind also Regeln der Beurteilung” (Windelband NN 1915 2:67).

within a dualistic framework. As we will see later, these two dichotomies -law/norm and law/event- tend to converge.

Assessments can be explained by means of psychological theories, and norms can also be perfectly handled by psychological explanation. But the concept of natural law cannot exclusively account for all the specific features of the concept of normative rule.

Windelband describes norms as the specific way in which natural laws are realized:

Alle Normen sind also besondere Formen der Verwirklichung von Naturgesetzen. Das System der Normen stellt eine Auswahl aus der unübersehbaren Mannigfaltigkeit der Kombinationsformen dar, unter denen, je nach den individuellen Verhältnissen, die Naturgesetze des psychischen Lebens sich entfalten können. Die Gesetze der Logik sind eine Auswahl aus den möglichen Formen der Vorstellungsassoziation, die Gesetze der Ethik sind eine Auswahl aus den möglichen Formen der Motivation, die Gesetze der Ästhetik sind eine Auswahl aus den möglichen Formen der Gefühlstätigkeit. (Windelband NN 1915 2:72)

What properly constitutes a norm is its relationship with certain ends that have been acknowledged as generally valid. Thus, norms are compatible with but not equivalent to natural laws.

The difference between a law of nature and a normative principle does not rest solely on their divergent treatment of explanations and assessments. Normative principles operate as orienting principles for our rational behavior. They are not only useful for the evaluation of actual instances of thinking, acting, and feeling, but they also serve for arranging our representations and for motivating our decisions in reflective consciousness; they are determining principles (Bestimmungsgründe) (Windelband NN 1915 2:85). Thus, norms demand to be actualized in the world: “Denn die Vorstellung einer jeden Norm führt als solche ein Gefühl davon mit sich, daß nach ihr der wirkliche Prozeß, sei es des Denkens oder des Wollens, sich gestalten sollte” (Windelband NN 1915 2:85).²⁹⁹ The determining force of norms is what allows the realization of norms.

²⁹⁹ This is the teleological necessity. See chapters 3 and 4. Windelband attempts to use this feature of normative principles to explain their effective or causal force. Windelband also defines freedom as the determining force of normative principles: “Nichts anderes nun als das Bewußtsein von dieser bestimmenden Macht, welche die erkannte und anerkannte Norm über die Denktätigkeit und die Willensentscheidung auszuüben vermögen - nichts anderes ist die Freiheit” (Windelband NN 1915 2:86), and “Dieser Begriff der Freiheit wird nämlich hier nicht etwa zum erstenmal aufgestellt, sondern nur als eine notwendige Konsequenz des Zentralbegriffs der kritischen Philosophie, der Norm, und in seinem dadurch bedingten Verhältnis zum Naturgesetz entwickelt” (Windelband NN 1915 2:87).

Reflective consciousness is characterized by the recognition of normative principles and, therefore, by the recognition of a guiding principle of rational behavior. Windelband concludes that that empirical consciousness ought to be determined by normative consciousness, the concept that expresses the sum total of normative principles.

As in the case of the concept of method, Windelband's first formulation of the concept of norm is oriented toward a psychological discussion. His argumentative effort is aimed at establishing a compatibilist approach between normative and natural consciousness:

Die 'Vernunft' wird nicht erzeugt, sondern sie ist in der unendlichen Mannigfaltigkeit der naturnotwendigen Prozesse schon enthalten: es kommt nur darauf an, daß sie erkannt und mit Bewußtsein zum Bestimmungsgrund gemacht wird. Das Reich der Freiheit ist mitten im Reich der Natur diejenige Provinz, in welcher nur die Norm gilt: unsere Aufgabe und unsere Seligkeit ist, uns in dieser Provinz anzusiedeln. (Windelband NN 1915 2:98)

However, by the 1890s, Windelband starts associating the discussion of norms with historical knowledge. For example, in reference to the Kantian system, the theory of normative principles supersedes Kant's doctrine of practical faith (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:158); thus, Windelband's system of values appears as the historical counterpart of the system of a priori principles of understanding, which is oriented toward the philosophy of natural sciences. Moreover, Windelband echoes a widespread criticism of Kantian philosophy, namely, its excessive formalism. In the critical method, the assumption of a necessary relationship between form and content led to the primacy of history over psychology. But the same also happens in the case of normative principles: they require a reference to concrete contents in order to acquire meaning.³⁰⁰ In this manner, a further determination of the historical event is advanced:

³⁰⁰ In "Nach hundert Jahren" the reference is to the classical objection against the categorical imperative and the solution is found in the close connection between ethics and philosophy of history. Windelband alludes to this solution through a reference to the thoughts of Schleiermacher: "Erst in dem großen Sinn, womit Schleiermacher die Ethik lehrte, den ganzen Umfang des historischen Lebens zu umspannen und begrifflich zu bemeistern, fand sie auf diesem unermeßlich erweiterten Arbeitsfeld auch das Verständnis der lebendigen Inhalte, welche als einmalige, individuelle Verknüpfungspunkt der generellen Norm-Beziehungen neben diesen selbst in ihrer Eigenart den Gegenstand allgemeiner und notwendiger Wertung ausmachen" ... "In dieser Richtung allein kann die wesenhafte Entwicklung der kritischen Ethik gesucht werden: nur im unmittelbaren und methodischen Zusammenhang mit der Geschichtsphilosophie kann sie daran arbeiten, das formale Gerippe genereller Maximen mit dem Fleisch und Blut lebendiger Wertinhalte zu umkleiden" (Windelband 1915 NHJ 1:159)

So vermag sie auch den gesättigten Reichtum der Hegelschen Lehre vom objektiven Geist in sich aufzunehmen und die Verwirklichung der "Ideale" als das Wesen alles historischen Geschehens zu verstehen. (Windelband 1915 NHJ 1:160)

This characterization of the historical formation as the realization of an ideal unites the logic of historical sciences, the methodological bringing to consciousness of norms, and the description of a historical worldview in a single conceptual constellation with an ethical motivation. While "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft," with all its gaps, still allowed an argumentative reconstruction, the further ramifications of his philosophy of history present themselves only in fragmentary expositions. Several passages support ideas from "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft," but a unified and consistent whole is certainly missing. Each text highlights a different aspect of the theory in an uncompromising manner, often as historical references to traditional figures of German philosophy.³⁰¹ Most notably, Windelband incorporates, in reference to Kant's third critique, the concept of development as the key to conceptualizing both facts and norms:

Aber der übergreifende Begriff, der in dieser Weise das Reich der Gesetze mit dem der Werte verbindet, ist der der Verwirklichung, die höchste Kategorie der Weltbetrachtung ist das Verhältnis des Mittels zum Zweck: es ist das Prinzip der Entwicklung. (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:162)³⁰²

If history is the organon of philosophy and normative consciousness is grasped as the ground and final motive of empirical consciousness, then history appears both at the beginning of the reflective process and as its final destination, in this case, as a realized ideal. History provides the necessary medium for the access of values but also acts as a supra-historical guiding force for the historical world (Ferrari 1998:372).³⁰³ Arguing for

³⁰¹ Most notably: Kant (Windelband 1904), Schiller (Windelband 1905c), Fichte (Windelband 1905d; Windelband 1908a), and Hegel (Windelband EH 1915).

³⁰² The relevance of this concept will become clearer in the next chapter, while dealing with Windelband's concrete historiographical works.

³⁰³ Beiser views in this principle of evolution an explicit solution to the connection between norms and laws: "Here Windelband finally has a concrete proposal for linking the normative and the natural, for joining together in holy matrimony what he had once so sacrilegiously sundered. What joins the normative and the natural, he now suggests, is the concept of historical development. The concept of development seems to link the normative and the natural because it is directed toward goals or ends, which represent norms. The normative does not transcend the activity but is somehow immanent within it, serving as both explanation and justification. In proposing such a solution, Windelband is following Kant's precedent in the third Kritik" (Beiser 2009:17). The problem is that after "Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft," the concepts of history and nature are thematized as belonging to two irreconcilable world-views.

this required to liberate history from the domain of natural or dialectical laws, a task accomplished in “Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft.”

4.4. THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Windelband’s last texts on the philosophy of history mark the end of his career. The two most important pieces are his *Introduction to Philosophy* from 1914 and the transcript of a seminar that was published by his son in 1916, a text aptly defined as a wartime lesson. This last course deals precisely with the philosophy of history. Naturally, Windelband still defends the importance of an epistemological approach to the historical sciences much as he did in 1905 (Windelband 1916:23). However, he offers some clues as to the direction his philosophy of history was heading:

The war prompted a more concrete reflection on the meaning of history. The onset of the war represented a difficult objection to Windelband’s Kantian faith:

Wir glaubten ein Gesamtbewußtsein der Menschheit, eine sittliche, eine intellektuelle und ästhetische Solidarität der gemeinsamen Arbeit für die Völker, wir glaubten ein Gewissen der Menschheit erreicht zu haben, das nicht die Verschiedenheiten, wohl aber die Gegensätze und die Feindschaften der Nationen auszu gleichen und zu überwinden versprach, einen sicheren Hort der Zivilisation. Und nun ist dieses ideale Europa sozusagen von einem Tag auf den andern zusammengestürzt. (Windelband 1916: 7)

In the context of the war, Windelband returns to his reflection on the philosophy of history: “Solche Glaube aber setzt voraus, dass das geschichtliche Leben kein sinnloses Ungefähr, kein vernunftloses Getriebe einer biologischen Art ist, sondern dass darin ein vernünftiger Sinn waltet, ein λογός, der auch die geschichtliche Welt zum Kosmos macht” (Windelband 1916:9-10; also Windelband EPh 1914:337). Windelband questions the general rational meaning of history.

For some interpreters, Windelband’s late turn toward a substantive philosophy of history represents a foray into metaphysics proper (Morrone 2017a:9). But the necessity of a substantive philosophy of history appears to be a systematic consequence of Windelband’s definition of philosophy as the science of normative consciousness. The ra-

tional meaning of history is explicitly acknowledged in “Was ist Philosophie?”³⁰⁴ when the history of philosophy is presented as the progressive path towards the clarification of normative consciousness. This is restated in *Geschichtsphilosophie*: “Aber ein solches Gesamtbewusstsein ist noch im Werden, in der Umgestaltung von Zeit zu Zeit und von Volk zu Volk. Und das ist jedenfalls schon etwas, worin wir einen vernünftigen Sinn der Geschichte sehen dürfen” (Windelband 1916:12). This, of course, is a thesis that belongs to the philosophy of history. Although the outline of the book is determined by the event of the war and the format of classroom lessons, its content strictly adheres to the path of Windelband’s philosophical thinking. As such, while the importance of the philosophy of history in Windelband’s philosophical program is beyond question, the way in which this philosophy of history is to be interpreted and developed remains a topic of contention.

In any case, Windelband acknowledges that the philosophy of history is broader in scope than the theory of historical knowledge. Windelband affirms that the different treatments of history pose diverse ends and values that are limited in time and scope and provide various possible narrations of human development. The philosophy of history asks: “Daraus erwächst von selbst die Frage nach einem letzten Sinn und höchsten Zweck alles historischen Geschehens, zunächst als Prinzip für eine univiersalhistorische Beurteilung” (Windelband 1916:25). The unique aspect of Windelband’s attempt to construct a substantive philosophy of history is that his approach is previously grounded in his theory of historical knowledge. Thus, it would be methodologically superior to previous attempts, such as that of Herder. According to what was said in previous sections, Windelband defined the meaning of the historical as the value that a given event acquires in relationship to a human community. Windelband’s philosophy of his-

³⁰⁴ “Eine solche Geschichte der Philosophie wäre also eine Auswahl, die den allmählichen Fortschritt zu zeigen hätte, in welchem der wissenschaftliche Geist an der Lösung der hier formulierten Aufgabe gearbeitet hat. Damit hörte sie keineswegs auf, eine empirische Wissenschaft zu sein, wie es jede historische Disziplin eben sein muß. Betrachtet man die Geschichte vom Gesichtspunkt einer zu lösenden Aufgabe, so hat man erst recht die Pflicht, den kausalen Prozeß aufzuweisen, durch welchen die Bewältigung derselben sukzessive fortgeschritten ist. Die Aufgaben realisieren sich nicht, sie werden realisiert. Auch die Bestimmungen des Normalbewußtseins, zu denen sich das philosophische Denken aufringt, sind im naturnotwendigen Prozeß der geschichtlichen Denkbewegung als Inhaltsbestimmungen des empirischen Bewußtseins zustande gekommen. Diese ihre empirische Genesis hat die Geschichte der Philosophie zu begreifen, unbeschadet des Wertes, der ihnen, wenn sie in das empirische Bewußtsein eingetreten sind, vermöge ihrer normativen Evidenz zukommt.” (Windelband WiPh 1915 1:48).

tory attempts to offer an exposition of this concept of human community or humanity, which serves as the backdrop to the determination of a historical event.

Repeating his conception of psychology and anthropology, Windelband distinguishes the anthropological conception of humanity from the historical conception of humanity. Anthropology addresses the treatment of humanity by way of the nomothetic method. It describes human existence as a human species (*Gattung*); the unity of humanity is considered, from this point of view, as the unity of the natural concept of a species. Against this concept, Windelband opposes the idea of humanity in the sense of unified whole to the point of view of “das Zentrum der Werbestimmungen des Historischen bei der Auswahl und Synthesis des Geschehens” (Windelband 1916:56). Therefore, humanity has the properties of a Kantian idea. Thus, the Kantian distinction between concept and idea functions as a new philosophical tool to identify the difference between a generalizing and an individualizing treatment of reality. It represents a necessary and endless task (*Aufgabe*). Finally, history is defined in relation to this idea: “Die Geschichte ist also der Prozess, worin diese Aufgabe der Humanität in wechselndem, vielleicht im ganzen allmählich wachsenden Masse erfüllt wird” (Windelband 1916:57).

The idea of a unity of humanity is neither a given nor self-evident. The onset of War World I is but another indication that diversity and conflict are the common state of affairs among peoples. Windelband’s theory is that the temporal process that we call history traces a path from a natural concept of humanity, in which individuals and communities are only linked by an abstract belonging to the same species, to a different type of unity grounded in shared cultural values (Windelband 1916:56). This distinction between the concept and the idea of humanity and the description of history as the process that led from the former to the latter is but a reformulation of Windelband’s idea of history as the realization of normative consciousness. In his *Einleitung in der Philosophie*, Windelband expresses himself in almost the same terms:

Die uns jetzt ganz geläufige Idee der Einheit des Menschengeschlechts, seiner Solidarität, seiner gemeinsamen Entwicklung ist vielmehr selber erst ein Produkt der Geschichte und zwar ein so wesentliches Produkt, daß wir darin sogar den bedeutsamsten Sinn der historischen Entwicklung sehen dürfen. Man könnte beinahe so formulieren: die Geschichte geht vom Begriff der Menschheit zur Idee

der Menschheit. Diese Idee ist nichts Gegebenes und Vorgefundenes, sondern ein in Mühsal und Elend erarbeitetes Gut. (Windelband EPh 1914:348)

The process that leads from the natural concept to the historical idea of humanity is exemplified through the slow process of the concrete unification of humans, from their violent lives in tribes to the assembling into bigger complexes of peoples and, ultimately, civilizations. Regarding this last concept, Windelband speaks of the importance of Mediterranean culture, in which the consciousness about this process of formation of humanity is achieved (Windelband EPh 1914:349).

Windelband's last two works finally constitute a philosophy of history in the traditional sense. This philosophy of history is not to be identified with a theory of historical knowledge. The discipline is defined in terms of the conceptual clarification of the evolution of humankind. Windelband arrives at the claim that the ultimate formulation of the philosophy of history is the question of the meaning of human life. Moreover, going back to the theory presented earlier in the context of my discussion of "Was ist Philosophie?", the idea of a normal consciousness appears again in the final stage of development of Windelband's philosophy of history.

4.5. CONCLUSIONS

Despite following the teachings of his Neo-Kantian predecessors, Windelband sought to develop a philosophy of history grounded in the problem of historical knowledge. However, the nature of the internal problems present in the theory of values required him to pursue the philosophy of history not exclusively in terms of a theory of the method of history but in the sense of a theory that could bridge the gap between concrete reality and the formality of values.

In his last work on the philosophy of history, Windelband provided a reformulation of his definition of philosophy as a science of normative consciousness by equating the abstract concept of normative consciousness with the idea of humanity. Thus, the progressive clarification of normative consciousness, which was the philosophical key to understanding human history, is conceptualized as another set of Kantian terms: starting

from the level of the natural concept of human species, we seek to build a world oriented by the idea of humanity.

This network of theoretical, practical, and metaphysical facets brought about by the development of a logic of historical sciences takes us back to the consideration of the identity crisis of philosophy. In this context, the problem is not limited solely to the issue of defining philosophy, its proper object, and method against the threat of positivism, but the disintegration of the meaning of reality in the flux of historical time. Thus, the philosophy of history has the task of reuniting again the disjointed poles of reality and rationality, the factual and the ideal.

CHAPTER 6: THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

*“Ich bemerke nur noch dies, daß aus dem Gesagten erhellt,
daß das Studium der Geschichte der Philosophie
Studium der Philosophie selbst ist,
wie es denn nicht anders sein kann.”* (G. F. W. Hegel)

The present chapter tackles the relationship between history and philosophy, as expressed in the idea of a history of philosophy. It constitutes an attempt to establish a philosophy of the philosophy of history. The discipline that inquires into the complex features of the history of philosophy stands at the crossroads between the history of philosophy and the philosophy of history, and can even be described as meta-philosophy. As such, this discipline seems to imply a rather baroque and unnecessary multiplication of the levels of analysis. Regardless of the term used -whether it is philosophy of history or simply philosophy- the discipline, as a specific cluster of questions, is concerned with a fundamental and unique property of philosophy: its relatedness to its past. Those involved today in philosophical activities know, at least in an intuitive sense, that they require a high degree of involvement with the study of the history of philosophy.

Notwithstanding, the pervasiveness of the history of philosophy, is not treated in contemporary philosophy with reflexive clarity. Gerald Hartung observes, for instance, that “we have a flourishing practice of philosophical historiography but we lack a serious consideration of the principles according to which we proceed in this and of the standards which we employ” (Hartung 2015:9). The philosophical consideration of the history of philosophy aims to inquire precisely into the meaning of this involvement between past and present thinking and the repercussions that this relatedness has for doing historiography of philosophy. While handling this general issue, certain specific questions frequently appear in the literature on the history of philosophy. To name a few examples: Is it worth studying the history of philosophy? Is the writing of the history of philosophy a matter for historians or philosophers? How do we determine the content of the history of philosophy? What role does the personality of the philosopher play in the history of philosophy? Is there an objectivity canon in the history of philo-

sophy? Is there progress in the history of philosophy? Is there an abuse of the history of philosophy? etc.³⁰⁵

Against today's alleged lack of reflexivity on the role of the history of philosophy, the historiography of philosophy of the nineteenth century was constantly and consistently engaged with the questions mentioned above. This chapter will certainly not offer conclusive answers to all of the questions surrounding the history of philosophy, although it aims to discuss how Windelband replied, either explicitly or implicitly, to some of them. This chapter encompasses a study of Windelband's conception of the history of philosophy. It has a specific relevance, not only in the context of this dissertation but in general, since, as the volume edited by Gerald Hartung and Valentin Pluder manifests,³⁰⁶ Windelband's works are a landmark of the 'classical epoch' of the history of philosophy. Although centered around a particular figure, this chapter will also carry a decisively philosophical inquiry.

In what concerns the chapter's specific structure, the first section presents the professional figure of the historian of philosophy. During the nineteenth century, the role of the history of philosophy drastically increased in university teachings and the professional practices of philosophers, sparking demand for historical books. This process shaped the philosophical profession to the extent of creating a specific tradition, which, as Lewis White Beck has pointed out, rejected not only an outdated conception of the history of philosophy in terms of a history of errors but also the classic doxographical approach, in favor of an interpretation of the history of philosophy as a quest to understand the "life of ideas" (Beck 1969:524). This section places Windelband's works in the broader context of this developing trend of nineteenth-century philosophy.

The next two sections focus on two distinct problematics. The second, theoretical section of this chapter reconstructs Windelband's argument for defending the philosophical necessity of the history of philosophy. Windelband advances his defense in a text called "Geschichte der Philosophie" included in Kuno Fischer's *Festschrift* of 1905. Following a Hegelian thesis, Windelband argues that the history of philosophy is a

³⁰⁵ For alternative lists of relevant philosophical questions related to the history of philosophy, see Beck (1959) and Gracia (1992).

³⁰⁶ HARTUNG, Gerald and PLUDER, Valentin (Eds.) (2015): *From Hegel to Windelband. Historiography of Philosophy in the 19th Century*. De Gruyter: Berlin-Boston.

constitutive and necessary moment of the system of philosophy. However, arguing against Hegel, Windelband denies the speculative grounding of the discipline. Returning to the discussion on the method of philosophy covered in chapter 4, the identification of history with the organon of philosophy is now placed in the context of a philosophical treatment of the history of philosophy. Based on this argument, in this chapter I will explain why the history that Windelband signals as the organon of philosophy is, actually, the history of philosophy.

The third section deals with the specifics of Windelband's historiographical methodology, which is defined as a history of concepts and problems. My object of study in this section is Windelband's most important historiographical work, his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*.³⁰⁷ This section aims to explain and discuss Windelband's theory of the three factors involved in the writing of the history of philosophy, namely, the individual, the cultural, and the pragmatic factor. Windelband's use of the concept of problem will also be covered in this section. Following the argument presented in the second section, Windelband's method of the history of problems will be explained as a corollary of his argument for the necessity of the history of philosophy.

The fourth and final section aims to evaluate the strengths of Windelband's argument against the backdrop of its later reception and criticism. Overall, the task of the chapter is to analyze Windelband's main historiographical concepts and the difficulties that he sought to solve with them, before going on to discuss if he made a significant contribution to our understanding of the relationship between philosophy and its history. Finally, by explaining that the true organon of philosophy is the history of philosophy, this chapter closes the second part of my investigation, i.e., the reconstruction of Windelband's program for a historical philosophy.

6.1. THE EPOCHAL CONTEXT

³⁰⁷ First published in 1892 as *Geschichte der Philosophie*, but titled *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* from the second edition (1900) onwards. The book was edited, after Windelband's death, by Erick Rothacker (1921) and Heinz Heimsoeth (1935).

According to a classical description, the nineteenth century can be best characterized as the century of history, a characteristic that distinguished it from the predominant philosophical tendency of the eighteenth century. This distinction belongs to the German philosopher and historiographer of philosophy Friedrich Paulsen,³⁰⁸ whose aim was not to praise the rise of scientific history but to claim that history portrays its own a specific way of thinking (Paulsen 1899:400). As a novel science, history offers new materials for reflection. Consequently, questions related to the grounding of historical objectivity and the clarification of historiographical methods became a topic of philosophical importance. This was one of the motives behind the program of a logic of historical sciences presented in the previous chapter. However, as a new way of thinking, history put the basic rationalist beliefs under scrutiny. Paulsen's opposition, therefore, refers to an antagonism within philosophical thinking.³⁰⁹ The expression "philosophical century" names an epoch dominated by the belief in atemporal rational truths, while the term "historical century" is meant to express the primacy of the factual and ephemeral.³¹⁰ The inherent tendency of this movement from the philosophical to the historical way of thinking is the yielding of the "eternal" to the transitory, transforming the aspiration for the eternal into a specific moment in human history. This new pre-eminence undercuts the traditional assumptions and pretensions of philosophy. Therefore, Paulsen was confronted with a serious dilemma: Should philosophy ultimately be measured by the standards of the historical mode of thinking? Or, using a term that has become popular, should philosophy be historicized? It is precisely this opposition between philosophy and history that gives rise to the hybrid concept articulating my inter-

³⁰⁸ Friedrich Paulsen (1846-1908) was an influential philosopher and educator who was based mainly in Berlin. The reference to a threefold distinction between a theological, philosophical, and historical century can be found in his monograph on Kant: *Immanuel Kant: Sein Leben und seine Lehre*. These three centuries are identified as three ways of thinking (Denkweisen). The theological century is characterized by a theologico-dogmatic way of thinking, the philosophical century by a rationalistic dogmatic way of thinking, and the historical by a genetic or relativist way of thinking (Paulsen 1899:400).

³⁰⁹ This is explicitly stated when Paulsen speaks about the relationship between the historical mode of thinking and truth: "Die historische-genetische Denkweise hat die absoluten Wahrheiten überhaupt aufgegeben: es gibt, abgesehen von der Logik und Mathematik, nur relative, nicht ewige Wahrheiten. Die Wirklichkeit ist in beständigen Fluss, ihr folgt die Erkenntnis. Die Ewigkeit und Unveränderlichkeit Gottes entsprach der theologischen Dogmatismus; den starren Substanzen, womit die mathematische Physik rechnete, entsprach der rationalistische Dogmatismus; einer Welt des Werdens entspricht die genetischen-relativistische Denkweise" (Paulsen 1899:401-402).

³¹⁰ Similarly, Windelband opted to oppose the naturalistic and the historical worldviews in his *Rectorial Address* from 1894.

pretation of Windelband throughout this investigation, i.e., the concept of historical philosophy.

This opposition between the philosophical and the historical, the eternal and the ephemeral, pervades nineteenth-century discussions on the theory of knowledge and the philosophy of history, as any account by the historicist movement will testify. The exposition of Windelband's method of philosophy and his conception of history as an idiographic science, presented in chapters 4 and 5 respectively, also bears witness to this situation. But this contradistinction found its most acute expression, in my opinion, in the philosophical reflection on the problems and methods of the history of philosophy. In this specific case, the opposition between the philosophical and the historical mode of thinking gave rise to an antinomy between a purely systematic treatment, essential to philosophy, and a scholarly practice of the discipline that progressively oriented itself toward the historical treatment of philosophical subjects.

The Neo-Kantian movement was contemporary with the consolidation of the history of philosophy as a philosophical discipline, and, although this philosophical tradition is often associated with the development of the theory of knowledge and science, it is easy to understand why its representatives developed an interest in the history of philosophy. The origin of the predominant role of the history of philosophy is strictly linked to the world of academia. According to Ulrich Schneider, who has devoted several studies to the production of histories of philosophy in the period, the main motives behind historiographical research and writing were strictly pedagogical. The authors of the voluminous histories of philosophy in Germany, Great Britain, and France were university teachers who wrote coursebooks (Schneider 2004:274). This suggests the rise of the history of philosophy was more related to professional demands than the process of creative thinking. As I have mentioned previously, the Neo-Kantian movement was deeply immersed in the university environment, and its representatives had the custom of giving lectures on the history of philosophy. But, as the study of their works shows, they did not view this task as a merely professional duty. The particula-

rity of the Neo-Kantian historiography of philosophy is that they transformed the history of philosophy into an inner aspect of philosophical reflection.³¹¹

However, the Neo-Kantian treatment of the history of philosophy was anticipated by a debate spanning from 1790 to 1840 between the representatives of the Kantian, Hegelian, and Hermeutical Schools (Geldsetzer 1968:19), a topic which I have previously touched upon in chapter 1. I will briefly recapitulate the differences between these two moments -the beginning and the middle of the nineteenth century- since these differences anticipate the discussion of the sections on Windelband. This explanation will also make the meaning of the expression ‘historical century’ more concrete. Instead of repeating the theories of the history of philosophy of the aforementioned philosophers, I focus on Lutz Geldsetzer’s reasons for limiting himself to analyzing them.

The arguments advanced by Geldsetzer concern the philosophical relevance of those involved in the discussion; they were the key figures of Classical German Philosophy, figures of the caliber of Immanuel Kant, Karl Friedrich Reinhold, Friedrich Schelling, and G. W. F. Hegel.³¹² To put it shortly, the development of the characteristic “philosophizing” histories of philosophy runs in parallel with the inner development of German Idealism (Geldsetzer 1968: 19). These authors shared to one extent or another a claim similar to that quoted from Hegel in the epigraph of this chapter. It is worth remembering that Schleiermacher opened his 1807 lectures on the history of philosophy by claiming: “Denn wer die Geschichte der Philosophie vorträgt, muss die Philosophie besitzen, um die einzelnen Facta, welche ihr angehören, ausfordern zu können, und wer die Philosophie besitzen will, muss sie historisch verstehen” (Schleiermacher 1839:15). Thus, the elucidation of the groundings and the organizing principles of the discipline was not only the affair of famous historians of philosophy, such as W. G. Tennemann, but a topic tackled by the most prominent figures of philosophy of the age. Together, these authors built a network of problems and answers that was complex and of a depth that has hardly ever been replicated. (Geldsetzer 1968:81).

³¹¹ I have argued elsewhere that the Neo-Kantian contributions to this problematic constitute a unique polemic in the philosophy of the history of philosophy (Páez 2019).

³¹² It has also been suggested that Fichte is the author of an anonymous piece on the history of philosophy published in 1795 (Geldsetzer 1968:27).

However, even though the texts from the period 1790-1840 are rich in innovative theoretical ideas, they do not have a solid foundation in concrete historiographical work. The distinctive model of the general history of philosophy has its origin in these early discussions, but the genre as such bloomed later, during during the mid-nineteenth century.³¹³ The same can be said about the other two typical genres of nineteenth-century historiography of philosophy: the history of ancient philosophy and the history of modern philosophy. Therefore, the philosophical discussion on the history of philosophy in Windelband's time was not articulated in terms of divergent programs of research. On the contrary, it was grounded in concrete historiographical work. The demand for objectivity and the discussions on how to treat historiographical sources are signs of this new situation. Together with the overall volume of these historiographical productions, these characteristics lead scholars to go as far as to label the period spanning 1830-1910 the 'classical epoch' of the history of philosophy.

However, the substantial difference between the discussions on the philosophical significance of the history of philosophy at the end of the eighteenth century and its posterior development after Hegel's death is also connected to the general development of the philosophical movement. In chapter 2, I covered Herbert Schnädelbach's and Frederick Beiser's interpretations of the 'crisis of identity' characteristic of philosophy in the 1850s (Schnädelbach 1983; Beiser 2014a). However, to recap briefly, for Schnädelbach the nature of the crisis stems from the difficulties of philosophizing in a post-idealistic epoch, with the subsequent result that philosophy lost its leading role as a cultural force in modern society (Schnädelbach 1983:17). The all-embracing philosophy of the idealist period faced the division of the whole realm of entities through a multiplicity of emerging particular sciences, while the neglecting of the dialectical method prompted the claim that the only available path for thinking was the method of the concrete sciences. As a result of this collapse, philosophy was stripped of its distinctive object and method of inquiry (Beiser 2014a:16).

³¹³ However, to be fair, I have to mention the judgment from Schneider, which corroborates and explains the preference for this early polemic: "In the second half of the century there were more historical works reprinted than written. There was no need for originality, but there was need for reliability." (Schneider 2004: 278). By the end of the century, the focus was more on the reproduction and edition of textbooks than on the development of the interpretation of history.

The transformation of philosophy into a theory of science was one of the predominant strategies employed against this crisis, a strategy that was also followed by Windelband. The early representatives of Neo-Kantianism turned toward an epistemological interpretation of philosophy, that is, they transformed philosophical reflection into a consideration of the principles and methods of the concrete sciences (Zeller 1862). Moreover, an additional emphasis on historiographical practices also came to be seen as a suitable reply to the crisis of philosophy. As Charles Bambach explains: “Many classically-trained German academics sought to resolve philosophy’s generational identity crisis by bringing their historical-hermeneutical skills to bear on a philological critique of selected primary texts or the history of philosophical systems” (Bambach 1995:24).³¹⁴ Historiographical work was considered more scientific than speculative thinking, while also doing justice to reality’s “continual change” (Scholtz 2015:27). Not only Kuno Fischer, but figures like Johann Eduard Erdmann (1805-1892), Friedrich Überweg (1826-1871), and Eduard Zeller (1814-1908) represented a new model of philosopher in the sense that their historiographical research and the grounding of the history of philosophy were the main focus of their philosophical activities³¹⁵. Some of them, such as Fischer and Zeller, were also representatives of the first Neo-Kantian generation of philosophers, and merged the historiographical with the epistemological solution to the ‘crisis of identity’ in their works.

Under this new philosophical orientation, “speculative excess was held to a minimum, and the scientific quality of work was secured through an emphasis on technical training, historical erudition, and the sober regard for method” (Bambach 1995:23). The speculative impulse, characteristic of post-Kantian philosophy, was replaced, in the

³¹⁴ Bambach’s explanation differs from Schnädelbach’s and Beiser’s insofar as he considers that the “historical-hermeneutical research” was in itself a reply to the ‘identity crisis,’ the other alternatives being the orientation of philosophy toward the concept of worldview and scientism (Bambach 1995:23). In Bambach’s narrative, the interpretation of philosophy as *scientia scientiarum* is replaced by an interpretation of it as *ars interpretationis*.

³¹⁵ Statistical information regarding the impact of this new professional model can be found in Schneider (1988) and (2004). According to Schneider, historical courses represented at the beginning of the nineteenth century only 10% of the study program, while it raised up to 50% by the end of the nineteenth century (Schneider 2004: 281).

work of these philosophers, by scientific demands, the ideal of scholarship, technical procedures, and the grounding of philosophy in historical knowledge.³¹⁶

The overall problem with this approach is that historical criticism does not lead us directly to the path of innovative systematical thinking. It is not clear how pursuing a better knowledge of the history of philosophy would provide us with new insights of the world and our place in it: [The] “sheer restoration of philosophical ideas from the past ... did not encourage innovative or energetic solutions to philosophy’s perceived identity crisis” (Bambach 1995:24). It became commonplace for nineteenth-century historians of philosophy to defend their works against the alleged perilous nature of the history of philosophy for philosophizing.

A good example of this pervading question is the closing section of Johann Eduard Erdmann’s *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie* from 1866, where he reflects on the place granted to the history of philosophy in the field of philosophical research. Erdmann notes the proliferation of works on the history of philosophy and the great success that these works have had among the literary public, in comparison with systematic books.³¹⁷ This situation is reflected on the fact that prominent thinkers -like the already mentioned Fischer and Zeller- have acquired more fame as historians of philosophy than as philosophers:

Mancher dieser Philosophen weiss nicht, dass es Bibliotheken gibt, in welchen der kritisch-historische Theil seines Werkes ganz zerlesen, der speculative nicht

³¹⁶ Helmut Heit discusses the apparent opposition between a speculative and a scientific tendency in nineteenth-century historiography of philosophy (Heit 2015). The title of the section on Eduard Zeller’s works -“Zeller: the scientific historian?”- aims precisely at putting this feature of nineteenth-century historiography into question: “His historiography is ultimately less impartial and objective than it pretends to be” (Heit 2015:126). For a discussion of Zeller’s historiographical principles, see Geldsetzer (1968:94) and Steindler (1992). The basic idea is that Zeller still shares Hegel’s idealist conception of the role of the history of philosophy: the self-knowledge of world spirit. He also shares the interpretation of the history of philosophy as an organism (Steindler 1992:404; also Schnädelbach 1983:121). But Zeller modifies a key methodological aspect of the history of philosophy: “L’histoire de la philosophie est, pour Zeller, simplement une architectonique dont non seulement les lois mais encore la facticité historique, déterminée par le lieu et le temps, n’admettent ni retours éternels ni terme métaphysique, contrairement à ce que pense Hegel” (Steindler 1992: 405). As will be explained in the third section of the chapter, there is a common charge leveled against Hegel by the historians of philosophy, namely, the parallelism between the succession of philosophies in history and categories in logic (Zeller 1844:52).

³¹⁷ He speaks of: “Die nicht abzuleugnende Thatsache, dass, wo sich noch Interesse für das philosophische Studium zeigt, es nicht in dem Drange besteht, (selbst) zu philosophiren, sondern in dem Verlangen, zu sehen, wie (von Anderen) philosophirt wurde, ist ein Gegenstück zu der gleichzeitigen Erscheinung, dass an die Stelle der Dichter die Literarhistoriker, and die Stelle der grossen Männer die Biographen getreten sind. Auch sie ist übrigens ein Beweis, dass das System noch nicht spurlos verschwunden ist, welches lehrte Grau und Grau zu malen, und bei dem zum erstem Male die Geschichte der Philosophie ein integrierender Bestandtheil des Systems wurde, das Hegelsche ... ” (Erdmann 1866:796).

aufgeschnitten ist, und die Meisten müssen darauf gefasst seyn, dass man den historischen Bestandtheil mit Interesse, darum auch so, dass man das darin Gesagte behält, den speculativen bloss aus Plifchtgefühl und darum ohne nachhaltige Wirkung liest. (Erdmann 1866:797)

The diagnosis states that the professionalization of philosophy and the attempt to face the “identity crisis” through historical research implies the degradation of systematical thinking. Therefore, it seems that the increasing role of the history of philosophy goes hand in hand with the decline of philosophy’s creative force. What began as an answer to the crisis of philosophy apparently gave rise to a new dialectical movement, a new sense of philosophical weakness. So far, Erdmann’s text is an example of the issues I described in the previous paragraph. By the end of the book, Erdmann attempts to advance a solution to the dilemma of the history of philosophy. He traces an analogy with the relationship between the pure doctrine of right and the history of right in order to set a model for philosophical thinking:

Oben war an die berühmte Schrift Savigny’s erinnert. Seit ihr und seit Savigny’s historischen Arbeiten, ist ein neuer Schwung nicht nur in das Studium der Rechtsgeschichte, sondern auch des Rechts gekommen. Warum? Weil von ihm die Geschichte des Rechts im Geistes eines wahren Juristen betrieben wurde. So mag wohl noch das vorwiegende Interesse an der Geschichte der Philosophie im Interesse der Philosophie ausgebeutet werden wenn durch eine philosophische Darstellung derselben die Leser dahin gebracht werden, mit dem Autor über sie zu philosophieren. Worüber philosophiert wird, ist im Grunde gleichgültig, darum hat zu allem Zeiten die Philosophie das zum Object genommen, was gerade die Zeit am Meisten interessierte [...] Warum also nicht jetzt die Geschichte der Philosophie? [...] Der Klage gegenüber also, dass nicht mehr philosophirt, sondern nur Geschichte der Philosophie getrieben werde, aus Philosophen Historiker geworden seyen, liesse sich geltend machen, dass die Philosophiehistoriker selbst zu philosophieren pflegen, und so vielleicht auch hier dieselbe Lanze, welche verletzte, auch Heilung bringen kann. (Erdmann 1866:798)

Here we find an optimism grounded in the possibility of a philosophical treatment of the history of philosophy. Erdmann suggests that the key to avoiding the antinomy between the historical and the systematic is to transform the history of philosophy into the proper philosophical object of his epoch. The suggestion is that in the same way as science, the arts, or religion had previously been considered objects of interest and the origins of philosophy’s vitality, the philosophical treatment of history could bring about an intellectual renaissance. The history of philosophy was thus posited as a source of

renewal, transforming philosophy into the philosophy of history. But Erdmann's text, in any case, leaves this question completely open.

Friedrich Nietzsche discusses this same issue in his third *Untimely Meditation* ("Schopenhauer als Erzieher" from 1873), but his solution stands opposite to that of Erdmann. For this reason, it is worth mentioning what he says about the relationship between philosophy and its historiography. In this essay, Nietzsche makes an indictment against the new professional model of the university-based historian of philosophy:

Die gelehrte Historie des Vergangenen war nie das Geschäft eines wahren Philosophen, weder in Indien, noch in Griechenland; und ein Philosophieprofessor muss es sich, wenn er sich mit solcherlei Arbeit befasst, gefallen lassen, dass man von ihm, besten Falls, sagt: er ist ein tüchtiger Philolog, Antiquar, Sprachkenner, Historiker: aber nie: er ist ein Philosoph. (Nietzsche 1988: 416-417)

Nietzsche's text appears as an indictment of the whole model of the history of philosophy, and suggests that it is not truly suited to the philosopher. He even includes caustic references to Ritter, Brandis, and Zeller, all authorities in the field of the history of Ancient Philosophy.³¹⁸ Their self-proclamation as philosophers proves to be a masquerade. They are simply not worthy of the title and should not be called as such.

Erdmann, who was a representative of university philosophy, was neither as straightforward nor as negative as Nietzsche. Nonetheless, he fails to provide an answer to Nietzsche's line of criticism.

A third opinion comes from the writings of Eduard Zeller, for whom the history of philosophy is a historical rather than a philosophical discipline:

Das historische und [...] das philosophische [Verfahren] sind aber mitnichten ein und dasselbe, und die Geschichte der Philosophie ist nicht [...] selbst Philosophie, sondern sie ist eben nur Geschichte, d. h. eine von der empirischen

³¹⁸ Paradoxically, Nietzsche praises the old doxographical works of Diogenes Laertius, a tradition mostly scorned by nineteenth-century historians: "Ich wenigstens lese Laertius Diogenes lieber als Zeller, weil in jenem wenigstens der Geist der alten Philosophen lebt, in diesem aber weder der noch irgend ein anderer Geist. Und zuletzt in aller Welt: was geht unsre Jünglinge die Geschichte der Philosophie an? Sollen sie durch das Wirrsal der Meinungen entmutigt werden, Meinungen zu haben? Sollen sie angelehrt werden, in den Jubel einzustimmen, wie wir's doch so herrlich weit gebracht? Sollen sie etwa gar die Philosophie hassen oder verachten lernen? Fast möchte man das letztere denken, wenn man weiss, wie sich Studenten, ihrer philosophischen Prüfungen wegen, zu martern haben, um die tollsten und spitzesten Einfälle des menschlichen Geistes, neben den grössten und schwerfasslichsten, sich in das arme Gehirn einzudrücken. Die einzige Kritik einer Philosophie, die möglich ist und die auch etwas beweist, nämlich zu versuchen, ob man nach ihr leben könne, ist nie auf Universitäten gelehrt worden: sondern immer die Kritik der Worte über Worte" (Nietzsche 1988: 416-417).

Grundlage der Überlieferung ausgehende Darstellung einer zeitlichen Entwicklung des Geistes; nur die Philosophie der Geschichte ist als solche ein Teil des philosophischen Systems, die Geschichte der Philosophie dagegen hat eine zum System entwickelte philosophische Ansicht nur zur subjektiven Voraussetzung, ist nicht unmittelbar diese selbst. (Zeller 1884)

In any case, together with their predecessor Hegel, historians of philosophy like Erdmann and Zeller were the first to recognize and research the undeniable relation between philosophy and its past. Gunther Scholtz considers, for instance, that

under the sign of historical consciousness, one's own philosophy and so-called systematic philosophy are confronted with the history of philosophy, and both the systematic and the historical are related and directed towards each other. Up to the middle of the 19th century, philosophers often did both, composing philosophical systems and writing philosophical historiography. (Scholtz 2015:26).

But the harmonious balance between the historical and the systematical paths was threatened constantly by the unresolved demands of historical and philosophical thinking. Thus, the equilibrium between the two acted more as a regulative idea than as a concrete reality.

In his typology of the history of philosophy in the nineteenth century, Gerald Hartung summarizes the features that still permeate our conception of the history of philosophy today: (1) the history of philosophy is a discipline that belongs to philosophy, in this sense, the ideal of a philosophizing history of philosophy is still operative in historical writings; (2) the history of philosophy intersects the history of other disciplines, like the history of society, culture, and sciences; and (3) philosophical historiography acquires its special value in the relationship between current problems and "traditional reserves of knowledge" (Hartung 2015:22). Hartung synthesizes these three features by affirming that philosophical historiography today requires a (1) systematic orientation or guidance, (2) a strong relation with cultural and scientific history, (3) an explication of a context of problems.

We can attest in Windelband's own methodology of philosophy the articulation of the three features previously mentioned in relation to the history of philosophy in the nineteenth century: the philosophical aims, the sensibility to the cultural context, and the focus on philosophical problems. In another fitting characterization of the process

of professional historicization of philosophy, Frede explains that “what emerges is a discipline that, with the tools of the historian, tries to do no more, but also no less, than to reconstruct historically the development of philosophy” (Frede 1988:666). Windelband pursued this reconstruction not as an autonomous investigation, but with the fixed idea that the understanding of the historical development of philosophy was the best way of understanding the present situation of philosophy.

6.2. THE NECESSITY OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

In this section, I aim to reconstruct Windelband’s theoretical argument for linking systematical philosophy with the history of philosophy. Therefore, I will present Windelband’s answers to both the professional model of the historiographer of philosophy and the conundrum presented by the alleged negative impact on the philosopher’s creative capacity.

Against a sociological or historical explanation of the development of the history of philosophy, something only hinted at in the previous section when I focused on the formation of the discipline in German Academia, one of the specific aspects of Windelband’s approach is his philosophical grounding of the historiography of philosophy. Although it has been claimed that up until the end of the nineteenth century, the historiographical and the systematical works pertained to two distinct poles of Windelband’s thinking, that is, without any theoretical connection (Kemper 2006:118), it is undeniable that later in his career, Windelband sought to ground his historiographical research in strict philosophical arguments. These arguments are presented in Windelband’s contribution to Kuno Fischer’s *Festschrift* from 1905: “Geschichte der Philosophie.” Thus, this section proceeds by reconstructing Windelband’s line of reasoning in this text.

In an essay on the contemporary situation of philosophy (Windelband GL), Windelband recognizes the problem posed by the excessive historical knowledge. I quote it here, before the discussion of “Geschichte der Philosophie,” since it provides

more evidence regarding the fact that Windelband considered the problem along lines analogous to my description in the previous section. Speaking of the mid-nineteenth century, Windelband says:

Es war deshalb eine Zeit [1830-1860], welche in der Tat nicht eigentlich eine eigene Philosophie hatte, sondern nur nicht die Geschichte der Philosophie kannte und im ganzen -abgesehen natürlich von individuellen Ausnahmen - auf eine neue Schöpfung verzichtete, weil sie entweder ihrer nicht zu bedürfen oder dazu nicht fähig zu sein glaubte. (Windelband 1915 GL 2:3)

“Geschichte der Philosophie” represents an inquiry into the source of philosophy’s orientation toward its history. Windelband concludes that this orientation and this reference are of a necessary nature. Thus, the history of philosophy is a component of the system of philosophy.³¹⁹

Windelband’s essay is structured, in my opinion, according to three different strategical motives. In the first place, Windelband wants to show that the contemporary emphasis on the history of philosophy does not represent a perilous threat to systematical thinking. Windelband takes sides with Erdmann and other historians of philosophy against the type of criticism raised by Nietzsche. In the second place, Windelband wants to show that the reference of philosophy to its own history is necessary. Both motives are anchored in Windelband’s interpretation of German Idealism as a movement that overcomes certain limits of Kantian philosophy, and in a set of abstract arguments. For Windelband, the primacy of the history of philosophy is the result of the evolution of philosophy from Kant to Hegel, and Windelband’s argument tries to capture the epochal results of German Philosophy. However, he also wants to avoid the conclusion that the reference of philosophy to history is in itself a historical contingency. His line of argument resembles what he did previously with his definition of philosophy, which was grounded in both the historical evolution of philosophy and the formal distinction between judgments and assessments. Finally, in a third argumentative moment, Windelband tackles the relationship between the a priori nature of philosophy and the empirical character of the history of philosophy. Windelband deals here with the presupposi-

³¹⁹ The treatment of the other relevant feature of this relation, namely, the determination of the history of philosophy as a meaningful whole, is postponed for the next section of the chapter.

tion of a particular philosophical system for the writing of the history of philosophy.³²⁰ To sum up, Windelband wants to show that the history of philosophy has definitely consolidated itself as a true philosophical discipline, that is, that the history of philosophy is a part of the system of philosophy and not its replacement, and that this emergence is the result and a demand stemming from the development of philosophical thinking.

As I have advanced, Windelband's first argument for the relevance of the history of philosophy is entirely historical. For Windelband: "Diese [the emphasis on the history of philosophy] reicht vielmehr bis in die grosse schöpferische Zeit der deutschen Philosophie zurück und entspringt in ihr aus den innersten Motiven der idealistischen Bewegung selbst" (Windelband 1905a:175). This concern with the past comes from the idealist idea of *Bildung*, and, as much as philosophy is concerned with this idea, it is also concerned with the history of philosophy. The idea of Windelband here is straightforward. Because this trend stems from such a fruitful philosophical movement as German Idealism, it cannot be taken as a sign of intellectual weakness. On the contrary, the new relevance of philosophical historiography has to be explained as a consequent development of idealistic tendencies. This passage is a clear acknowledgment of the undeniable value of the idealist and romantic movement's contribution to the historiography of philosophy.

However, the appraisal of the legacy of idealism is critical, i.e., it is placed under strict limits. As mentioned several times during this book, the most important reference for Windelband regarding the history of philosophy is Hegel. In Hegel, Windelband finds the deepest understanding of the relationship between history and philosophy. And indeed, Windelband's twofold conception of the presentation of reason to humankind is an echo of a Hegelian doctrine. Windelband claims that reason presents itself as a dialectical unfolding and a temporal series of formations of the living spirit (human

³²⁰ This is an obvious reference to the discussions on the history of philosophy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. An interesting text in the context of this topic is Zeller (1843). In response to a polemical statement about his historiographical works, Zeller affirms: "Wer die Geschichte der Philosophie verstehen will, habe ich gesagt, muß selbst Philosoph sein. Wirth giebt dieß zu. Also, schließe ich weiter, muß er auch ein bestimmtes philosophisches System haben" (Zeller 1843:819). There is a subtle difference in the opposition put forward by Zeller and the way in which Windelband tackles this topic. For in the case of Zeller and his polemic with Wirth, they are asking if the presupposition of a peculiar system blocks the understanding of other systems; while in the case of Windelband, we find a discussion on the empirical nature of the history of philosophy, and, therefore, a question of methodology.

culture).³²¹ The divergence is methodological. Hegel conceptualized this twofold givenness through the identity or parallelism between history and concept. As Windelband summarizes, for Hegel “die dialektische Entwicklung des Systems der Kategorien in der Logik soll dieselbe sein, wie die historische Entwicklung der Prinzipien in der Geschichte der Philosophie” (Windelband 1905a:176).³²² The thesis of parallelism is the true grounding of the history of philosophy in Hegel’s case, since the discipline’s scientific status depends on this thesis. This is precisely the reason why this thesis was so important for Windelband. Only after the spelling out of a systematic meaning of philosophy is it possible to transform the haphazard array of philosophical theories into a single systematic organic whole. Therefore, for Hegel, the history of philosophy is the highest, the last and conclusive moment of the system of philosophical sciences. But, as the last moment, it is conceptually dependent on Hegel’s philosophical logic.

Thus, the problem of the relationship between the history of philosophy and systematic philosophy becomes a question of how to preserve the philosophical and scientific nature of the history of philosophy without the alleged arbitrariness of Hegel’s parallelism thesis. The problem of finding this mediation is identical to the problem of showing the necessary relation of philosophy to its history. This is a demand shared by several historians from the Hegelian school, such as the aforementioned authors: Johan Eduard Erdmann, Eduard Zeller, and Kuno Fischer. And, of course, it was also a predicament for Windelband.

Windelband’s requirement for this argument, that is, his philosophical presupposition, is that this reference has to be specific to philosophy and cannot be explained through an analogy with other scientific endeavors (Windelband 1905a:179). The feature that makes philosophy unique is the inclusion of its history as a constitutive moment. And so Windelband goes on to argue against those philosophical positions that consider that philosophizing is independent from philosophy’s own historicity.

³²¹ See Windelband’s commentaries to Emile Boutroux, in Boutroux (1905:59).

³²² See my introduction, section iii. There is plenty of literature on this aspect of Hegel’s philosophy. To name just a few recent writings on the matter: Nuzzo (2003), Krijnen (2005), Fulda (2007). Among the historians of philosophy of the nineteenth century, it’s worth mentioning Zeller (1843).

Adding a further level of complexity to the task at hand, Windelband considers that this characterization of philosophy as historical is the true meaning of critical philosophy. He affirms this by identifying the unhistorical point of view with dogmatism:

Dasselbe gilt, und zwar in verstärktem Masse, wenn man die Aufgabe der Philosophie in einer Metaphysik sieht, die unabhängig von dem besonderen Wissen der empirischen Wirklichkeit aus irgend welchen Quellen eigener Erkenntnis die letzten Prinzipien alles Seins und Werdens erfassen soll. Dieser dogmatische Standpunkt ist der absolut ungeschichtliche. (Windelband 1905a: 181)³²³

Therefore, if the history of philosophy is going to be essentially related to philosophy, we need to find, says Windelband, a definition of philosophy that involves its history. This, of course, recalls the definition of philosophy presented in chapter 3, but the idea takes on a new shade of meaning. While Windelband's definition of philosophy as the critical science of absolute values is explained through a legitimizing historical narration, Windelband aims now to show that, if the history of philosophy is a constitutive part of the system of philosophy, the object of philosophy also has to be historical in some sense. Thus, this argument goes one step further than those covered in the previous chapters, insofar as Windelband's new characterization of historical philosophy involves not history but the history of philosophy.

Windelband also hinted at this when he characterized the critical science of absolute values as a science of the normative consciousness. In "Was ist Philosophie?", Windelband defined philosophy as a scientific investigation of the contents and forms of empirical consciousness that constitute the value of normative consciousness. Thus, the problem of philosophy is the relationship between universal and human reason. Even though universal reason -the Logos- is self-sufficient or self-explanatory, we can only grasp the Logos through human reason. However, this human reason, and the process of grasping the universal, are instances conditioned by history. This further qualifies Windelband's argumentative idea. The way in which the relationship between philosophy and its history differs from the relationship between other sciences and their

³²³ Treating the history of philosophy in this way implies doing so in the manner of the natural scientist or the mathematician: as a history of errors or as previous moment along a path toward our actual "truth." This qualification is extremely important because it stands against the general assumption regarding the use of the history of philosophy in philosophy in terms of actualization, with the subsequent problem of historical anachronism. In this actualization, Windelband does not find that history belongs to or is included in philosophy.

history implies that the object of philosophy is itself historical. The object of philosophy is defined through the concept of evolution [*Entwicklung*] (Windelband 1905a:182). Rather than repeating his methodological idea of the organon of philosophy, Windelband turns, as an explanatory ground for the object of philosophy's evolutive nature, to a theory advanced by Kuno Fischer, to whom the article was dedicated. According to Windelband,

... er [Fischer] die Philosophie selbst als die Selbsterkenntnis des menschlichen Geistes definiert und den 'fortschreitenden Bildungsprozess', der zu dem Wesen dies ihres Gegenstandes gehört, für den Grund des 'fortschreitenden Erkenntnisprozesses' erklärt hat, den sie in ihrer Geschichte aufweist. (Windelband 1905a:182)

Windelband refers in this passage to the methodological introduction in Fischer's *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie*.³²⁴ Since Windelband quotes approvingly from Fischer's text, it would be useful to consider here what Fischer says about the history of philosophy and the self-knowledge of humanity.

In his *Introduction*, Fischer raises a question that structures the whole chapter, namely, the possibility of combining history and philosophy into a single endeavor, a philosophical history of philosophy. According to Fischer, this is a difficult but not impossible concept. This difficulty is identical to that found in Hegel's lectures. While history cannot be conceived but as a temporal series of events, philosophy has to be thought of as the grasping of truth. But truth is a unity, it does not involve any series or temporal succession. Thus, a history of philosophy appears to imply a contradiction (Fischer 1912:4). Hence, Fischer's strategy is to dismantle the idea that truth is alien to time.

Fischer's first solution to this contradiction is to criticize the positions that oppose history to philosophy on the grounds that both are historical products. It constitutes a critique insofar as the philosophical judgment of history, in the traditional sense, requires the assumption of a point of view from outside of history. Being historical disciplines in their own right, the philosophical criticism of history is self-refuting. Valid as it

³²⁴ FISCHER, Kuno (1897-1902): *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie*, Jubiläumsausgabe, 10 vol. Heidelberg: Winter. Originally started in 1852 with the first volume on Descartes, the Jubiläumsausgabe comprises volumes on Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant (two parts), Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and finally, Bacon.

seems, this type of argument says nothing about the possibility of the history of philosophy, and a positive argument is also required.

Fischer explains that the possibility of a concept of the history of philosophy is blocked by a deficient conception of knowledge. The antithesis between history and philosophy implies, so argues Fischer, that we have already assumed that the object is completely given and that true knowledge completely corresponds with our representation of the object. But the object is always grasped from a peculiar perspective, and our knowledge, therefore, implies advancing from a less clear and definite conceptualization toward a more complete one, through a consideration of successive experiences (Fischer 1912:7). Fischer concludes that, for the individual subject, all knowledge of an object is the result of a progression from an incomplete to a more complete apprehension of the object. For Fischer, it is philosophically false to assume that a representation can be given as something complete. From the point of view of the theory of knowledge, this helps to explain why the non-historical point of view is associated with dogmatism, as Windelband points out in his essay. Knowledge commonly implies a development of representations through time. At least from the subjective perspective, knowledge presents a temporal structure.

But Fischer also claims that the object of knowledge can be involved in a temporal process too. Although it may be contested whether certain objects change or not (abstracts entities such as mathematical objects, for example), Fischer is only interested in a specific variety of objects, i.e., spiritual objects [ein lebendiger geistiger Natur]. Here, history pervades the whole model of explanation. The knowing subject can only grasp spiritual objects through the progressive elaboration of points of view, i.e., through a process that it is in itself historically mediated. The nature of the object at hand implies an unfolding, and so does our knowledge of it. The knowledge of the spiritual reality is characterized as a back and forth movement in which both subject and object are involved. The progressive movement of the subject determines the modification of the object and vice versa. And this process itself can only be known progressively, that is, historically. In his *Introduction* Kuno Fischer concludes with the following sentence, later paraphrased by Windelband: “Ein fortschreitender Bildungsprozess kann nur begriffen werden in einem fortschreitenden Erkenntnisprozess” (Fischer 1912:8). Thus, the pre-

vious model of the individual consciousness is extrapolated by Fischer to cultural life in general, since the perspectives and conceptions held by a certain society determine the possibilities particular subjects have of establishing certain cognitive processes.

Now, this correlation that belongs to the theory of knowledge also serves the purpose of defining philosophy. So far, Fischer has spoken about the historical dimension of the two poles involved in knowledge, but the sphere of human spirit evidently implies a peculiar relation, a self-relation. Fischer defines the human spirit as the objective side, and characterizes it as being essentially a process of self-formation. On the other hand, the subjective side is precisely philosophy, here defined as the progressive process of knowledge of the human spirit. Hence, philosophy represents this peculiar self-relation of the spirit. However, as self-relation, it is also a necessary endeavor since it depicts human self-consciousness; philosophy stems from this tendency of the human spirit to turn toward itself. Philosophy's task is to represent and know the the process of self-formation of the human spirit, and, for this reason, humanity constitutes philosophy's essential problem.³²⁵ It is possible to consider that this argument represents Fischer's complex appropriation of the old Greek sentence γνωθι σεαυτόν [gnothi seauton].

Of course, the same back and forth movement characteristic of the subject-object relation is manifested in the development of questions and replies that structure the problem of the human spirit. For this reason, according to Fischer, philosophy and the history of philosophy are one and the same discipline. The historical point of view appears as a necessary demand of philosophy rather than as a logical contradiction: "Wenn das Object [of philosophy] der menschliche Geist ist, so ist die Wahrheit selbst

³²⁵ "Dieser fortschreitender Bildungsprozess ist der menschliche Geist, dieser fortschreitender Erkenntnisprozess ist die Philosophie als die Selbsterkenntnis des menschlichen Geistes. Den es ist klar, dass der menschliche Geist als selbstbewusstes Wesen sich Gegenstand sein, darum sich Problem werden muss: er muss suchen, dieses Problem zu lösen, er kann nicht ohne ein solches Streben nicht sein. Eben dieses Streben ist die Philosophie. Ohne dasselbe könnte der Geist nicht sich selbst Problem, nicht sein eigenes Objekt, also nicht selbstbewusst sein. Das menschliche Selbstbewusstsein enthält eine Frage, welche die Philosophie auflöst. Der menschliche Geist ist gleich einer geschichtlichen Entwicklung, die in einer Mannigfaltigkeit von Bildungen, in einer Reihe von Bilgundssystemen verläuft, die der Geist aus sich hervorbringt, erfüllt, auslebt, und woraus er als seinem Stoff neue Kulturformen erzeugt" (Fischer 1912:8).

eine lebensvolle Geschichte: sie muss sich entwickelt und fortschreiten in den grossen Bildungsgänge der Menschheit” (Fischer 1912: 9).³²⁶

The problem of philosophy experiences an increasing complexity as both poles -self-knowledge and self-configuration- have the structure of a temporal unfolding. The content of the history of philosophy is precisely the narration of this unfolding. Thus, the contemporary philosopher needs to see and understand this movement of problems and solutions in order to understand where he or she stands as a thinker. Philosophy expresses itself in and requires a historical progression; moreover, one of the consequences of the whole argumentative strategy developed by Fischer is that philosophy and the history of philosophy have become an increasingly combined task.³²⁷ Thus, Fischer ends his *Introduction* with the following statement: “Die Menschheit ist ein Problem, das in der Geschichte immer vollständiger entwickelt, in der Philosophie immer deutlicher zum Vorschein gebracht, immer tiefer begriffen wird” (Fischer 1912:15).

Going back to Windelband now, the reference to Fischer’s theory clearly aims to place reason within a developmental frame. It is time, then, to address Windelband’s specific elaboration of this idea, i.e.: How is it possible to understand reason and philosophy’s grounding procedure of reason in the context of the historiography of philosophy? For it is clear that in the case of Kant’s critical philosophy, the concept of reason can neither be identified nor grounded in the empirical existence of human beings; in this sense, reason is an eternal structure that cannot be grounded in what is merely temporal. It is also clear how Fischer departed from this concept of reason by modifying the interpretation of the subject-object relation. Windelband probably mentions Fischer’s formula in order to assert that the basic problem of philosophy is the self-inter-

³²⁶ Indeed, the definition of philosophy as self-knowledge of humanity does not work as a historical abstraction. There is a strong alternative candidate for the title of true object of philosophy: the knowledge of the whole [world]. Fischer argues that philosophy as self-knowledge of humanity embraces the conception of philosophy as knowledge of the whole (Fischer 1912: 10). He also argues that the knowledge of the world presupposes a thinking being that contemplates this world. For this reason, there is no knowledge of the world independent from the self-image of human beings. The evolution of philosophy throughout history shows the truth of this transcendental point of view [Die Welt sind wir selbst].

³²⁷ As I will explain in the following section, Windelband follows Fischer’s idea of a necessary relation between philosophy and history and his interpretation of the primacy of problems. This is shown in the identification of philosophy with the general problem of self-knowledge, and the identification of periods in history through the delimitation of specific predominant problems.

pretation of human spirit, but it is difficult to assess to what extent he agreed with Kuno Fischer's overall position on the necessity of the history of philosophy.

For Windelband, we, as philosophizing beings that attempt to grasp reason, find ourselves in time. This leads him to the key distinction of his essay, which is a repetition of the methodological idea he proposed in "Kritische oder genetische Methode?": we have to differentiate the grounding of rational principles from their discovery. The grounding cannot be done through the presupposition of empirical knowledge. The discovery, on the other hand, cannot be done without reference to human self-knowledge. Thus, a general strategy emerges since Windelband argues that the history of philosophy is relevant as the fundamental source for the aforementioned discovery of rational principles.

Windelband claims, as has been shown in chapter 4, that the content of human reason cannot be grasped through the mediums of psychology or anthropology (Windelband 1905a:184). It is true, he says, that these sciences deal with the conditions of reason's development, but only in a formal sense, for example, in the sense that having a brain is a condition for thinking. But these disciplines cannot decide through their scientific methods and principles, generally based on natural necessity, which conditions serve to distinguish and articulate different aspects of reason's development. In other words, these sciences arrange their explanations as a structure of causes and events, while the expressions of reason in human life, according to Windelband, appear as tasks, objectives, and difficulties. Thus, the recognition of reason's contents involves a structure of finality, which is better suited to the type of narratives presented in historical explanations (Windelband 1905a:184).³²⁸ However, this stance should not be understood as a commitment to a metaphysical explanation of history. On the contrary, it means that rationality does not appear in human life as something given and finished but as an ideal toward which we aspire. This is a basic feature in Windelband's definition of philosophy as a science of norms, as well as in Fischer's connection between self-knowledge and self-formation.

³²⁸ This particular passage clearly shows how the different topics treated in my dissertation -the method of philosophy, the philosophy of history, and the history of philosophy- start to converge. Windelband's preference for history over psychology is not isolated from his understanding of history as an idiographic science.

And this rationality does not manifest itself only in philosophical matters, but in sciences, religion, the arts, and politics. Therefore, the self-knowledge of humankind is not attained merely by explaining our capacity to think, or through the evolutive history of this capacity, but through the reconstruction of the development of the principles and contents operating in all our cultural formations.³²⁹ Seen from this point of view, the apparent conclusion is that the sources of philosophical reflection stem from the history of culture in general. However, the history of philosophy has primacy over the history of other cultural formations:

Die historische Selbsterkenntnis der menschlichen Vernunft, deren die Philosophie als ihrer methodischen Voraussetzung bedarf, gewinnen wir zwar aus der gesamten Entwicklung der Kulturtätigkeiten in der Geschichte, und die einzelnen Zweige der Philosophie, wie Ethik, Religionsphilosophie usw. werden das ihnen zugehörige Material aus den besonderen Teilen dieses historischen Kulturlebens zu meistern haben: aber das unmittelbar und zunächst Gegebene für den Ausgangspunkt der philosophischen Prinzipienlehre bleibt schliesslich ihre eigene Geschichte. (Windelband 1905a:186)

The groundings for the historical definition, the premise in Windelband's argument, is Windelband's characterization of mankind: "Der Mensch als Vernunftwesen ist nicht naturnotwendig gegeben, sondern historisch aufgegeben" (Windelband 1905a:185). History is the medium required to articulate the universal and the empirical dimensions of reason, and, therefore, it is also the primary and presupposed object of philosophical criticism. These are the critical philosopher's materials, and so far, Windelband's argument follows the line set out in "Kritische oder genetische Methode?" proving once again the philosophical relevance of Windelband's doctrine of the organon of philosophy in the context of his philosophical program.³³⁰ As Windelband says: "Das historisch Gegebene der Werte ist das Objekt für die philosophische Kritik" (Windelband 1905a:187).

This line of argument may sound Hegelian, with one key discrepancy. For both philosophers, Hegel and Windelband, the history of philosophy is a part of the system

³²⁹ This imbrication between philosophy and its cultural background represents one of the key factors of Windelband's historical explanation.

³³⁰ "Deshalb ist die Geschichte das Organon der Philosophie, deshalb bildet dieser 'objektive Geist', d.h. der gesamte Tatbestand des historischen Lebens der Menschheit, das empirische Material, an dem sich die Besinnung auf die reine Vernunftwahrheit in der Philosophie entwickelt" (Windelband 1905:186).

of philosophy; however, while in the case of the former, the history of philosophy is the conclusive moment of the system, for Windelband, the history of philosophy represents the starting point. Thus, the meaning of a philosophical history of philosophy changes. During the polemic on the history of philosophy at the end of the eighteenth century, the formulation of a philosophical history of philosophy was achieved only under the presupposition of a specific system of philosophy, the Kantian, the Hegelian, and so on.³³¹ In Windelband's case, the philosophical status of the history of philosophy is determined by exactly the opposite reason, namely, the absence of a presupposed systematic philosophy. Paradoxically, this allows a historical endeavor to be transformed into a philosophical one. Without the constructive presupposition, the history of philosophy becomes a field in which the logical necessity of problems, the historical context, and the idiosyncratic factors introduced by every philosopher are intricately connected.³³²

For Windelband, the prerequisite of the usefulness of history is linked to the possibility of disentangling the multiple dimensions of historical reality in order to obtain philosophical validity from historical materials. These materials constitute a wider totality than that which fits within the boundaries of the philosophically valid. Only the historical purity of the original moment could pave the way for a conceptual treatment of history in which the philosophically relevant is highlighted. This is Windelband's defining critique of Hegel. Although the history of philosophy has a philosophical aim and belongs to the system of philosophy, it has to be pursued as a historical discipline. This is not against its philosophical utility but because of it: "Gerade damit leistet sie [the History of Philosophy] am besten den Dienst, der ihr im systematischen Zusammenhange der Philosophie selbst zukommt" (Windelband 1905a:189). The historian's labor thus becomes more subtle since it cannot be limited to classify past philosophies according to a pre-given schema, but has to conceptualize them as possible guiding threads for our systematical endeavors.

³³¹ See Zeller (1843) for an explicit defense of this presupposition.

³³² This point deserves special attention and prompts a discussion regarding the different factors operating in the history of philosophy.

A further step in Windelband's argument, then, involves describing the organon of philosophy as the history of philosophy. Once this is explained, it is easy to move from this stage to the assertion of the integration between history and system. The importance of his explanation is that it legitimates the inclusion of history into systematic thinking and shows how the different levels in the treatment of history become integrated.

A valid criticism of Windelband's motives can be spelled out in the following terms. At a methodological level, Windelband distinguishes between the discovery and the grounding of philosophical principles. However, it is not clear what the status is of this so-called philosophical truth external to history. Methodologically speaking, the history of philosophy is proposed as the material [*Stoff - Material*] from which the philosopher can constitute the object [*Sache*] of philosophy.³³³ Following Windelband's definition of philosophy from chapter 3, the object of philosophy is the system's universally valid values, i.e., normative consciousness. Therefore, this movement from the materials to the object also has to structure a movement from historical to philosophical validity.

For Windelband, only the latter matters. But the ideality of philosophy means that it is impossible to finish the critical and lay down the concrete system of values once and for all. Since normative consciousness is an idea in the Kantian sense, it is impossible to stop pursuing the clarification of the principles of reason. As we will see in Windelband's formulation of his historiographical method in the next section, there are always three operative factors in history: the individual, the cultural, and the rational. All these factors are at play in the history of philosophy, and, for this reason, they are also operative in thinking as such. These factors are related to the scission between real and normative consciousness. The contemporary philosopher has no guarantee of being able to escape from his own historical condition. But nonetheless, the ideal of philosophical knowledge has to be assumed as a regulative ideal: philosophical thinking has a teleological normative structure. Therefore, how is it possible to reach a level of abstraction

³³³ Hegel claims, on the contrary, that we need the thing (*Sache*) in advance in order to understand its manifestation; this was the key to separate doxography from the scientific history of philosophy.

as high as that required by Windelband's concept of philosophical truth? Should not the philosophical moment ultimately be completely independent from history?³³⁴

Windelband tackles these questions in his introduction to the fourth and final moment of his whole argument, which involves the treatment of the problem of a circular relation between history and philosophy:

Scheinen wir uns also nicht in einem Zirkel zu bewegen, wenn wir auf der einen Seite behaupten, die Philosophie bedürfe ihrer Geschichte, um aus dieser historischen Selbsterkenntnis der menschlichen Vernunft ihre Probleme zu entnehmen, -und wenn wir andererseits nicht verkennen dürfen, dass die Auswahl dessen, was zur Geschichte der Philosophie gehören soll, selber schon eine Vorstellung von der Philosophie als kritischen Masstab voraussetzt? (Windelband 1905a:191)³³⁵

The circle mentioned here is related to the continuity between philosophical and historical motives in the history of philosophy. This is a further development of the problem of the organon of philosophy and a different way to treat the interplay of factors in the history of philosophy. In the case of the history of philosophy, the circular relation between history and philosophy is present in the problem of the selection of historical materials. The problem of selection is challenging for the theory since philosophy takes its material from history, but also requires a pre-concept of philosophy -of systematical import- operating in the background.³³⁶

Windelband speaks of three different interests in the history of philosophy. He confronts the mere empirical or doxographical accumulation of materials with other views, including those proposed by doctrinal or dogmatic tendencies (Windelband

³³⁴ I think that this is Windelband's motive for not pursuing the line of reasoning advanced by Fischer.

³³⁵ The circle in question arises from the claim that philosophy needs to consider its history in order to understand its own concepts and problems since those concepts and problems are undeniably the results of a historical formative process. On the other hand, the point of view presupposed for the history of philosophy is undeniably a certain understanding of the meaning of philosophy (Windelband 1905a:191; Gentile 1909). There are naturally different approaches to an argumentative circle like this. I hope that from my exposition of Windelband's texts, the reader will have the tools to advance Windelband's attitude toward it. The problem of the circle between the history of philosophy and philosophy is similar in spirit or form to the opposition between an empiricist and an idealist approach to the history of philosophy. The circle can manifest itself as a corrective opposition [when the system of philosophy is placed as a principle]: the history predominates over a definite system showing its limitations, or the study of the history of philosophy is done from a peculiar point of view, building thus an a priori history, in which the history of philosophy is the foreground for the appearance of a determinate system (Gentile 1909).

³³⁶ For instance, "dass Jeder, welcher die Geschichte der Philosophie begreifen und darstellen will, zu diesem Geschäft eine bestimmte, zum System entwickelte, philosophische Ansicht mitbringe" (Zeller 1843:6). A certain conception of philosophy has to be presupposed in order to write a history of philosophy. The main discussion is to determine how much substantive doctrine is needed for this purpose.

1905a:198), in which the history of philosophy is but the introduction to a specific philosophical doctrine. Windelband's position attempts to mediate between an ideal and an empirical (or better, apologetic) understanding of the history of philosophy. These extremes give rise to an excessive emphasis on both the historical and the systematical sides of the problem.

Windelband's last word is that the middle path in the history of philosophy is the interest of the educated man. The interest is not focused on the unearthing of long-forgotten details or on a specific doctrine, but the general comprehension of Western thinking. As I have hinted at previously, Windelband does in fact have the theoretical elements needed in order to deal with the problem of the circular relation between philosophy and its history (namely, his distinction between the three factors or modes of explanation in the history of philosophy) but he does not use them in the context of this specific essay. And, in my opinion, Windelband is not entirely clear in this text about this possibility of a pedagogical appropriation of philosophy.

The final remark regarding this key essay, "Geschichte der Philosophie," sets in motion the transition toward Windelband's concrete historiographical method. This transition point established that by mediating between empirical and purely idealistic histories of philosophy, the true philosophical interest in the history of philosophy requires the history of philosophy to be considered a history of problems and concepts:

Eine solche Geschichte der Philosophie ist also notwendig eine Geschichte der Probleme und der Begriffe. Indem sie das geschichtliche Material in dieser Weise gestaltet, legt sie es der Philosophie selbst bereit, um in der Formung ihrer Probleme und ihrer Begriffe das nur historisch Geltende der Veranlassungen und Vermittlungen von dem an sich Geltenden der Vernunftwahrheit abzulösen und von dem Zeitlichen zu dem Ewigen vorzudringen. (Windelband 1905a:199)³³⁷

All in all, Windelband is a Neo-Kantian philosopher. He claims to defend the idea of a critical method in philosophy, but offers a completely new interpretation of this idea, introducing in the core of his proposal a historical dimension absent in the original Kantian system. The result of this movement is the formulation of a new argument for

³³⁷ The preface to Windelband's *Lehrbuch* follows the same line of argument: "Den Schwerpunkt legte ich, Wie schon in der äusseren Form zutage tritt, auf die Entwicklung desjenigen, was im philosophischen Betracht das Wichtigste ist: die Geschichte der Probleme und der Begriffe" (Windelband LGP 1935:VII).

the study of the history of philosophy and also a new methodology for this discipline. Windelband's idea is that the history of philosophy, as a part of the system of philosophy, has a role in the philosophical method. These are the grounds on which the situation of philosophy and that of the sciences is differentiated. Scientists use the results of their predecessors, but only as a starting point and without directly referencing their methodologies. But when our aim as philosophers is to acquire self-knowledge, to understand what humanity is, we need to look at what humanity has done. In this particular sense, Windelband's history of problems can be articulated into one single story, namely, the history of the problem of humanity, which takes diverse problematic forms throughout the different epochs of philosophy. And it is in this peculiar sense that Windelband's method for the history of philosophy most resembles Hegel's idea in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Summing up, Windelband's conception of the critical method is necessarily linked with Windelband's defense of the value of the history of philosophy. The true organon of critical philosophy is finally identified with the history of philosophy. The nature of the critical enterprise explains philosophy's necessary relatedness to its past. Moreover, Windelband's original characterization of the history of philosophy in terms of a progressive grasping of normative consciousness is further characterized as a process of self-knowledge and self-formation.

6.3. THE HISTORY OF PROBLEMS

It is time to analyze Windelband's *Lehrbuch* as a fulfillment of Windelband's theoretical argument presented in the previous section and as an expression of Windelband's systematic ideas. According to Kemper, "Dieses Lehrbuch entwickelt zum ersten Mal im Kontext neukantianischer Theoriebildung den Gedanken der Problemgeschichte programmatisch" (Kemper 2006:12). However, it is correct to say that the *Lehrbuch* represents a concrete exposition that rests on arguments presented both in "Was ist Philosophie?" and "Geschichte der Philosophie?" (Hoffer 1993:33). I will try to show how

the relationship between the critic and the development of his ideas is expressed from the point of view of the method of the history of philosophy.

Although Windelband provides several references to philosophical problems in previous writers, and even a model of the history of concepts, he claims that his approach to the history of philosophy is entirely novel. In contrast, disregarding these earlier attempts, Nicolai Hartmann affirms that a true history of problems remains an unwritten task. How should this situation be dealt with? Is Windelband's historical work a true landmark in the history of philosophy?

The second thematic field regarding the history of problems is directly linked to the previous questions. Although Windelband is clear about the philosophical necessity of the history of philosophy, his own methodology, nonetheless, remains unarticulated, or at least implicit. Windelband's characterization of 'problem' for example, requires further interpretation. He arranges the index of his work according to problems, and not, for instance, by grouping the contents under different philosophical schools. He distinguishes between practical and theoretical problems. However, he does not define the term 'problem' in a clearly conceptual manner.

Finally, there is a recurrent criticism against the naive nature of a history of problems. Sebastian Luft reconstructs this criticism in the following terms: "problem-history proceeds with the naïve assumption that problems exist "in themselves," that they are merely repeated and manifested differently in different epochs" ... "On this view, only someone who has forgotten what the authentic domain of philosophy is concerns himself with the history of philosophy" (Luft 2015:181).³³⁸

There are three disputed aspects of Windelband's history of problems that crystallized in three different indictments: its lack of novelty, its lack of clarity, and its naiveness. I will go back to these criticisms explicitly at the end of this section. For now, I will briefly address the question of Windelband's originality as a historian of philosophy.

The problem of the novelty of Windelband's approach is a contested matter. The idea of a history of philosophical problems clearly predates Windelband's writings, but,

³³⁸ He, of course, does not hold this criticism: "They [the Neo-Kantians] turn to it [history of philosophy] as the source from which originate the highest and most compelling systematic questions, and ultimately the central question of what in actual fact philosophy itself is" (Luft 2015:182).

as Geldsetzer points out in his entry “Problemgeschichte” in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, its origin is difficult to assess, as it coincides with the development of the history of ideas, of concepts, of the general history of philosophy, etc.³³⁹ In fact, Windelband tends not to differentiate between problems, concepts, and principles as the object of his historiographical narration. In Kuno Fischer’s case, for example, problems and systems appear as equally important components:

Ich will die Hauptssysteme, von denen das Licht kommt und die Geschichte der Philosophie in Wahrheit lebt, in ihrem eigenen Geiste methodisch entwickeln und so wiedererzeugen, dass man deutlich sieht, aus welchen Problemen sie hervorgehen, wie sie diese Probleme auflösen und welche ungelösten und noch zu lösenden Fragen sie der Welt zurücklassen. (quoted in Geldsetzer 2017)³⁴⁰

Windelband replaces the reference to systems with a reference to concepts, thus distinguishing the problems from the philosophical concepts developed by the philosophers who attempted to solve them. The preface of the *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* presents us with an insight into Windelband’s idea of a problem-based historiography of philosophy:

... was ich biete, ist ein ernsthaftes Lehrbuch, welches die Entwicklung der Ideen der europäischen Philosophie in übersichtlicher und gedrängter Darstellung schildern soll, um zu zeigen, durch welche Denkantriebe im Laufe der geschichtlichen Bewegung die Prinzipien zum Bewusstsein gebracht und herangebildet worden sind, nach denen wir heute Welt und Menschenleben wissenschaftlich begreifen und beurteilen. (Windelband LGP 1935:VII)

Three things stand out in this passage. In the first place, the reference to the exposition of the history of philosophy as a way to bring philosophical principles to consciousness. However, on this occasion, this bringing to consciousness is mediated by historical time (hence, it is a process of evolution). Finally, the reference to our judging and assessing capabilities. In this sense, there is certain terminological familiarity bet-

³³⁹ Geldsetzer mentions the works of Karl Friedrich Bachmann (1785–1855) as an early reference for the history of problems (Geldsetzer 1968:78). Georg Gustav Fülleborn (1769–1803) is another possible source. Among the philosophers that have been related in one way or another to the writing of a history of problems, it is also worth mentioning Christian August Brandis (1790–1867), Harald Høffding (1843–1931), Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945) and Nicolai Hartmann (1882–1950).

³⁴⁰ “Streckenweise wird die Problemgeschichte praktisch zur ‘Systemgeschichte’ mit vergleichenden Querverweisen, wo dies dem realen Geschehen der Philosophiegeschichte adäquater ist” (Hoffer 1993:35). Also “Im engsten Zusammenhange mit dieser Auffassung der Persönlichkeiten steht endlich die Art, wie Kuno Fischer die Systeme der Philosophen entwickelt. Er lässt sie aus jenem Grundprinzip, das er in der Individualität und ihrem Verhältnis zur Zeit entdeckt hat, organisch entstehen” (Windelband 1897:8).

ween the *Lehrbuch* and the general articulation of Windelband's philosophical program presented in the previous chapters. In order to understand this connection, our efforts have to be directed toward understanding how the evolution of our normative consciousness is related to the concept of philosophical problem.

By mentioning these concepts, Windelband hints at the core question in the discussion of the history of philosophy: its thematic unity, which was one of the aims of Windelband's philosophical pursuit: "Diese [Geschichte] als ein zusammenhängendes und überall ineinandergreifendes Ganzes zu verstehen, ist meine hauptsächliche Absicht gewesen" (Windelband LGP 1935:VII).

As we know, there is no unity of concept, object, or method in the history of philosophy. In the context of the *Lehrbuch*, Windelband repeats his claim that the unity of the history of philosophy comes from the changing meaning of the discipline:

Dieser gemeinsame Ertrag aber, der den Sinn der Geschichte der Philosophie ausmacht, beruht gerade auf den wechselnden Beziehungen, in denen sich die Arbeit der Philosophen nicht nur zu den reifsten Erzeugnissen der Wissenschaften, sondern auch zu den übrigen Kulturtätigkeiten der europäischen Menschheit im Lauge der Geschichte befunden hat. (Windelband LGP 1935:8)

However, Windelband does find a unity of scope in the history of philosophy precisely because philosophy has been defined as the process of self-knowledge of reason. Philosophy has conceptually explicated not only our rational activity but also the non-conceptual ways in which this activity is manifested (perceptions, feelings, impulses).

Windelband sums up this idea by affirming that "Die Geschichte der Philosophie ist der Prozess, durch welchen die europäische Menschheit ihre Weltauffassung und Lebensurteilung in wissenschaftliche Begriffen niedergelegt hat" (Windelband LGP 1935:4)". With this passage, the beginning of Windelband's *Lehrbuch* condenses Windelband's theoretical argument from "Geschichte der Philosophie". Past philosophies are viewed jointly as belonging to the same attempt at self-knowledge of humanity. Philosophy is an attempt to elucidate the different processes of self-formation and self-understanding through conceptual means. By conceptualizing the different cultural manifestations, here identified as pre-conceptual worldviews and judgments on life, philo-

sophy grants them a distinctive scientific form.³⁴¹ For this reason, philosophical doctrines cannot be detached from their peculiar context. Such a distinction between a system and its cultural context is highly artificial at first glance, since it is impossible to dissolve the connection between philosophical concepts, the intuitive view of the world, and human life present in each epoch of human history.

The unity of the history of philosophy is, therefore, twofold. On the one hand, there is a unity of philosophy that belongs to its task, i.e., conceptually grasping the pre-conceptual standpoints on the world and human life. On the other hand, the different philosophies are unities insofar as they belong to the same concrete historical process of self-formation and self-knowledge. Philosophy is characterized as a western enterprise. These characterizations do not stand against Windelband's definition of philosophy as the science of normative consciousness. Quite the contrary, they represent its concrete instantiation. Philosophy attempts to make explicit, to grant a conceptual form to the objective values that inherently guide our rational behavior. Giving values this conceptual form would secure their worth as universal and necessary principles. However, since the very idea of providing this conceptual form transforms philosophy into a critical enterprise (this is the result of Kant's transformation of philosophy), these principles acquire their validity by means of an unending discursive process, i.e., a process that unfolds over time. The science of normative consciousness necessarily has a history. While the history of humanity, in general, contains all human cultural manifestations, every intuitive vision of the world, and the place of human beings in this world, the history of philosophy contains the recollection of the reflexive attempts to grant those visions a conceptual form.

The progressive transformation of consciousness is embodied through diverse concepts and problems. This progress, nonetheless, is not lineal. On the contrary, it is articulated through the intersection of three factors or modes of historical explanation. This distinguishing of three different explanatory factors represents the most important aspect of Windelband's historiographical methodology, for it explains the difference with the previous attempts at an idealist historiography of philosophy and why Windel-

³⁴¹ This interpretation is already present in "Was ist Philosophie?" and "Über Sokrates." In this last essay, Socrates' philosophical quest is interpreted as a conceptualization or rationalization of former traditional beliefs, i.e., as the rational shaping of the intuitive Greek worldview.

band placed a huge emphasis on the relationship between philosophy and other cultural manifestations of humanity. Moreover, these factors represent the diverse elements implicit Windelband's definition of philosophy as the science of normative consciousness. I will try to place a special emphasis on this relationship since Windelband's rather shallow treatment of these factors has often led this connection to be overlooked by the specialized literature. These factors, which I will explain in detail, are the pragmatic, the cultural, and the individual.

The first factor that affects the historical movement of philosophy is the 'pragmatic factor' (pragmatische Faktor³⁴²), which can also be described as objective (sachlich³⁴³) or logical. Windelband offers a brief and condensed presentation that has not been duly analyzed from a theoretical point of view. For this reason, I will quote it in full:

Denn die Probleme der Philosophie sind der Hauptsache nach gegeben, und es erweist sich dies darin, dass sie im historischen Verlaufe des Denkens als die 'uralten Rätsel des Daseins' immer wieder kommen und gebieterisch immer von neuem die nie wollständig gelingende Lösung verlangen. Gegeben aber sind sie durch die Unzulänglichkeit und widerspruchsvolle Unausgeglichenheit des der philosophischen Besinnung zugrunde liegenden Vorstellungsmaterials. Aber eben deshalb enthält auch das letztere die sachlichen Voraussetzungen und die logischen Nötigungen für jedes vernünftige Nachdenken darüber, und weil sich diese der Natur und Sache nach immer wieder in derselben Weise geltend machen, so wiederholen sich in der Geschichte der Philosophie nicht nur die Hauptprobleme, sondern auch die Hauptrichtungen ihrer Lösung" (Windelband LGP 1935:9-10) ... "Und ebenso begreift es sich, dass dieselbe sachliche Notwendigkeit eventuell zu wiederholten Malen aus einer Lehre eine andere hervortreibt. Deshalb ist der Fortschritt in der Geschichte der Philosophie in de Tat streckenweise durchaus pragmatisch, d.h. durch die inner Notwendigkeit der Gedanken und durch die 'Logik der Dinge' zu verstehen (Windelband LGP 1935:10).

I think that there are two ways to approach this idea of pragmatic history. On the one hand, there is an established meaning for this term, one which permeates writings

³⁴² The term 'pragmatic' has been employed several times to describe this specific type of history. One example is Salomon Maimon's text on the progress of metaphysics from 1793: "Eine pragmatische Geschichte der Philosophie, wovon diese Auflösung ein Theil soll, muss a priori geschrieben werden. Der menschliche Geist bleibt sich selbst gleich" (Maimon 1793:6). A systematic treatment of the concept of the pragmatic history of philosophy is found in the works of Conrad Hermann. Hermann, 1863, *Der pragmatische Zusammenhang in der Geschichte der Philosophie*.

³⁴³ "Auch der Standpunct eines jeden grossen philosophischen Systems in der Geschichte ist gleichsam ein an sich oder im Voraus schon im Wesen der Dinge gegebener; jedes philosophische System zeigt uns die Welt von einer anderen Seite; diese Seite aber ist immer eine an ihr selbst und ihrem Inhalte vorhandene" (Conrad 1863:1).

on the history of philosophy from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. On the other hand, there is Windelband's usage of the term. I differentiate Windelband's understanding of the term because he singles out advantages and disadvantages of undertaking a history of philosophy from a purely pragmatic point of view. In doing so, he modifies a basic feature of this model of historiography, that is, he supplements this view with the aid of two other factors. While traditional presentations developed pragmatic histories, that is, narratives completely dependent on this point of view, Windelband transformed the pragmatic treatment of history into a factor whose meaning cannot be isolated from its relationship with the other two components of the method of the history of philosophy. For this reason, I will venture to say that what was traditionally regarded as a pragmatic factor represents, in Windelband's case, a mode of explanation that comprises the level of the universal consciousness. It considers the history of philosophy as being articulated in terms of the relation between recurrent philosophical problems. It represents the most abstract level of reflection on the history of philosophy. However, in a concrete historiographical exposition, it has to be related both to the collective consciousness of a society and the individual consciousness of the philosopher.

Regarding the inner dynamic character of the pragmatic mode of explanation, Windelband considers that philosophical problems and theories are engendered from materials deemed incomplete and not fully compatible. And, since these materials point toward real presuppositions and imply certain logical necessities for philosophical reflections, the history of philosophy not only repeats its main problems but also the typical solutions to these problems (Windelband LGP 1935:9-10). Philosophical problems emerge from our insufficient understanding of reality, but they neither evolve in a completely haphazard way nor establish completely arbitrary relations. Philosophical problems represent real and recurrent obstacles for the human spirit. And, if one can even speak of progress in the history of philosophy, it is only under the presupposition of a complex comprehension and development of the understanding of problems.

This recurrence of problems leads to the idea of building a formal or abstract history of philosophy, like Kant's history of pure reason. This formal history implies a presentation of philosophy in terms of the articulation of permanent problems and the logical possibilities for their solution. The difference with Windelband's position is the

following: while the unilateral emphasis on the logical dimension produces a false belief in an a priori structure of problems and concepts, these are taken as a posterior instantiation of that structure in historical reality. Windelband tries to determine which problems are central to the thought of a given epoch, how these problems were related, and how these problems have affected the development of philosophy.³⁴⁴ Windelband's historiographical path does not start from pure and eternal problems and concepts in order to follow to history; he rather attempts to go from history to problems. This aspect of Windelband's conception of philosophical problems is easier to grasp if my association between universal consciousness and the pragmatic factor is accepted. The complete abstract determination of philosophical problems represents the problematic arriving point of the history of philosophy, constituting in this manner a Kantian ideal.

Moreover, Windelband denounces the inadequacy of prototypical histories of philosophy insofar as they offer an extension of the logical factor in the history of philosophy. Here, again, Hegel's name is brought up along with those of Comte, Brentano, and Cousin.³⁴⁵ To sum up, Windelband recognizes a logical factor in the history of ideas, a factor strongly relevant since the inner contradictions in the relationship between mind and world condition the emergence of philosophical problems and philosophical answers to those problems. But this logical dimension is not the only factor operating in history. For this reason, it is not possible to reduce the history of philosophy to a limited set of principles or to interpret the temporal unfolding of philosophies through a logical unfolding of those principles. In Windelband's case, logical and temporal factors have a reciprocal role in the understanding of the history of philosophy.

³⁴⁴ To compare with: "Das heisst den sachlich-systematischen Zusammenhang der historischen Abfolge im Blick, wobei er [Windelband] aber nicht von einem systematischen Zusammenhang der Probleme selbst ausgeht und fragt, wie sie sich geschichtlich realisieren, sondern er untersucht, welche Probleme sich in der historischen Bewegung der Philosophie manifestieren, wie sie untereinander zusammenhängen und auf den Fortgang der Philosophie in ihrer Geschichte einwirken. Windelband handhabt das problemgeschichtliche Verfahren als ein komplexes, vielseitiges Instrumentarium, welches er dem jeweiligen historischen Material geschickt und ideenreich anzupassen weiss" (Hoffer 1993:34-35)].

³⁴⁵ Kubalica opposes Hegel and Windelband's conceptions of the history of philosophy in the following manner: "Im Gegensatz zu Hegels absoluter, resp. theologischer Vorstellung der Geschichte war Windelbands Geschichtsverständnis eher ein menschliches und deshalb philosophisches. Er hat bei der Auffassung der philosophischen Geschichte die »Mannigfaltigkeit von Einzelbewegungen des Denkens« mit den in ihr enthaltenen Aufstellungen der Probleme und dem Versuch ihrer Lösungen zugelassen" (Kubalica 2018:172).

Windelband synthesizes the fundamental character of this factor but also its defined limits in the following evaluation of Hegel's history of philosophy:

Aber das unvergängliche Verdienst Hegels ist es, daß er in der Geschichte der Begriffe das Organon der Philosophie erkannt hat. Ihm verdanken wir die Einsicht, daß die Gestaltung der Probleme und Begriffe, wie sie die Entwicklung der menschlichen Vernunft in der Geschichte herbeigeführt hat, für uns die allein zureichende Form ist, um die Aufgaben der Philosophie für ihre systematische Behandlung vorzubereiten. Nur diese historische Grundlage kann davor schützen, längst Erkanntes von Neuem zu entdecken oder Unmögliches zu wollen. Nur sie aber ist auch imstande, uns mit Sicherheit und Vollständigkeit über den Problembestand des Philosophierens zu orientieren. Denn die Besinnung auf den notwendigen Inhalt des vernünftigen Bewußtseins überhaupt, welche die letzte Aufgabe der Philosophie bildet, kann der Mensch nicht aus seiner natürlichen Unmittelbarkeit, sondern nur aus der Vermittlung seines eigenen Wesens durch seine Geschichte gewinnen." (Windelband EPh 1914:17)

This passage goes a step further in the progression that I have been tracing throughout this chapter. While Windelband's discussion of the critical method assigned a prominent methodological role to history; now the history of philosophy emerges not only as the necessary organon of critical philosophy but as a discipline understood according to Windelband's precise definition: a history of problems and concepts.

Additionally, the passage stresses the problematic character of a history of reason. The history of our grasp of rational contents is inextricably mediated by our own being and our own human history. For this reason, even though there is a logical relation between the different problems of philosophy, their temporal succession does not follow a pure order. According to Windelband: "Denn aus den Vorstellungen des allgemeinen Zeitbewusstsein und aus den Bedürfnissen der Gesellschaft empfängt die Philosophie ihre Probleme, wie die Materialien zu deren Lösung" (Windelband LGP 1935:11). This justifies the inclusion of another factor that conditions the history of philosophy: the history of civilization (kulturgeschichtliche Faktor).

We have seen this cultural factor operating in Windelband's historical definition of philosophy, for the varying cultural interests, scientific discoveries, and political issues put pressure on the resolution of peculiar philosophical queries, and therefore shaped the transformation of philosophy. The historical changes in the meaning of philosophy are related to different cultural interests, scientific findings, and political crises. Win-

Windelband considers that each epoch in the history of philosophy is characterized by the primacy of a nucleus of philosophical problems. But this primacy is not explained as the result of a logical sequence but in connection with certain cultural situations. Philosophical problems also stem from and are always understood in relation to concrete cultural necessities.

This factor is as important as the logical factor. Therefore, the history of problems is not only directed toward the explanation of the logical relations between problems; its tasks are deeper since the relations between problems are not configured exclusively by logical factors. There is always an empirical moment associated with the specific history of every human culture. As Windelband says, the historical-cultural factor breaks the continuity of the pragmatic factor. The solving of problems and the formation of philosophical concepts does not arise solely from a logical necessity but the peculiar -collective- necessity of each individual nation.

Windelband praises his former teacher Kuno Fischer for modeling a history of philosophy according to the history of culture: "Er [K.F.] betrachte die Philosophie in ihrer historischen Entfaltung als die fortschreitende Selbsterkenntnis des menschlichen Geistes und lässt ihre Entwicklung als stetig bedingt durch die Entwicklung des in ihr zur Selbsterkenntnis gelangenden Objekts erscheinen" (Windelband LGP 1935:11). In Windelband's case, this factor is made clear in the complete title of his history of modern philosophy: *Die Geschichte der neueren Philosophie in ihrem Zusammenhänge mit der allgemeinen Kultur und den besonderen Wissenschaften*.

Again, the explanation of different philosophies cannot be the sole result of a contextual analysis since there is, after all, a logical factor in the history of philosophy that transcends cultural determinations. However, the cultural factor establishes which philosophical problems are more pressing, which resources are available for the philosophers -scientific theories, religious views, political institutions-, which solutions admissible, etc (Windelband LGP 1935:11).

The third factor is the personality of the philosopher. Every attempt to understand philosophical problems and solve them is carried forward by a particular individual who is not only immersed in a cultural context in relation to his or her understanding of the abstract nature of problems and the formulation of concepts, but who attempts to

understand problems from a unique standpoint. The final formulation of any given philosophy, the way in which it manages to present a conceptual solution to a certain problem, depends on the particular creativity of the individual philosopher. The history of philosophy is no exception to the ideographic character of history: “Dass die Geschichte das Reich der Individualitäten, der unwiederholbaren und in sich wertbestimmten Einzelheiten ist, zeigt sich auch in der Geschichte der Philosophie” (Windelband LGP 1935:12).

The coexistence of diverse factors at play in the history of philosophy justifies Windelband’s expression “confusion of problems.” This confusion is caused by the convergence of objective and subjective elements. Since the logical dimension of philosophical problems is wrought with concrete historical elements that are in principle external to them, modes of associations that are not in themselves logical emerge among problems and concepts. Cultural factors can determine a force connection between different spheres of problems.

In discussion with Emile Boutroux, Windelband sums up the grounding of the logical and historical factors operating in the history of philosophy in the following way:

Die Struktur der Vernunft ist uns doppelt gegeben: einmal in der ersten Selbstbesinnung des philosophierenden Denkens, und ein anderes Mal in ihrer historischen Entfaltung. Diese beiden Erscheinungsweisen erleuchten sich gegenseitig, und deshalb gehört zur Philosophie — anders als bei allen andern Wissenschaften — ihre Geschichte selbst als integrierender Bestandteil. (Boutroux 1905:60)

Finally, the interrelation of factors explains the three different tasks that Windelband sets for the history of philosophy. In the introduction to his *Lehrbuch*, Windelband explains three different dimensions of the historiographical work. The first of them is related to the gathering of materials belonging to a specific philosophical doctrine. This task is more closely related to the individual factor since it involves the study of the sources, life, and evolution of the thinking of a given philosopher. The second task consists in reconstructing the genesis of that specific doctrine by describing preceding doctrines or the dominant ideas of an epoch. These two tasks are considered eminently historical. The last task consists in establishing the value of a specific philosophical doc-

trine. This is properly a philosophical or critical task. It seeks to discern the universally valid elements present in a philosophical doctrine. The norms of evaluation are briefly stated in the *Lehrbuch* as logical coherence and fecundity of ideas.

One can say that philosophy appears in its history in a threefold way, or at least we can introduce the individual as the subjective moment, as the consciousness that grasps reason in its double mode of presentation or apprehension. Hoffer is of a similar opinion: “Die Problemgeschichte hat damit eine zweifache Gestalt. Sie ist einerseits philosophische Kritik, welche die historischen Problemstellungen auf die objektiven, ‘überhistorischen’ Problemgehalte hin bezieht und sie beurteilt. Andererseits ist sie historische Darstellung der Problemstellungen im realen Prozess des philosophischen Denkens” (Hoffer 1993). My suggestion is that this double mode of presentation gives rise to the specific interpretation of philosophical tasks: the interpretation of reason as a logical structure by transcendental philosophy (chapter 3); the interpretation of history as rational (chapter 5) and two different attempts to reconcile pure and historical reason (chapters 4 and 6). The final problem of philosophy is the creation of a single unified view in which all factors operate in unison: both the history of problems and the concept of worldview are at play in Windelband’s final attempt to clarify this constellation of factors.

At this point, I will return to the criticisms leveled against Windelband’s conception of the history of philosophy. I previously mentioned three issues raised in relation to the history of problems: novelty, clarity, and naiveness. As far as the novelty and clarity of the doctrine is concerned, there is not much left to be said on the subject. Windelband may not have been the first author to highlight the role of concepts and problems in the history of philosophy, but the originality of his theory does not lie in this area but in his specific treatment of these categories. Windelband’s historiographical method is dependent on his unique definition of philosophy, and, for this reason, his take on the history of problems is unique. Regarding the clarity of Windelband’s theory, I think that the most obscure aspects of the history of problems have been dispelled. The problem with Windelband’s conception is not his intrinsic obscurity but the lack of a proper articulation between his ideas. As often happens with Windelband’s theories, the elements that may serve to reconstruct his thinking are not condensed in a single

source. His history of problems is usually treated in isolation from Windelband's Neo-Kantian programmatic, but, as I have shown, even his division of factors in writing the history of philosophy can be related to his more robust conception of normative consciousness. In sum, the articulation of his theory of the history of philosophy necessarily leads back to Windelband's definition of philosophy, to his conception of the critical method, and to his philosophy of history.³⁴⁶

The problem of the naiveness of Windelband's history of problems can only be addressed by reference to the fundamental criticisms raised against this methodology, that is, the assumption of the existence of an unchanging set of philosophical problems. As far as this criticism is concerned, I must say in advance that it is directed at the general formulation of a history of problems, and those who have raised it may not have had Windelband's proposal as their main target of criticism.³⁴⁷ In any case, I will consider these criticisms from the point of view of this research, i.e., from the perspective of Windelband's philosophy.

In the first place, there is an opposition between the history of philosophy and intellectual history, which also employs the concept of problem in its formulations. The authors of the introduction to the classic *Philosophy in History* criticize the division of labor between intellectual history and the history of philosophy and the suggestion that these disciplines are concerned with the meaning and the truth of past thought, respectively (Schneewind, Skinner, and Rorty 1984:4). These authors take for granted that those who defend the aforementioned view of history also conceive of philosophy's domain as being constituted by a "set of timeless problems" (Schneewind, Skinner, and Rorty 1984:8). Naturally, the authors of this preface are against such a fixed division between intellectual history and the history of philosophy (Schneewind, Skinner, and Rorty 1984:10). However, the employment of the concept of problem proves to be reductive since they define the history of philosophy as both a problem-oriented and an antiquarian enterprise. Windelband's history of problems, on the contrary, both addresses philosophical problems and the connection with a particular cultural context. Seen

³⁴⁶ Exceptions are Chang (2012), Chang (2018), and Kubalica (2018).

³⁴⁷ Nicolai Hartmann's version of the history of problems is a popular candidate among the critics of the history of problems.

from this perspective, the preface of *Philosophy in History* attempts to bridge a gulf that in the concrete development of a history of problems cannot be said to exist.³⁴⁸ I mention this specific point to highlight a common feature in the discussion of a possible history of problems, namely, the false claim according to which those who defend this view accept the existence of non-temporal philosophical problems shared by the philosophers from the present and the past.³⁴⁹

The ambiguity between the eternal or temporal character of problems finds a reference point in the historiography of Kuno Fischer. Leo Catana quotes a passage that I mentioned in my discussion of Fischer's history of philosophy and that Windelband appeared to approve:

Die Menschheit ist ein Problem, das in der Geschichte immer vollständiger entwickelt, in der Philosophie immer deutlicher zum Vorschein gebracht, immer tiefer begriffen wird: das ist, kurz gesagt, der ganze Inhalt der Geschichte der Philosophie, ein Inhalt selbst von größter geschichtlicher Bedeutung. Erst dann sieht man die Geschichte der Philosophie im richtigen Lichte, wenn man in ihr den Entwicklungsgang erkennt, in welchem die nothwendigen Probleme der Menschheit mit aller Deutlichkeit bestimmt und so gelöst werden, daß aus jeder Lösung in fortschreitender Ordnung immer neue und tiefere Probleme entspringen. (Fischer 1912:15)

Regarding this passage, Catana advances the following interpretation: "Fischer, for instance, held that philosophy's development is determined by a stable set of philosophical problems and various philosophers' attempts to answer them" (Catana 2013:21). I have presented a different interpretation, but I will emphasize the following point in connection with this quotation. Fischer speaks of a problem that appears throughout the history of philosophy, i.e., the problem of humanity. There is another reference to pro-

³⁴⁸ Windelband's characterization of the tasks of the history of philosophy is another example of this situation, as it contains, in a single methodological proposal, research tasks that in other expositions are artificially ascribed to intellectual history and the history of philosophy.

³⁴⁹ This is the center of Rorty's attack on the traditional histories of philosophy, which he mistakenly calls "doxographies." Rorty says regarding the failure of doxographies: "The main reason for this recurrent half-heartedness is the idea that 'philosophy' is the name of a natural kind - the name of a discipline which, in all ages and places, has managed to dig down to the same deep, fundamental, questions" (Rorty 1984:63). Kruger provides another similar characterization: "Simplifying somewhat, the common core of several different variants of this view can be identified as the assumption that philosophy is characterized by a specific set of tasks which remain constant through history" (Kruger 1984:79). Windelband opens "Was ist Philosophie?" explaining why philosophy cannot be defined in terms of a set of unchanging fundamental questions.

blems, this time in the plural, but these problems are new problems that emerge from our philosophical attempt to solve the problem of humanity.³⁵⁰ These problems are not characterized as eternal; on the contrary, they are “new” problems, they have a specific origin in a specific moment of history. What is constant is the characterization of the history of philosophy as the process of self-knowledge of humanity. But in the historical attempt to solve this recurrent problem, novelty arises. Similarly, Windelband does not claim that the history of philosophy is articulated by reference to eternal problems; rather, he articulates his narrative by ascribing to each specific epoch its own distinctive dominant problem. Therefore, problems in the plural are not eternal but historically located. The unifying thread in these histories is not the shared assumption of a set of perennial problems but Fischer’s definition of philosophy as self-knowledge of humanity and Windelband’s definition of philosophy as the science of normative consciousness.

There is, however, a problematic reference for my interpretation. In his *Einleitung der Philosophie* (1914), Windelband mentions the idea of permanent problems and solutions in the history of philosophy as the basis for the temporal continuity of the discipline. In Windelband’s words:

Wenn aber dann schliesslich doch immer wieder dieselben Probleme und dieselbe Gegensätze der Lösungsversuche sich geltend machen, so ist gerade das der beste Rechtstitel für die Philosophie. Es beweist, dass ihre Probleme notwendig sind, unentfliehbar sachlich gegeben, unweigerlich aufgegeben, so dass sich kein ernstes Denken, einmal erwacht, ihnen entziehen kann (Windelband EPh 1914:11)

There are different ways to approach this troublesome passage. The first important aspect is that this statement does not belong to the history of philosophy proper but to a general introduction to philosophy (Windelband EPh 1914:12). Windelband does not use this idea to develop his historical narrative. The *Einleitung*, on the contrary, offers a

³⁵⁰ Catana considers that Fischer’s reference to the problems of the world, knowledge, freedom, and religion that Fischer mentions in the first volume of his *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie* represents a set of perennial problems (Catana 2013:121). I take issue with this view because Fischer refers to these four questions with to offer an overview of Greek philosophy, not the history of philosophy as such. Moreover, the fourth chapter, which concerns the middle ages, presents the epoch’s specific problem in terms of the specific purposes of scholasticism and its relationship with the Church. The chapter on the alternative positions facing Cartesian dualism is also called “Beurtheilung des Systems. Ungelöste und neue Probleme.”

panoramic and abstract vision of the different sub-disciplines of philosophy and their different lines of inquiry.

The second aspect is the provisional character that Windelband ascribes to this section of his book. The passages on the concept of problem belong to the introduction of the work and Windelband still does not have enough materials to determine the nature of the philosophical problems at this stage. For this reason Windelband relativizes his own statement about the perennial nature of problems, claiming that some problems may have been solved while other may be insoluble (Windelband EPh 1914:13).

In third place, the necessity present in Windelband's passage has a very specific meaning. It represents a plea against a possible arbitrariness of philosophy. Despite the existence of subjective elements in the formulation and resolution of a philosophical problem, these problems also have an objective dimension, and this dimension is already problematic. Philosophical problems are not the mere result of the arbitrary imagination of the philosopher but arise from the constant attempts to understand the relationship between the world and our thought. What is problematic is this relationship itself.³⁵¹ Problematicity is perennial, not some concrete problem. For this reason, philosophical thinking is not a casual but a necessary endeavor of humanity.

These last considerations allow a brief reflection on the last book of Windelband. At first glance, it is surprising that Windelband's most systematic work takes the form of an introduction to philosophy. However, this work can be put in relation to the *Lehrbuch*. While the *Lehrbuch* concretely presents philosophy as an articulation of objective and subjective factors, the *Einleitung* exposes the objective factor in isolation. Therefore, the *Einleitung* deals with problems but takes a different approach than the *Lehrbuch*. The *Einleitung* is an attempt to formalize and systematize the philosophical problems that pervade the history of philosophy (Windelband EPh 1914:11). From this perspective, it is possible to understand why this introduction comes after Windelband's *Lehrbuch*:

Daher fasst sich die Aufgabe, um die es sich hier handelt, dahin zusammen, die Hauptprobleme der Philosophie und die Richtungen, nach denen ihre Lösung zu suchen ist, mit umfassender Darlegung ihrer historischen Erscheinungen zu ent-

³⁵¹ Windelband recalls the Kantian assertion that the adequacy between matter of experience and forms of our thinking is a "glückliche Tatsache" (Windelband EPh 1914:13).

wickeln, zu begründen und zu beurteilen: auf diesem Weg gestaltet sich die Einleitung in die Philosophie zu einer kritischen Untersuchung über die möglichen Formen philosophischer Weltansicht. (Windelband EPh 1914:14)

Building on the results of the history of philosophy, Windelband's last book seeks to pass a critical judgment on these results. Using the history of philosophy as an organon, philosophy finally reaches the point of the critical elaboration of its historical contents. Given the internal problematic of these contents, Windelband gives this formalization the name of antinomianism (Antinomismus). Antinomianism is another label that Windelband employs for the inner problematicity of the connection between reality and thinking, or between "is" and "ought". Despite the fact that history shows the progressive realization of normative consciousness, the gap between the real and the ideal cannot be closed. Windelband explains this gap as inherent to the concept of value: "Zu der Tatsache des Wertens gehört notwendig die Dualität des Werthaftens und des Wertwidrigen in der Wirklichkeit" (Windelband EPh 1914:426). If our knowledge of reality were complete, if the final truth were reached, we would lose our grasp on the evaluative nature of knowledge. This duality is for Windelband a last and unsolvable problem (Windelband EPh 1914:434).

In this final reflection on the relationship between the real and the ideal, Windelband offers his last words on the relationship between philosophy history:

Fielen Wert und Wirklichkeit zusammen, so gäbe es kein Wollen und kein Geschehen: denn dann beharrte alles in ewiger Fertigkeit. Der innerste Sinn der *Zeitlichkeit* ist die niemals aufzuhebende Verschiedenheit zwischen dem, was ist, und dem, was sein soll, und weil diese Verschiedenheit, die sich in unserm Willen darstellt, die Grundbedingung des Menschenlebens ausmacht, so kann unsere Erkenntnis niemals über sie hinaus zu dem Verständnis ihres Ursprung reichen. (Windelband EPh 1914:434)

6.4. CONCLUSIONS

Windelband's conception is always articulated in view of a material exigence of empirical objectivity and a formal framework provided by his conception of normative consciousness. In this sense, Windelband's historiography of philosophy is both constituted and regulated by a reference to an ideal consciousness. In the case of Windelband's own methodology, it is represented by the reference to the pure dimension of

philosophical problems. Thus, Windelband advances a formal understanding of historical teleology represented by his conception of philosophy as a science of normative consciousness and a material treatment of this conception in the form of a history of problems.

From chapter 3 onwards, I have been pursuing this precise line of concretion which spans from Windelband's abstract characterization of Neo-Kantian philosophy to his most concrete formulations. The next and final step required can be characterized by reference to Sebastian Luft's opinion on problem-history:

Thus, the Neo-Kantian treatment of philosophical history as problem-history is, in principle and transcending the differences between its schools, fundamentally the attempt to appropriate history with a forward regard ... out of the insight into the historicity of philosophy itself. Anyone who desires to 'scientifically assess and evaluate our contemporary world and human life' will have to understand the development of these principles 'in the course of historical movement'. Accordingly, only someone who studies the history of philosophy can philosophize properly" (Luft 2015:183).

Now that the necessity of the history of philosophy has been established, the next step consists in analyzing and evaluating the resulting concrete and detailed interpretation of philosophical history provided by Windelband.

THIRD PART: HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY ACKNOWLEDGED

CHAPTER 7: FROM NEO-KANTIANISM TO NEO-HEGELIANISM

“Was soll aus dem Kritizismus werden?”
(Windelband 1904)

My exposition of Windelband’s philosophical program in chapters 3 to 6 shows that Windelband’s philosophical program turned its focus on the formulation of a historical philosophy. History plays a role both in the determination of the method and the object of philosophy. This resulted in a distinctive emphasis on the philosophical relevance of the historiography of philosophy. This transformation has been related with Windelband’s adoption of a distinctively Hegelian line of reasoning. Examples of this shift include Windelband’s identification of history with the methodological organon of critical philosophy or the claim that the history of philosophy is an integral and necessary part of the system of philosophy. The second part of my investigation, therefore, has interpreted the transformation of Windelband’s philosophical program in the light of his progressive recognition of the role of historical consciousness for transcendental philosophy. Moreover, this progressive recognition has been directly related to Windelband’s appropriation of certain Hegelian elements. This chapter sums up this appropriation of Hegelian philosophy through a discussion of Windelband’s later texts. This Neo-Hegelianism represents Windelband’s last, albeit incomplete, formulation of his philosophical program. At the end of his career, Windelband acknowledged the inner transformation of his own philosophical system.

The chapter is articulated through the discussion of three different but essentially interconnected themes. In the first place, I discuss Windelband’s historiographical account of Classical German Philosophy and the conclusion that Windelband reached from this account, namely, that the Neo-Kantian movement must advance toward an appropriation of Hegelian philosophy. The fundamental point of reference for considering this subject is 1910 Windelband’s conference “Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus.” For many interpreters, this text represents a true turning point in Windelband’s written production since in this conference he faces directly, for the first time, the conclusions reached by the inner development of his philosophical program. Without any sense of irony, Windelband calls into question the results of the precedent phi-

losophy, which aimed at overcoming the identity crisis of philosophy through the equation of the latter with the formulation of a critical theory of knowledge (Windelband EH 1915 1:274). I consider this conference not only trailblazing as far as a new philosophical movement is concerned but also the final step in Windelband's reformulation of his philosophy. The analysis of "Die Erneuerung of Hegelianismus" offers us the opportunity to address Windelband's own narrative regarding the process that I reconstructed in the previous four chapters.

In the second place, I explain Windelband's more abstract expression of his systematic philosophy through his redefinition of teleological idealism in terms of a philosophy of culture. The discussion of this shift from one interpretation to the other is centered around the determination of two concepts that, strictly speaking, do not belong to the Hegelian vocabulary: culture and worldview. Thus, the principal point of reference is represented by another text from 1910: "Kulturphilosophie und transzendentaler Idealismus."

Finally, the last section considers the general meaning of Windelband's proposal for a "renewal" of German philosophy through a discussion of the stance advanced by two of his major disciples: Heinrich Rickert and Richard Kroner. Although Windelband did not offer a full description of the grounds and consequences of the historical renewal that he preached for, these two disciples offer sufficient conceptual tools to evaluate his merits and deficiencies. Despite their acknowledgment of Neo-Hegelianism as a shift away from Windelband's departure point, both Rickert and Kroner consider this move highly problematic. The exposition of the problems involved in the shift from Neo-Kantianism to Neo-Hegelianism will provide us with the final elements required to conclude this investigation of Wilhelm Windelband's historical philosophy.

7.1. THE RENEWAL OF HEGELIANISM

"Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus" is the title of a conference that Windelband gave in 1910 at Heidelberg's Academy of Sciences. This text is not only a representative of Windelband's philosophical development, but it has become a reference point for

the few historical studies dealing with the *Hegel-Renaissance* at the beginning of the twentieth century (Levy 1927; Honigsheim 1968). For Gerhard Lehmann, Windelband's conference proclaims decisively, for the first time, the necessity of a serious undertaking of Hegel's philosophy (Lehmann 1913:195)³⁵².

For the unsuspecting reader, this brief text comes as a surprise in the context of Windelband's philosophical production. In the first edition of "Kritische oder genetische Methode?", Windelband spoke decidedly against any possible value of Hegel's dialectical method for the study of philosophy (Windelband 1884:275). Later, in an homage to Kuno Fischer (Windelband 1897), while referring to Fischer's recent publication of his book on Hegel included in the *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Windelband put a special emphasis on the limited character of Hegel's value:

Und auch hier wird die Lösung der Aufgabe eine That historischer Gerechtigkeit werden. Freilich wird sich diesmal nicht der Ruf erheben: „Zurück zu Hegel". Denn das ist der Unterschied, dass mit Kants Lehre auch ihre begrifflichen Formen und ihr terminologischer Apparat wieder auferstehen konnten, und dass dies bei Hegel unmöglich ist. Aber wenn Kuno Fischer die Hegelsche Philosophie in unserer Sprache zu uns reden lässt, so wird die Welt mit Staunen sehen, wie tief der Geist dieser Lehre der Wissenschaft des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts im Blute steckt. (Windelband 1897:14)

Although Fischer's exposition has an intrinsic value, augmented by the fact that Fischer had started his philosophical career immersed in the atmosphere of early Hegelianism and was more than qualified to comment on its history, the possibility of a renovation of Hegel was neither necessary nor desirable.

However, these two references, one from 1884 and the other from 1897, show the progressive modification of Windelband's point of view, which naturally stems not from a simple rereading of Hegel's works, but from the changing historical context and a new appreciation of philosophical matters. As I have shown, there were many implicit points of connection and partial acknowledgments of the worth of Hegel's philosophy. In 1910, Windelband explicitly acknowledges the existence of a renewal of Hegelia-

³⁵² Although this merit probably belongs to Dilthey's *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels* (1906) and Hermann Nohl's publication of *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften* (1907). Glockner is of the opinion that these two publications represent the true origin of the *Hegel-Renaissance* (Glockner 1924). Helferich offers an even earlier reference from a review of Hegel's correspondence written by Dilthey in 1888. In it, Dilthey expressed himself in the following terms: "Die Zeit des Kampfes mit Hegel ist vorüber, die Zeit seiner historischen Erkenntnis ist gekommen" (Helferich 1979:151).

nism, and in light of this renewal, he seeks to establish its meaning and limitations (Honnigsheim 1968:291).

One of the first things that stands out about “Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus” is its critical or negative aspect. By tackling the topic of the renewal of Hegelianism, Windelband puts into question the general Neo-Kantian strategy for facing philosophy’s ‘identity crisis.’³⁵³ What Windelband says here is that the rehabilitation of philosophy in terms of a theory of knowledge is not sufficient to avoid philosophy’s risk of obsolescence. Therefore, this conference comprises not only an analysis of the virtues and defects of Hegelian philosophy; it also advances an overall judgment about the development of the Neo-Kantian movement. For this reason, Windelband’s conference can be seen as a judgment on the evolution of Neo-Kantianism and Windelband’s philosophical career. For this same reason, the content of this text coherently summarizes different arguments that were presented in the previous chapters.

The problem with the primacy of the theory of knowledge is directly reflected in Windelband’s evaluation of the Kantian legacy. While Windelband’s earlier essays published during the decade of the 1880s stressed the negative results of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, that is, the failure all attempts to establish a scientific metaphysics, Windelband appears hesitant, in the context of this conference, to address the positive meaning of Kantian philosophy. Although this only becomes fully apparent in the discussion of the positive appropriation of Hegel, what Windelband is ultimately suggesting is that the grounding of philosophy in a theory of knowledge is an insufficient answer to the materialistic and positivistic tendencies of the time. The traditional renewal of Kantianism provides the tools needed to understand the mistakes of these tendencies, but does not go so far as to offer a true alternative. But the search for these new tools demands a revision of the definition of philosophy, as stated earlier in “Was ist Philosophie?”

The renewal of Hegelian philosophy gives rise to similar questions. Hegel stands, without a doubt, as a representative of the old pretensions of metaphysics, already attacked by Immanuel Kant and mocked by the Neo-Kantians. The problem of appropriating his philosophy is not easily overcome, and, as such, any attempt to recover Hegel’s

³⁵³ See chapter 2, section 2.

philosophy demands a previous and careful study of its inherent limits. In a paradoxical, even unthinkable manner for any Hegelian Scholar, Windelband attempts to renew Hegelianism by depriving it of its grounding in the dialectical method and the specific metaphysical impulse characteristic of the German philosopher. It is best to proceed slowly at this point. So far, we have seen how Windelband's thinking became increasingly articulated through the inclusion of a historical dimension in his programmatic solution to philosophy's identity crisis. These changes are reflected in new interpretation of Kant Windelband presented in the commemoration of the centenary of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.³⁵⁴

In the first place, Windelband distances himself from the reductive interpretations of Kantian philosophy in terms of a theory of knowledge. He does so through a consistent and constant reference to his interpretation of transcendental idealism in terms of a philosophy of culture.³⁵⁵ Against a reading of the critical enterprise as a form of philosophical grounding of knowledge, he insists on the broad meaning of the critical enterprise:

Kant hat dies Forschungsgebiet mit dem Namen der Kritik der Vernunft bezeichnet: wobei unter Kritik die Besinnung, die systematische Besinnung auf die prinzipiellen Grundlagen alles Vernunftlebens, die wissenschaftliche Blosslegung der Grundstruktur aller Kulturfunktionen zu verstehen ist. Das ist tatsächlich der Ertrag der kantischen Kritiken, wenn auch diese Formel selbst bei Kant nicht zu finden und vielleicht sogar ihr Sinn in dieser Weise ihm nicht geläufig ist. Seine Transzendentalphilosophie ist in ihren Ergebnissen die Wissenschaft von den Prinzipien alles dessen, was wir jetzt mit dem Namen Kultur zusammenfassen. Sie forscht nach den begrifflichen Grundlagen des Wissens, der Sittlichkeit, des Rechts, der Geschichte, der Kunst, der Religion: und sie tut es in dem Sinne, daß diese Grundlagen in ihrer sachlichen Selbstverständlichkeit aufgedeckt werden, wie sie, unabhängig von aller empirischen Erfassung durch das individuelle oder durch das historisch gemeinsame Bewusstsein an sich gelten. (Windelband EH 1915 1:274)

Against a treatment almost exclusively oriented toward the analysis of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, now Kant's transcendental philosophy is redescribed as an inquiry into the conceptual groundings of all the spheres of culture. Through philosophical critique, we seek to discover and recognize which aspects of the realm of culture have a long-

³⁵⁴ Chapter 3, section 3.

³⁵⁵ See the sixth section of the present chapter.

lasting value. This, of course, is the organic result of the shift in Windelband's philosophical interests and also a common feature of the philosophers at the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, Windelband concludes that the inner development of Neo-Kantianism runs parallel to Kant's broadening of the critical enterprise. Historically speaking, Windelband sees a structural analogy between the path that led from Kant to Hegel and the path that goes from Neo-Kantianism to Neo-Hegelianism.³⁵⁶

For Windelband, there is a logical or objective sense to the progression from the narrow epistemological to the broader cultural interpretations of Kantian philosophy. The painstaking road from the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the *Critique of Practical Reason*, and from there, to the reflection on the arts, history, and religion is viewed, in hindsight, as both the unfolding of the principle of critical philosophy as well as the struggle between psychology and history as possible organons of philosophy. Kant's theoretical works, especially the *Critique of Pure Reason* and his *Prolegomena* implicitly use psychology in the form of a *Leitfaden*. As I have explained, Windelband sees this implicit aid as the source of the troubles and misconceptions pervading the hermeneutic treatment of Kant's theoretical philosophy. On the contrary, the practical works, specifically Kant's writings, express Kant's orientation toward a likewise implicit acceptance of history as *Leitfaden*.

One legitimate question regarding this interpretation is why Windelband is not content with just developing a new interpretation of Kant. Why does he instead attempt to renew Hegelian philosophy? And if this renewal is necessary, what is the meaning of this renewal? These are not merely historiographical questions. If there is an objective meaning in the path from Kant to Hegel, then these questions demand a new evaluation of the destiny of philosophical criticism as Windelband understood it. With these questions in mind, the task set for the Neo-Kantians in this conference could be seen as a surgical extraction of the Hegelian doctrines deemed useful for the redefinition of criticism as a philosophy of culture.

³⁵⁶ "Dieser Entwicklungsgang aber hat sich in der deutschen Philosophie des letzten halben Jahrhunderts wiederholt" (Windelband EH 1915 1:275). The period depicted here spans from 1860 to 1910, representing the beginning and mature phase of the Neo-Kantian movement. As the passage shows, the essay presents itself as an internal criticism of the traditional interpretation of Neo-Kantian philosophy and the emphasis on the Kantian theory of knowledge. In this conference, Windelband affirms that this interpretation is unilateral and does not represent the Kantian project's true breadth.

According to Windelband, the first motive behind the demand for a renewal of Hegelian philosophy is a “hunger for worldviews” (Windelband 1915 EH 1:278). This hunger for worldviews is portrayed as the result of a weariness toward positivistic and materialistic trends, precisely those intellectual tendencies against which Neo-Kantianism rebelled. This first motive grounds the claim that the return to Hegel’s doctrines stems from deficiencies in the standard Neo-Kantian reply to positivism. As a second motive, Windelband mentions the appeal of Hegel’s systematic configuration of philosophy, even considering it an aesthetic virtue, and Hegel’s rationalistic optimism (Windelband EH 1:278). In both cases, the younger generations demand a more robust conception of philosophy. But this appraisal is evidently opaque. Neither the concept of worldview nor Hegelian rationalism seem compatible with the Neo-Kantian programmatic.

Accepting the need to revise Kant’s path toward the identification of a priori principles, Windelband compares Fries and Kant’s alternatives, a topic that I have already explained in chapter 4. As seen in this chapter, it is precisely by comparing the systems of these two philosophers that Windelband opposes psychology and history as possible guiding disciplines for philosophy. In “Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus,” Windelband describes their philosophical stance in the following terms:

Wie soll nun diese Erforschung und tatsächliche Konstatierung jener synthetischen Urteile a priori, die ihrer philosophischen Kritik vorhergehen muß, in gesicherter Weise erfolgen? Das war die methodische Grundfrage der nachkantischen Philosophie, und es gab für sie im Grunde nur zwei mögliche Antworten, und diese sind von den beiden Philosophen gegeben worden, die nacheinander auf dem Heidelberger Katheder gestanden haben: Fries und Hegel. Nach dem einen erfolgt diese Erforschung an der Erfahrung des individuellen Seelenlebens mit allen seinen Ausweitungen, nach dem andern aus der Erfahrung der menschlichen Gattungsvernunft in allen ihren historischen Gestaltungen. Nach dem einen ist das Organon der Philosophie die Psychologie, nach dem andern die Geschichte. Beide Philosophen sind im Prinzip gleich weit entfernt davon, die tatsächliche Geltung jener Vernunftwerte, die sie, psychologisch der eine und historisch der andere, vorfinden, mit der philosophischen Geltung zu verwechseln, die es erst durch die Kritik aus der sachlichen Selbstverständlichkeit zu begründen gilt: beide verfahren also in der Absicht, das empirisch Festgestellte nur als das Material für die kritische Bearbeitung zu benutzen. (Windelband EH 1915 1:208/281)

From this point of view, there is a thematic affinity between Kantianism and Hegelianism that could lead to a more positive assessment of Hegel, but not an appropria-

tion of his thinking. Moreover, both the merits of Kantian and Hegelian philosophy seem to be identical provided Hegel is transformed into a critical philosopher. Basically, what these philosophers have established is that nothing is purely given without thought. As Windelband summarizes:

Daß wir die Welt, die wir erleben sollen, uns erst selbst zu eigen machen müssen, beruht darauf, daß wir immer nur eine Auswahl und diese immer nur in einem geordneten Zusammenhang erleben können, und daß die Prinzipien für die Auswahl wie für die Ordnung nur in der Struktur unseres Bewußtseins selbst gesucht werden können. Die Welt, die wir erleben, ist unsere Tat. (Windelband TK 1915 2:281).

What, then, is the difference implicit in the Windelband's appraisal of Hegel and how does it differ from his view on Kant? The answer lies in the correlation between Windelband's philosophical formalism and historical concreteness. Windelband starts his argument in favor of a return to Hegel by referring to Hegel's alleged methodical employment of history. The same can be argued regarding the role of Hegel in the transformation of the history of philosophy into a proper philosophical science. However, this emphasis on the concreteness of history carries in itself a new formalist aspect. Windelband's reference to Hegel is characteristic of his mature philosophical work and implies Windelband's gradual distancing from his original program. While during his early phase, he sought to construct a philosophical doctrine articulated through the concept of value. Once he started to acknowledge the importance of history, he came closer to creating what I consider a "philosophy of philosophy." This is best exemplified in his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, where Windelband presents a narration of the evolution of philosophical problems and categories. In the same manner, Heinrich Rickert went on to develop a general and formal theory of worldviews instead of articulating a philosophy from the point of view of a singular worldview. The specific articulation of a conception of the world is a matter of subjective decision, while a typology of possible worldviews is the objective task of the philosopher (Rickert 1924:IX).³⁵⁷ Against Kant, who advanced substantial theories in epistemology, ethics, or the philosophy of right through the process of philosophical critique, Windelband move toward offering a formal exposition that left the decision of substantial issues undecided, at

³⁵⁷ This represents a diminishing of Windelband's third factor in the writing of the history of philosophy.

least from the point of view of philosophical discourse, while closely shaping the concrete process of formation of ideas through history. The need to formulate a wide-reaching theory is what I believe led Windelband to embrace certain aspects of Hegel's teachings.

A synthetic way to express the relationship between Kant and Hegel from Windelband's standpoint is to say that in Windelband's mature phase, Kantian philosophy is seen through the prism of Hegel's emphasis on history. Moreover, rather than inquire into how reason achieves the transformation of the human world, Windelband seems to assume that the world already presents a rational content that philosophy has to grasp.³⁵⁸ In this sense, he was less focused on advancing particular philosophical theories than on offering an understanding of what philosophy in general means. As in the case of Hegel, philosophy is defined as a quest for understanding, that is, for grasping reason in the world. In Windelband's own terms, rational values can only be understood according to their concrete development in human history, therefore denying a certain type of Platonism regarding values (Windelband 1915 EH 1:285). Correctly understood, rational values cannot be posed in opposition to our own world.

For the mature Windelband, the traditional Neo-Kantian answer to the identity crisis of philosophy proves insufficient. In contrast with the subjective decision evidenced in the "hunger for worldviews," Windelband attempted to show the possibilities and results of Western thinking through a general exposition of its history. Thus, rather than a merely informative or instrumental presentation, this history represents Windelband's attempt to solve this new crisis by immersing the reader in the greater stream of Western culture. In my opinion, this idea represents the profound thought that sums up his philosophy of culture and his historiography of philosophy. From this point of view, the labels "Neo-Kantianism" and "Neo-Hegelianism" can be held side by side. At the beginning of the movement, "Neo-Kantianism" meant a unilateral approximation to the Kantian system. Therefore, the task at hand was to identify the valid aspects of Kantian philosophy. Accordingly, Neo-Kantianism was opposed to Hegelianism. Windelband's

³⁵⁸ "So drängt alles darauf hin, daß die kritische Philosophie, wenn sie die Lebenskraft, die sie ein Jahrhundert lang bewahrt hat, auch in der Bewältigung der intellektuellen Bedürfnisse der Gegenwart bewähren soll, sich fähig erweisen muß, mit ihrem Begriffssystem eine Weltanschauung zu tragen, welche den geistigen Wertinhalt der Wirklichkeit in sicherem Bewußtsein zu erfassen ver mag." (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:165)

conference radically changes this reading since the purpose of the appropriation of these past philosophies is not the reformulation of a particular system of philosophy but a re-interpretation of the history of philosophy in terms of the progressive understanding and realization of rationality. Rather than seeking valid arguments in the writings of Kant or Hegel, Windelband implicitly seeks to understand the rationality behind the debates of these German philosophers. Consequently, while the early interpretation of a Neo-Kantian programmatic demanded the interpretation and defense of Kantian doctrines, the later Neo-Kantian programmatic requires a general re-interpretation of the history of philosophy.

The recognition that the history of philosophy plays the role of the organon of philosophy was the last step in the reconstruction of Windelband's argument for explaining philosophy's inner relatedness with its past. Windelband's philosophy of values requires, as an inner necessity, a relationship with the history of philosophy. But "Die Erneuerung of Hegelianismus" shows another side of Windelband late programmatic, namely, how Windelband's Neo-Hegelian programmatic fully addresses the general crisis of Western culture.

7.2. PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

In this section, I will tackle the task of considering the last formulation of Windelband's program. The specific problem of this section is to understand how Windelband's idea of a philosophy of culture can be understood as a result of his definition of philosophy as the science of normative consciousness and also as a variety of historical philosophy.

I think that it is possible to argue that this relation between the philosophy of culture and historical philosophy has two different aspects. On the one hand, Windelband's program establishes a formal correlation between the philosophy of culture and the philosophy of history. This correlation represents the final formulation of Windelband's definition of philosophy as the critical science of the normative consciousness. Windelband's entire understanding of the role of history is linked to a particular vision

of the history of Western thought. I refer to this vision of history as the concrete side of the correlation between culture and history since it implies a positive claim for this tradition's meaning. This is the result achieved through the interpretation of "Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus." In this sense, the concrete aspect of Windelband's understanding of culture and history reflects a characterization of Neo-Kantianism advanced by Makkreel and Luft:

their historical research was carried out in order to understand the present situation of the sciences -and ultimately also of culture and society- by reconstructing the genesis of modern issues and problems. For the Neo-Kantians, then, it is the present as a problem that should initiate historical research, and not at all the present as a synthesis or resolution of the past. Their history of philosophy was therefore impossible without a philosophy of history (Makkreel and Luft 2010:12-13)

In the case of Windelband, the historiographical research is motivated by an attempt to face both the problem of the realization of values and the problem of the struggle for survival of Western culture. It is this issue that drives the philosophical enterprise to provide a philosophical reflection on history. Although Windelband's essay on the renewal of Hegelianism presents the essential orientation of the critical enterprise in the direction of a critique of culture; it is only in Windelband's essay "Kulturphilosophie und transzendentaler Idealismus" -also from 1910- that this aspect of Windelband's philosophy is thoroughly explained.³⁵⁹ As is often the case with Windelband's writings, this conference is of a programmatic nature and is presented in highly condensed prose. This has led some scholars to assert that Windelband's concept of culture is vague to the point of banality (Krois 2013:103). However, I hope that, by placing the program of a philosophy of culture in the broader context of Windelband's intellectual development, this impression will be countered. Let's first consider the formal side of this correlation between the philosophy of culture and the philosophy of history.

Windelband characterizes the philosophy of culture as a systematic reflection on the rational grounding of every dimension of our cultural life. This definitively represents a widening of the formulations included in "Was ist Philosophie?" and "Kritische

³⁵⁹ It was written 30 years after "Was ist Philosophie?", and was Windelband's contribution to the first volume of *Logos*, a journal that was conceived as a forum for the representatives of the Neo-Kantian school of Baden. Among several articles, this first volume comprised articles by Husserl ("Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft") and Rickert ("Vom Begriff der Philosophie").

oder genetische Methode?“, since now Windelband does not limit himself to establishing a threefold division of the spheres of validity -logical, ethical and, aesthetic validity- but instead develops the concept of culture and its manifold manifestations.³⁶⁰ Philosophy is presented as the quest for the fundamental structure of human creative capacities. Windelband, therefore, distinguishes his position from those interpretations of the philosophy of culture that belong to a transcendent ideal separated from the actual manifestations of culture. For Windelband, the task of the philosophy of culture is not to create values but to find and understand them, as they are already involved in the formation of our culture.³⁶¹ In this sense, the philosophical ideal of culture does not imply the strict acceptance of what is given in culture or the postulation of a future ideal that is independent of reality. The objective of Windelband’s philosophy of culture is to offer a principle of unity for the different fields, spheres, or directions of cultural life.

Windelband explains that the different approaches to the philosophy of culture are related to different understandings of human time:

Wer die historische Entwicklung nach Art der mathematischen und der begrifflichen Entwicklung behandelt, worin nach der Erkenntnis des Gesetzes der Reihe zu jedem Glied das folgende muß konstruiert werden können, für den mag nach dem Gesetz des Fortschritts auch das Ziel als prinzipiell gegeben und bei richtiger Einsicht als vorauszusehen gelten. Wer dagegen das spezifische Wesen historischer Entwicklung gerade darin findet, daß sie in der fortschreitenden Gestaltung eines begrifflich nicht bestimmbar, zeitlich tatsächlichen Geschehens besteht, für den sind aus dem Verständnis des Vergangenen und des Gegenwärtigen nur die Aufgaben zukünftiger Kultur herauszuarbeiten, und das Maß des Vertrauens in ihre dereinstige Verwirklichung kann in diesem Fall nicht mehr eine Sache der Erkenntnis, sondern nur der Überzeugung und der Weltanschauung sein. (Windelband KT 1915 2:280)

Postulated culture requires a mathematical understanding of historical evolution, an understanding in which the result of the process is given by the composition of the preceding moments of a developing series. The problems faced by culture do not constitute a pure conceptual series but are mediated by the effective factors of concrete peoples and individuals.

³⁶⁰ Nevertheless, Windelband appears hesitant to take this step. In contrast with Windelband’s exposition in “Kritische oder genetische Methode?”, which attributed the tripartition of philosophy to the division of the mind’s psychological faculties, Windelband now simply acknowledges knowledge, morality, and aesthetic taste as three cultural fields in which synthetic consciousness is differentiated.

³⁶¹ Therefore, both essays from 1910 present the same interpretation of the task of philosophy.

On the contrary, the structural rationality of culture cannot be established from outside concrete cultural formations; this rationality has to be established from within these same formations. As is apparent, in this essay Windelband emphasizes that his appropriation of Hegelian themes does not undermine his Kantian commitments. Windelband affirms that the gateway to the development of a philosophy of culture is the Kantian discovery of synthetic consciousness. The concept of synthesis is the formal condition of a philosophy of culture because, by rejecting the *Abbild* theory of knowledge, it paves the way for the recognition of culture as the creation of that same synthesis. Windelband considers that the theoretical model applied to the elucidation of theoretical philosophy, that is, the acknowledgment that reason's activities condition the world that we experience, is also valid for both the practical and aesthetic dimensions.

The unity of transcendental idealism does not require a higher theory of consciousness, as its unity is given by the concept of culture.³⁶² From this formal grounding of the philosophy of culture in the concept of synthetic consciousness emerges a further clarification of this discipline's task:

Aus diesen Verhältnissen, deren Richtigkeit sich im Prinzip, soweit ich sehe, nicht bestreiten lassen wird, ergibt sich nun für die Transzendentalphilosophie ein klar bestimmtes methodisches Prinzip: es läuft darauf hinaus, nach der Aufdeckung der allgemeingültigen Voraussetzungen der Vernunfttätigkeiten, auf denen alles, was wir Kultur nennen, schließlich beruht, mit sachlicher Analyse festzustellen, was davon durch die spezifisch menschlichen, im weitesten Sinne empirischen Bedingungen bestimmt ist, und so den Rest herauszupräparieren, der in allgemeinen und übergreifenden Vernunftnotwendigkeiten begründet ist (Windelband TK 1915 2:285)

Again, rather than an abstract formulation of what culture should be, the truly normative concept of culture has to emerge from the process of tracing our cultural creations back to their conditions, namely, synthetic consciousness, and separating everything that stems from that origin from those aspects of our culture that are merely transitory. Thus, the task of the philosophy of culture is to show the inherent rationality of culture.

³⁶² This idea of the unity of transcendental idealism is best revealed in Windelband's heterodox understanding of the primacy of practical reason: "Und nur in dem Sinne sollte in ihr von einem Primat der praktischen Vernunft gesprochen werden, als die Erzeugung der Gegenstände aus dem Gesetz des Bewußtseins in keinem Gebiet so selbstverständlich und auch dem alltäglichen Bewußtsein so geläufig ist wie in diesem" (Windelband TK 1915 2:288).

From this concept of culture, a normative conception of culture emerges. Windelband's idea is that by recognizing synthetic consciousness as the ground of cultural life, it would be possible to retrace the different conflicting tendencies in Western culture to a single unified source:

Dieses Selbstbewußtsein der schöpferischen Synthesis muß der zentrale Punkt sein für die Gestaltung der Weltanschauung, welche unsere heutige, so unübersehbar vielfältige und in sich zerrissene Kultur sucht und welche sie braucht, wenn sie sich zu großen und geschlossenen Leistungen ihrer geistigen Arbeit, wenn sie sich zu inneren Gemeinschaften dauernder und fruchtbarer Art zusammenfinden soll (Windelband TK 1915 2:291)

The unity of culture is not presented as something given in the concrete effects of culture, since these effects appear to experience both union and conflict. In this specific context, Windelband thinks about the tension between humanistic and technical life. However, this unity has to be sought in the recognition that all cultural spheres, despite their conflicts, are the product of the same creative function. Thus, Windelband's *Prä-ludien* closes with yet another programmatic essay.

Nevertheless, the need for a unifying conception of the world is not only asserted through the formal postulate of the meaning of the philosophy of culture. Windelband's history of philosophy is precisely the counterpart of this formal or programmatic presentation of the philosophy of culture. Insofar as philosophy is described as the conceptual grasping of a cultural epoch through the reflective capacities of certain thinking individuals, the history of philosophy in its totality appears as the concrete counterpart to the formality of the concept of synthetic consciousness. Windelband elaborates a synthetic worldview with his narrative and provides a positive assessment of the history of western philosophy.

From what I have just said, it follows that the idea of renaissance acquires a different and conspicuous meaning. I have found only one relevant quotation in this direc-

tion,³⁶³ but I think that the contradistinction between the common modern attitude toward the rehabilitation of philosophy, namely, to start afresh, does not square with Windelband's standpoint. On the contrary, the renaissance is not a specific moment in the history of mankind, but rather takes the shape of a structure of philosophical thinking.

The original return-to-Kant movement sought to bypass the more recent events in philosophy and restate and make key amendments to Kantian arguments. This is not the case of Windelband's late efforts to return to Hegelianism. This is why he did not carefully examine the specifics of such a return, as he had done previously with the back-to-Kant movement of the 1860s. On the contrary, the emphasis on the 'spirit' of Hegelian philosophy, in detriment of the latter, was even more emphatic than in the case of its Kantian counterpart.

As I have explained, Windelband retained the Kantian framework in his characterization of transcendental idealism as a philosophy of culture. But the idea behind replacing the reference to a theory of mind with a theory of history is, in Windelband's perspective, a Hegelian inclusion.

The final motive of his philosophy changed in the same manner. The original Neo-Kantian problem, as expressed by Zeller or Fischer, was to restate the scientific character of philosophy, and this was achieved by arguing in favor of the transcendental nature of the discipline. Philosophy explains something that cannot be explained by any particular science, that is, the sciences themselves. Windelband's main concern at the beginning of the twentieth century was not the possibility of a scientific philosophy but the capacity of philosophy to bring together opposing tendencies in western culture that were threatening to dismember it. Thus, Windelband's disrepute is not only down to the poor interpretative efforts of his critics. In a period of sudden transformations, Windelband had, as Max Weber once said, a phobia for anything modern (Gundlach

³⁶³ "Es steckt in dieser Bewegung etwas von dem Zuge der Renaissance und darum zugleich auch wieder ein heutiges Bedürfnis, die Last der Tradition, die in dem intellektuellen Dasein steckt, abzuwerfen. Es gibt Zeiten, wo der Menschheit ihr Schulsack zu schwer zu werden scheint und wo sie plötzlich meint, sich aufraffen zu müssen, um ihn abzuwerfen, um ihn los zu werden, um ganz frank und frei sich der Wirklichkeit selbst in die Arme zu werfen. Aber gerade die Renaissance sollte in dieser Hinsicht das lehrreichste Beispiel sein; sie zeigt dem, der sehen will, auf die deutlichste Weise, daß man auch mit allem leidenschaftlichen Drange von der Tradition nicht loskommt, daß sie dem geschichtlichen Menschen unweigerlich im Blute steckt und daß, wenn er meint, irgendwelche Traditionen abzuwerfen, er, gewollt oder ungewollt, bewußt oder unbewußt, in eine andere verfällt" (Windelband 1915 2:246).

2018:318). This sentence expresses Windelband's hesitance to confront the problem of cultural orientation in a 'post-metaphysical' [technical epoch] through modernist aestheticism, that is, through the creation of new values.

The two essays written in 1910 can be interpreted as being correlated. Both essays cover the path between systematic philosophy and the history of philosophy, but do so from different starting points. In light of this correlation, it is not true that Windelband never attempted to clarify normative contents by means of historical narratives (Kinzel 2017:100). Windelband's history of philosophy is presented as the reassurance or exhibition of the possibility of such a philosophy. For this reason, it is possible to conclude that the philosophy of culture and the philosophy of history in a broader sense are essentially united in the writings of Windelband. Recovering the famous Kantian dictum, Windelband would agree with the claim that systematic philosophy without the history of philosophy is empty, while the history of philosophy without systematic aims is blind.

Windelband's solution is not modern because it does not bring about a complete transformation of philosophy by way of a breakthrough or intellectual revolution. On the contrary, Windelband's solution to philosophy's identity crisis consists in showing that a meaningful and coherent exposition of the path of Western philosophy is still possible. This new narrative attributes a role to each contending party and shows that the crisis is overcome by unearthing the idealist systems that were apparently the cause of the crisis itself.

However, the sense of cultural crisis that was meant to be solved by this philosophy of culture could not be dispelled by philosophy. Windelband's ideas were imbued with the spirit of continuity, not rupture, with Western tradition. This is best shown in the philosophical concept that he used to elaborate his philosophy of history, that is, the concept of evolution. Windelband was moved in his writings by his faith in the value of this tradition and its capacity to produce a new synthesis. Rickert expressed this faith in his eulogy following Windelband's death: "Das ist im Gegensatz zur historischen Geisteshaltung das Herrliche an Windelbands echt geschichtlichen Werk, dass es uns mit der Hoffnung entlässt: so gross wie die Vergangenheit war, wird die Zukunft sein" (Rickert 1915:9).

Thus, the task of philosophy is to regain a sense of totality, if not substantial, at least in the functional sense of a common origin in humanity's rational capacity. And the task of the history of philosophy is to integrate the different cultural problems that seemed to be refractory to reason into a single meaningful narrative. The philosophy of culture is based not only on Windelband's definition of philosophy as a philosophy of values; it also has a historical component since it has to consider modernity as a process of cultural differentiation that it introduces. The bringing together of these two enterprises represents the crux of Windelband's historical philosophy.

Following the exposition of this last section, Windelband's philosophical path has come full circle. It is time to weigh the value and significance of his understanding of philosophy and the bridging together of Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism as a defining feature of his philosophical program.

7.3. ÜBER HEGEL HINAUSGEHEN?

Throughout this dissertation, I have aimed to reconstruct Windelband's philosophical program and show its relation to historical consciousness. With its specifics, this program reveals fundamental aspects of nineteenth-century philosophy, such as the rehabilitation of philosophy in terms of a theory of knowledge, the crisis-consciousness of Western values, the impact of historical sciences on philosophical thinking, and the increasing relevance of the history of philosophy. Through this program, a fundamental antinomy of nineteenth-century thinking is also manifested, to wit, the antinomy between systematic and historical approaches in philosophy. As I said in the preface of the dissertation, I delved into Windelband's thinking with the purpose of discerning which possibilities are still open for systematic philosophy, which possibilities are not, paths not to tread if we are to avoid relapsing into the contradictions that doomed Windelband's Neo-Kantian philosophy to the condition of an unfinished project.

Throughout the different phases of the Neo-Kantian movement, it is possible to highlight how the different attitudes toward Kant's philosophy reveal different levels of historical consciousness. In the first stage, Vaihinger's description signaled that the dif-

ferent philosophical systems that were developed following the heyday of Kantian philosophy were merely backward steps. These systems called for the restoration of Kantian philosophy. Windelband never displayed this attitude in his writings, and manifested from the start that the re-appropriation of Kantian philosophy represented not its repetition but its overcoming. But this overcoming mentioned in the preface to his *Prä-ludien* does not have a fixed meaning, as Windelband's different philosophical essays reveal. Although it is clear from Windelband's writings that the historical study of the philosophy of Kant must not restrain the creativity of philosophical thinking, the consequences of this overcoming are multiple and undecided. In the case of Windelband, although no abstract meditation on the idea of this overcoming is presented, it is possible to say that his essays show concrete possibilities of philosophical appropriation. And indeed, the project of a philosophy of culture and the renewal of Hegelianism are intertwined aspects of the overcoming of Kantian philosophy. These two aspects explain why the reception of these writings was encapsulated under two unappealing labels: a program that constituted merely an impulse for other renowned Neo-Kantians and a collection of historiographical materials. I hope to have shown that the systematic side of Windelband's works goes beyond mere impulses and that his histories of philosophy are more than mere materials for his lectures. Their philosophical interest lies in the way in which these two distinct sets of works aim to constitute an intricately articulated whole. On the other hand, the coexistence of these two lines of interpretation is made evident by the evaluation of Windelband's philosophy advanced by other representatives of the Neo-Kantian Baden School.

A hint about the fate of Windelband's works is provided by Rickert in a passage that I have quoted previously: "Neue Neukantianer brauchen wir jetzt nicht mehr. Sie fänden keine Arbeit vor, die erst noch zu leisten wäre" (Rickert 1924/1925:164). The obsolescence of Neo-Kantianism is related, in this specific passage, to its success. Since the primary objective of the return to Kant is identified with the rehabilitation of scientific philosophy and the consolidation of the study of Kant, Rickert is entitled to consider that the Neo-Kantian goals have been achieved. The task of reviving the philosophy of Immanuel Kant is no longer a prerogative of future philosophy. Thus, he continues, Neo-Kantianism should be acknowledged and thanked for its contributions to philo-

sophy (Rickert 1924/1925:165). But as such, these attempts become superfluous: “Er ist als blosser Neukantianismus jetzt abgeschlossen” (Rickert 1924/1925:165).

The grounding of Rickert’s judgment of Neo-Kantianism is not limited to an assessment of the study of Kant. His long essay “Geschichte und System der Philosophie” from 1931 is an important reference, and I will dedicate some pages to it as it offers a standpoint from which I will prepare my conclusions on historical philosophy. Rickert explicitly “fights” the historical orientation in philosophical thinking (Rickert 1931a:11).³⁶⁴As we will see, Rickert tackles the same problematic as Windelband but arrives at an entirely different solution.

Rickert again poses the question of the advantages and disadvantages of the history of philosophy for systematical thinking (Rickert 1931a:8). Although it does not seem to be implied in the title, there is a temporal articulation hidden within it which immediately leads back to Windelband’s thought. While Windelband’s historical philosophy aims to specifically articulate philosophy’s direction toward its own past and its possible future, Rickert opposes philosophy’s past to its future by means of the conceptual pair of system and history: “Das Verhältnis zwischen der Darstellung der Vergangenheit und der für die Gegenwart und die Zukunft bestimmten Systematik gestaltet sich in der Philosophie ist prinzipiell anders als in den übrigen Zweigen des wissenschaftlichen Lebens” (Rickert 1931a:8). Thus, systematic thinking is not eternal but future-oriented thinking.

Compared to Windelband, Rickert is much clearer about the meaning of systematic thinking. He says the following on the subject:

Dem Zusammenhang oder der Einheit der Welt auf der Seite des zu erkennenden Gegenstandes muss ein Zusammenhand oder eine Einheit auf der Seite der theoretischen Sinngebilde, die seine Erkenntnis geben sollen, entsprechen. Einen solchen ‘Zusammenhang’ aber nennt man ein ‘System’, und insofern haben wir voraussetzen, dass die wissenschaftliche Philosophie, um ihr Ziel zu erreichen, nicht nur in dem Sinne ‘systematisch’ verfährt wie die generalisierenden Einzelwissenschaften, sondern notwendig nach der Form eines allumfassenden Welt-Systems strebt. (Rickert 1931a:25)

³⁶⁴ Although this does not necessarily imply an attack on Windelband since Rickert contests an interpretation of philosophy that resolves (auflösen) philosophy into history (Rickert 1931a:11).

Therefore, in this later text, Rickert offers a definition of philosophy that no longer follows Windelband's characterization of philosophy as a critical science of absolute values or as a science of normative consciousness, but as a science of the world in its totality. Philosophy does not only proceed systematically, but it gives rise to a system. The definition of philosophy in terms of the knowledge of the totality of the world shares a feature of Windelband's characterization of the science of the normative consciousness, namely, its ideal nature.³⁶⁵ The knowledge of the totality remains a perpetually unfinished task, thus presenting a specific type of historicity; in this case, the aforementioned orientation toward the future. This characterization of the historicity of the knowledge of the totality acquires relevance when we define the specificity of the history of philosophy in opposition to the history of other scientific disciplines. In Rickert's view, what allows particular sciences to isolate certain knowledges (for example, a physical law) and treat them in complete isolation from the history of its discovery or the corpus in which it was originally expressed, is the fact that sciences deal with parts of reality and not with the totality. The same holds true for the scientist who is not involved in scientific inquiry into the totality of the self (als 'ganzer Mensch' (Rickert 1931a:30; 405)) but only in a theoretical or contemplative attitude. However, the possibility of this isolation does not present itself in philosophy, and for this reason, it is impossible to handle the philosophical acquisitions from the past as if they were non-temporal entities.

Rickert explains that this difference lies in the fact that philosophy, as a science of the totality, is also concerned with the meaning of the entire personality of the philosopher (Gesamtpersönlichkeit) (Rickert 1931a:36). Thus, the sphere of influence of philosophy cannot be limited exclusively to the theoretical attitude of scientific research. Rickert comes back, in this context, to Windelband's description of explanatory factors in the history of philosophy, here conceptualized from the point of view of philosophical research:

Der Philosoph ist als Gesamtpersönlichkeit stets auch geschichtlich bedingt durch die besondere Zeit und die sozialen Zusammenhänge, in denen er lebt, und

³⁶⁵ "Das hängt natürlich damit zusammen, daß man von der Philosophie nicht die Einsicht in ein einzelnes Gebiet des Wirklichen, sondern vielmehr eine gedankliche Arbeit erwartet, die in wissenschaftlicher Begründung eine Weltanschauung und Lebensansicht gewähren soll" (Windelband GL 1915 2:1).

wenn er dem Weltganzen gegenüber nicht in derselben Art zum nur theoretischen, also partikularen, Menschen werden kann wie gegenüber einem Teilobjekt in der Welt, dann vermag er sich auch nicht in derselben Weise von den historischen Bedingtheit und Einschränkungen zu befreien, die für sein Gesamtleben bestimmend sind. (Rickert 1931a:36)

This impossibility of detachment in the elaboration of a philosophical doctrine determines that each philosophical system presents an inner relationship with its own peculiar time. The opposition between the subjective and the objective dimensions of philosophical problems and systems is restated as a problem: philosophers search for a comprehensive and objective theory of the totality of the world, but they do so from a concrete position in time and as an indivisible human being. Moreover, even though it is possible to isolate pieces of a philosophical system, to do so implies forfeiting their full philosophical significance, which can only be grasped by understanding each 'piece' as a moment or member of a whole philosophical system (Rickert 1931a:405). Therefore, according to Rickert, we cannot treat the history of philosophy as a warehouse from which arguments may be taken; on the contrary, the study of philosophy must be carried out by interpreting philosophical systems in their totality.

Rickert criticizes the idea of a philosophy of problems, which for him should be transformed into a history of systems. Rather than seeking to address history as a single evolutive process, Rickert presents the idea that every philosophical system, anchored in its own peculiar epoch and carried forward from the specific point of the philosopher, implies a different way of approaching totality. And we become concerned with the history of philosophy, that is, the history of systems, insofar as the different philosophical systems differentiate themselves in the way they relate to timeless truths.

The increasing demands of historical thinking caused a rift between the pursuit of systematical thinking and the practice of the history of philosophy. Windelband found the organon of philosophy not exclusively in history but also in the history of philosophy. Judging Windelband from Rickert's point of view, it seems that the increasing role of the history of philosophy goes hand in hand with the decline of philosophy's creative force. That which originated as an answer to the crisis of philosophy has apparently created a new dialectical movement, a new sense of philosophical weakness. For Rickert, the opposition between history and system could not be bridged. On the con-

trary, the philosopher had to make a choice between the study of the past and the construction of the future of philosophy. In this sense, the usefulness of history appears to have been put into question once again.

An equally radical, though divergent claim, can be found in the work of another representative of Baden Neo-Kantianism. Richard Kroner sees in the shift from Kantianism to Hegelianism the expression of an inner logic of philosophical thought. And the same principle applies to the shift from Neo-Kantianism to Neo-Hegelianism:

Wenn Windelband einmal sagt: "Kant verstehen heißt über ihn hinausgehen", so könnte man auch sagen, Hegel verstehen heißt einsehen, daß über ihn schlechterdings nicht mehr hinausgegangen werden konnte. Sollte es noch ein "Nach - Hegel" geben, so musste ein neuer Anfang gemacht werden. Es war daher nicht zufällig, sondern im Innersten des Geistes begründet, daß der Gedanke, der von Hegel auf die höchste Spitze getrieben worden war, aus dieser Einsamkeit herabstürzte, und daß damit der stolze, kühne, titanische Schwung, der ihn emporgerissen hatte, jäh abbrach. (Kroner 1961:6)

Although Windelband's original words were strictly related to the actualization of Kantian philosophy, the development of his thought makes this type of interpretation valid. Bending Windelband's words, Kroner affirms that the meaning of Windelband's promotion of Kant essentially demands a step toward Hegel, although the same hermeneutic principle cannot be applied to Hegel. Therefore, his philosophy is depicted as the final point of Western thinking.

Kroner shares Windelband's characterization of human beings as historical beings (Kroner 1936:205). However, the difference resides in the evaluation of Hegel's philosophy and Kroner's treatment of the philosophy of history. Windelband presents history in general, and the history of philosophy, in particular, as a narrative of human progress toward the realization of the ideal of normative consciousness. However, this ideal ought to be understood in the Kantian sense, that is, as an end that cannot be fully realized but which, nonetheless, articulates the organization of human cultural life. Kroner's vocabulary, on the contrary, hints at a constitutive understanding of this ideas' force. Thus, Kroner affirms that "the absolute being is present in his mind in the form of the idea. Man does not create or produce the idea, just as he does not produce or create being itself" (Kroner 1936:209). It is possible to conclude without irony that, just as

Kuno Fischer tried to restore Kant's philosophy, so too did Kroner attempt to restore the philosophy of Hegel.

The difference between Kroner and Windelband, that is, between restoration and renewal, is grounded in the ways in which they conceive the ideal element in history. Kroner himself highlights this distinction by way of the following questions:

... is the life of history life only because nations and personalities grasp the idea and make an image of it in the shape of their own spiritual mode and individuality? Or has it a life of its own because the idea in itself goes on vitally developing itself, because its proper essence takes various shapes and runs through various phases? Is, after all, the philosophy of history a philosophy of life only because it is the natural life of mankind through which the idea, otherwise lifeless, gains life? Or is the vitality of historical life derived from, and conditioned by, the self-revelation of being? (Kroner 1936:210)

For Kroner, history is the life of the idea itself (Kroner 1936: 211), while Windelband ascribes assigns philosophers a bigger role in grasping ideas. In any case, Windelband's position is even more complex, since the gap between the real and the ideal does not come only from the philosopher's mind but from the very essence of values. Thus, the development of the idea is not dialectical but antinomic in Windelband's sense.

What the reference to Windelband, Rickert, and Kroner reveals is the indeterminacy in the idea of a renewal of philosophy and the conflict that this renewal poses to the idea of an end of philosophy. Both Rickert and Kroner, albeit for different reasons, seem to limit the scope of Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism to a step backwards. In that sense, both authors express skepticism concerning the possibility of going beyond classical philosophy. Rickert is skeptical about this possibility because he denies the program of historical philosophy, while Kroner considers that this program ends in the recognition of the philosophy of Hegel. Moreover, neither of the two accepts the relationship between Neo-Kantianism and Neo-Hegelianism, which Windelband argued for in his mature texts.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS

Windelband's "Die Erneuerung des Hegelianismus" represents the explicit manifestation of the transformations in Windelband's philosophical program. As I showed, this program is articulated through the recognition of the history of philosophy as the organon of philosophy, i.e. as a necessary component of the transcendental method. The incorporation of history as a fundamental dimension of philosophical thought led to a general revision of the appropriation of Kant's philosophy, since, as Windelband acknowledges, Windelband's theory of knowledge was oriented towards the conceptualization of the problems of the natural sciences.

In different texts published after 1900, Windelband makes different criticisms to Kant's theory of knowledge. In "Nach hundert Jahren" (Windelband NHJ 1904 [1915]), Windelband affirms the necessity to revise Kant's theory of time as a pure form of intuition in view of the problems of historical consciousness (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:163). If the relationship between the real and the ideal is conceptualized by means of the principle of evolution or development, then, the real itself has to be taken as inherently temporal (Windelband NHJ 1915 1:163). The concept of time is not only a presupposition of our understanding of the empirical world, but a concept required in order to understand the relationship between the factual and the valid. Therefore, time cannot be a mere form of intuition but something different, perhaps, something metaphysically real. For this reason, Windelband advances the possibility, in this conference, of breaking the parallelism between space and time characteristic of Kantian philosophy. "Über Sinn und Wert des Phänomenalismus", a conference from 1912, takes up this idea. In this precise case, Windelband hints at the possibility of employing the thesis of the identity between the ideal and the real as a means to solve their problematic relationship:

Das Verhältnis von Bewußtsein und Sein muß durch andere Kategorien gedacht werden als durch die reflexiven Beziehungen von Gleichheit oder Ungleichheit. Dazu liegen die Anfänge zweifellos in Kants kritischer Lehre von der synthetischen Erzeugung des Gegenstandes, und die von da ausgehende Entwicklung wird prinzipiell schwerlich andere Bahnen einschlagen können, als sie durch die große Bewegung der Identitätsphilosophie in der Richtung vorgezeichnet sind, daß für das kategorial Grundverhältnis zwischen Bewusstsein und Sein statt der Gleichheit die Identität eingesetzt wird. (Windelband SWPh 1912:26)

With these passages in view, it is relevant to consider what configures Windelband's Neo-Hegelianism. The key appropriation of Hegel's thought comes from the recognition of the role of history for philosophical reflection. Although Windelband himself claims that this tendency is already present in Kant, all the passages in which Windelband refers to this specific topic involve a reference to Hegel's thought. However, this incorporation of history as the element that allows a mediation between the real and the ideal is not freed from problems. It requires rethinking the relationship between human thought and reality. After all, Windelband explicitly uses the idea of a developmental principle as the movement through which values acquire a real manifestation. In this sense, Windelband advances the possibility of a stronger appropriation of Hegel's philosophy in terms of an acceptance of Hegel's logical theory. After all, the Hegelian answer to the understanding of rationality in reality is not independent of Hegel's own speculative metaphysics. But this appropriation constitutes, in the end, an insurmountable limit. Windelband never goes deep into the possibility of adopting Hegel's logical theory and, in the end, Windelband denies, in *Einleitung der Philosophie*, the possibility of understanding the relationship between thinking and being in terms of identity. To put it bluntly, Windelband does not accept the Hegelian theory of the concept but he rather sticks to his own understanding of assessments in terms of the relationship between a consciousness and a value. This preference is fundamental for Windelband's interpretation of the objective factor in the formulation of philosophical problems, that is, his antinomianism, which is Windelband's alternative to Hegel's dialectics. To the extent that Windelband explicitly accepts some aspects of the Hegelian doctrine and rejects others, his philosophy cannot be considered as merely Hegelian but Neo-Hegelian. He carries forward a conscious reworking of Hegel's original themes.

Windelband's theory of value, although Kantian in inspiration, is what makes his philosophical program a variety of Neo-Kantianism. This same theory of values is what led Windelband to a progressive recognition of the worth of Hegel's philosophy. It is also the reason that makes Hegel's interpretation of the relationship between reason and reality unacceptable. Inspired by the philosophy of Kant and Hegel, Windelband's philosophical program remains by its own right an original and irreducible alternative.

CONCLUSIONS

I mentioned in the introduction that my general reason for offering a study of Windelband's philosophy is that this study helps us to understand why doing philosophy today implies getting involved in historiographical practices. Faced with this fact, what remains for philosophical inquiry is to determine the precise attitude that we must sustain towards history. Windelband concluded that philosophical research is tied with the writing of history but not due to subjective reasons. The relationship between philosophy and its past is internal to thinking itself, it is a self-relation.

Through the preceding chapters I have shown that Windelband's definition of philosophy allows us to define his philosophy as an exponent of historical philosophy. Although his early approaches to philosophy made by Windelband appear to be extremely abstract, and disconnected from historical thought, the evolution of his thought led him to reevaluate his characterization of philosophy. Thus, both the characterization of the method and the object of philosophy acquire an undeniable historical nature. Although the idea of a temporal dimension of philosophy was already present in the characterization of philosophy as a science of normative consciousness, the true foundation of historical philosophy is the identification of the history of philosophy with the organon of philosophy.

These modifications in Windelband's conception of philosophy are exemplified in the different possibilities of interpreting his impulse for going beyond Kant. At first, Windelband's motto was directly linked to the attempt to restore Kantian philosophy. The teachings of this philosophy, which radically transformed the way of understanding human thought, were the best resource to solve the fundamental problem of the present, i.e. rehabilitate scientific philosophy. However, these teachings were obscured by their relation to the context in which Kantian philosophy was elaborated. Kant's solution to the problem of metaphysics was ahead at his time, even ahead of Kant's own conceptual formulations. The philosophical endeavor consisted in a careful reconstruction of the Kantian doctrine suited for the demands of the nineteenth century. Later in his career, Windelband provided elements for a different interpretation of this movement beyond Kant. His philosophical vision was united to the belief in the formative force of

philosophical tradition. Abandoning the classical premises of neo-Kantianism, Windelband recognizes the virtues of post-Kantian philosophy, specifically, the incipient attempt to develop a historical worldview. In this way, the overcoming of Kant's philosophy was transformed into an appropriation of the philosophy of German idealism, and above all, of Hegel's thought. In this manner, the widespread references to history as the organon of philosophy are associated, in most cases, with positive assessments of the philosophy of Hegel. This leads Windelband to affirm, in one of his last essays, the importance of a renewal to Hegelianism.

These two ideas, restoration and renewal, lived together in the first edition of *Präludien*. However, the idea of a philosophical renewal grew in parallel with Windelband's increasing historical consciousness.

These two lines of interpretation were, in one way or another, assumed by Heinrich Rickert and Richard Kroner. However, none of these one-sided interpretations do justice to the actual development of Windelband's historical philosophy. Each of these interpretations would force Windelband to accept a certain philosophical system that is not his own. Moreover, accepting a given system of philosophy, be it that of Kant or Hegel, immediately blocks the historical character of philosophy, that is, the temporality of thought. Both unilateral interpretations, then, lose sight of the meaning that Windelband ascribed to history. Furthermore, both interpretations, by losing sight of the true role of history, prevent the actual understanding of the systematic elements in Windelband's thought. We must remember that Windelband's philosophy is most often approached as a mere propaedeutic to the mature philosophy of the Baden school³⁶⁶. And now we have enough elements to understand why this was the case.

Präludien's formulations are programmatic, incomplete, and extremely formal. Windelband clearly affirms the central character of the concept of value for the development of his philosophical program. However, his explanation of the concrete determination of the meaning of the values is not so clear. Rather, much of my interpretive work consisted in offering a detailed reconstruction of the interpretation of the critical method. The mutual belonging between the history of philosophy and systematic philosophy can only be understood in terms of this method. Where understanding of this

³⁶⁶ As it was the case in Husserl's letter to Rickert, quoted in footnote 8.

method is absent, systematic philosophy and the history of philosophy only appear as dissociated elements. Finally, without the correct interpretation of this method, Windelband's last work appears as another general introduction to philosophy. The deep meaning of this book cannot be understood in isolation from the author's philosophical program or in isolation from his *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*. Put in these terms, Windelband's philosophical program transcends the mere reformulation of Kant's or Hegel's ideas. What Windelband actually does with philosophy is highly original even to the point of having gone unnoticed by many of his successors.

The historical sense is also responsible for the unfavorable evaluation of his thought. John Passmore says that the occupation's disease of the philosopher is to "exaggerate his own originality" while the historian's disease is an excessive emphasis on continuities (Passmore 1965:3). Windelband hid his own philosophical ideas behind the figure of the monumental personalities of the history of philosophy. Therefore, Windelband's work produces the impression of being the result either of a "weak" thinker or of an heterodox reader of the history of philosophy. I think that this posture is not accidental and that it is truly grounded on that alleged disease of the historian of philosophy, that is, the search for continuity. Even his most notable philosophical idea, the development of a historical mode of philosophizing is framed through a historical reference:

Denn das Bleibende und Fruchtbare an Hegels Lehre ist, daß er in der Geschichte das Organon der Philosophie erkannt hat. Dies historische Philosophieren ist das reife Bewusstsein der Wissenschaft des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, das zum ersten Male eine szientifische Historie gesehen und auch die Natur unter dem geschichtlichen Gesichtspunkte zu betrachten begonnen hat. Als philosophisches Prinzip bedeutet die Geschichte dies, daß der Anteil, den die menschliche Vernunft an der Weltvernunft, an den letzten geistigen Gründen aller Wirklichkeit haben kann, nicht aus dem Menschen als Naturwesen, aus seiner gleichbleibenden psychischen Gesetzmäßigkeit, fordern nur aus dem Menschen als Kulturwesen, aus den Errungenschaften des Gesamtgeistes in seiner geschichtlichen Arbeit abgelesen werden kann. Das ist die große sachliche Aufgabe, die Hegel der zukünftigen Philosophie gestellt hat. (Windelband 1911:376)

Following this Hegelian reference, Hegel himself opposes, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Universal History*, the eastern and western understandings of the life of the spirit. For Hegel, the movement of renewal is what truly represents the western understanding of history: "Der Geist, die Hülle seiner Existenz verzehrend, wandert nicht

bloss in eine andere Hülle über, noch steht er nur verjüngt aus der Asche seiner Gestaltung auf, sondern er geht erhoben, verklärt, ein reinerer Geist aus derselben hervor” (Hegel 1998: 98). Following the meaning of this Hegelian expression, Windelband’s history seeks to narrate the life of humanity in its constant and continuous process of formation and expansion. And his systematical philosophy attempts to elaborate conceptually the basic tendencies of the spirit underlying this process. The new clarification of philosophy brought forward by Windelband consists precisely in the exhibition of this movement of renewal. Windelband advances with respect to his predecessors because his task is to offer a new synthesis of the philosophies of Kant and Hegel. By reason of this attempt, his philosophy is both, a Neo-Kantianism and a Neo-Hegelianism.

This study on Windelband’s philosophy has shown why Windelband was a capital figure in the making of our contemporary emphasis on the history of philosophy. Windelband, “the most neglected of the ‘major’ Neo-Kantians” (Luft (Ed.) 2015:267), is not the least contemporary. Windelband’s philosophy can still be considered a suitable contemporary model for our profession. I am not referring myself to Windelband’s concrete solutions for historiographical or systematical problems³⁶⁷, but to his general attitude, the same attitude that allow him to unite into a single encompassing project both, a promising philosophical position and a fruitful historiographical work. Our present attempts to situate contemporary discussions in a continuity with nineteenth century philosophy resembles what Windelband did regarding the eighteenth century tradition and his own epoch. Finally, having shown how Windelband tried to expose this historical continuity is also an important step forward in the task of recovering our own historical continuity, our own belonging to the same philosophical tradition.

³⁶⁷ Windelband himself affirms this necessity in his approach to the history of philosophy: “Wir können das Alte nicht unverändert aufnehmen, denn wir selbst sind andere geworden” (Windelband 1909a:3).

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