**Phenomenology and Foucault; Prof. Boedeker**

**Handout on psychologism, neo-Kantianism, and intentionality: *History of the Concept of Time*, pp. 1-26**

Introduction:

The book *History of the Concept of Time* provides the text of a lecture-course that Martin Heidegger gave at the University of Marburg in 1925. Heidegger had studied at the University of Freiburg in southwestern Germany: first theology, then physics and mathematics, and finally philosophy, receiving his second doctorate in 1915. From 1916 through 1923, he served as an assistant of Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology. He then moved north to teach at the University of Marburg from 1923 until 1928, after which he returned to Freiburg upon Husserl’s retirement to serve as his hand-picked successor. When he gave this lecture-course, Heidegger was a very popular teacher, especially famous for extracting important and surprising insights from classic thinkers, especially the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. I’ve assigned this text in large part because it explains many of the important motivations for his most important work, *Being and Time*, completed a little over a year after the end of the lecture-course.

As you can tell from its title, Heidegger originally intended for this lecture-course to focus on the various phenomena that we can group under the term “time.” The overly ambitious plan of the lecture course is given in §3 (pp. 8-9). As you can see from comparing this outline with the table of contents, he ended up getting through only a bit over 1/9th of the whole project: just a few pages into the second of three divisions of the first of three planned parts. (I’m certainly no Heidegger, but I do know what it’s like to get “behind” on the syllabus for a class!)

At the beginning of the lecture-course, Heidegger attempts to motivate his investigation into the phenomena of “time” by showing how they’re relevant to the basic sciences. In §1, Heidegger mentions some “crises” that were going on in various sciences in the first three decades of the 20th Century. As the American philosopher/physicist/historian Thomas Kuhn (1922-96) would point out 37 years later, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, a science is in crisis when not just the truth of its theories is in question, but its basic concepts and methods as well. A crisis gets resolved in what Kuhn would famously call a “paradigm shift.” In §2, Heidegger then argues that understanding the phenomena that make up “time” are crucial for at least understanding these crises.

Heidegger then tells a story culminating in Husserl’s phenomenology, which Heidegger will then argue makes a natural transition to his own phenomenology. Here’s a way – in fact, Heidegger’s way – to situate Husserl’s phenomenology in the context of the history of philosophy.

I. Ancient and medieval philosophy:

A. The most fundamental topics of philosophy are God and Reality. These topics can be studied before any study of the human mind. (Psychology and anthropology are just some sciences among others – and by no means the most fundamental ones.)

B. The human person is essentially a blend of body and soul.

C. The soul’s perception of real physical things is more or less direct: the *forms* (= shapes) of bodies are transmitted *directly* to the soul via the sense-organs. Perception is essentially a passive process, consisting of the soul’s reception of the forms of bodies.

II. René Descartes (1596-1650), in *Discourse on the Method for Conducting One’s Reason Well and for Seeking the Truth in the Sciences* (1637) and *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), laid the foundations for the Enlightenment philosophy of the late-17th and 18th Centuries, and subsequent philosophy well into the 20th Century. Descartes’ major contribution was to shift the basic topic of philosophy from God and Reality to the human mind, conceived as consciousness[[1]](#footnote-1) (= explicit awareness or experience) of *ideas*. For Descartes, conducting a study of the mind, its ideas, and the operations it performs on them is logically the first step in doing science or philosophy. Descartes argued that such a *science of consciousness* is the fundamental science – and must be undertaken before doing theology, metaphysics, physics, biology, etc. This view of philosophy as basically the science of consciousness was to continue through Husserl, where it reached its peak. Because a science of consciousness is modeled after mathematical physics, Heidegger will criticize it as a form of **Naturalism** (in a *broad* sense): the view that **all meaningful questions can be answered by using the methods of natural science**. Here are some of the specifics of Descartes’ view of consciousness:

A. Descartes overturned the ancient and medieval theory of the mind’s perception of real, physical objects, by arguing that it is entirely *indirect*. In particular, perception is mediated by the mind’s reception of a certain kind of idea: *sensations*, also called “sense-data,” or “qualia.” Some philosophers also use the term “phenomena,” but it’s crucial to note that these kinds of things are fundamentally different from the phenomena of *phenomenology*. Phenomenology *can* study phenomena in this sense, but its phenomena are much broader than mere sensations.

1. Sensations are the mind’s awareness of the data transmitted from the sense-organs. Colors, shapes, tones, tastes, and tactile impressions are examples of sensations. They are the ways that physical objects *appear*, *seem*, or *look* to the mind, not necessarily the way they *are*. They are the so-called *secondary qualities* of bodies, because they’re not in the bodies by themselves. Instead, they are only produced by the causal interactions of the bodies with our sense-organs.

2. When the mind perceives a real, physical object, it *judges* that a certain set of sensations resemble that physical object. This view of perception can be summed up in the slogans “appearance precedes being”, or “seeming precedes being.”

B. For Descartes, ideas, including sensations, are not intrinsically representational. Rather, it is up to the mind to take a stand on such ideas, by judging them true, judging them false, or refraining from judgment altogether. Admittedly, Descartes does think that our minds have a very strong inclination to judge sensations as representing physical objects. Nevertheless, this inclination is something added to the ideas.

C. Descartes argued that the mind and all its ideas – in Husserl’s terms, everything that’s “reelly immanent” to consciousness – can be known with certainty – i.e., what Husserl would later call “absolutely given” to consciousness. (This is the point of Descartes’ famous “I think, therefore I am” – meaning that he can know with certainty that his mind exists.) This feature about consciousness makes the science of consciousness fundamental in a second sense: it is the science with the most *certain* findings. The way to secure consciousness and its ideas as objects of such a certain science is to engage in methodological doubt:

1. doubting that physical objects are just as they appear to the senses;

2. doubting the existence of physical objects;

3. doubting even mathematical truths;

until one reaches consciousness itself and its ideas, whose nature and existence cannot be rationally doubted, and are thus certain. Such self-consciousness and consciousness of ideas is *pure* – by which Descartes means “purified of rational doubt”.

One consequence of this view is that, since sensations are ideas (“reelly immanent” to consciousness), they – the secondary qualities of bodies – *can* be known with certainty. However, sensations will never allow us to know with certainty the true nature of physical objects in themselves (the *primary qualities* of bodies). Descartes’ *official* reason for claiming to know sensations with certainty was that he could directly inspect them in his mind. His *real* reason was most likely that they figured in the physiological theories of perception of his day.

D. Descartes espoused metaphysical dualism: the view that mind, or consciousness, is a fundamentally different kind of thing from real, physical bodies.

1. In fact, Descartes argued that mind (consciousness) is “really distinct” from physical matter. This means that your mind does not need any other thing else – including your body – in order to exist (*nulla re indiget ad existendum*). (For Descartes, the converse isn’t true, since bodies need some mind – namely, God’s – to have created them.) Consciousness is thus the most fundamental – or highest – kind of thing, or substance.

2. Although metaphysical dualism was not new to Descartes (it is also present in Hinduism, Plato, and Christianity), Descartes made the mind-body distinction especially sharp – and also especially mysterious. He accomplished this through his notion that physical matter is made up of a *closed* system of forces. Because it is closed, no forces get in and none get out. Since mind is not physical matter, mental forces therefore can neither cause nor be caused by physical forces. Nevertheless, Descartes admits that voluntary motions involve mental forces causing physical forces, and that sensation involves physical forces (namely, those in the sense-organs and nervous system) causing mental forces (namely, sensations). This is known as the mind-body problem.

E. The *only* things of which the mind can be *directly* conscious are *ideas*, which are *contained* within the human mind – what Husserl would later call “reelly immanent” (to consciousness). Thus Descartes rejected Plato’s view that ideas are *universals* accessible to, but not contained in, any mind. No two minds can ever have the same (= numerically identical) thought – but at best similar thoughts.

F. Descartes held that not all ideas come from the senses. These ideas that are not sensations are *innate*, i.e., “hard-wired” in our minds “before” our sense-experience. Later philosophers, called “Empiricists,” would quarrel with Descartes on this point. Nevertheless, the notion of *a priori structures* of the mind – structures independent of sense-experience – will appear importantly later on in our story.

III. One development of Enlightenment philosophy was known as German Idealism (1781-1840) by Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, and their followers. German Idealists not only followed Descartes in holding that the human mind is the best starting-place of philosophy, but they also thought that the human mind literally formed *reality* itself. German Idealism also attempted to show how the mind formed all important *concepts*, by placing them all in a great logical system. But the great conceptual systems of German Idealism had collapsed in continental Europe by the Revolution of 1848, after which the Prussian state crushed various socialist movements. Their critiques of religion had simply become too radical and subversive for the Prussian state. (In fact, Hegelian idealism didn’t disappear, but moved to England – where it survived through the early 20th Century, under the leadership of F.H. Bradley [1846-1924], in a highly idealized form that completely ignored Hegel’s emphasis on the *historical* development of the mind.)

IV. Naturalism, Empiricism, and Positivism:

A. After 1848, German philosophers adopted the less politically objectionable position of Empiricism – pioneered in England during the 17th Century by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, and during the 18th Century by George Berkeley (1668-1753) and David Hume (1711-1776). **Empiricism** maintains that **there are no innateideas, i.e., that *all* ideas come from sense-experience**.

B. One consequence of a consistent Empiricism is **Positivism**: the view that **all meaningful propositions must be able to be “cashed out” in terms of (“positive”) facts, usually conceived as possible sensations. One slogan of Positivism is “the meaning of a sentence is the method of its [empirical] verification.”**  (Precursors to Positivism included the British Empiricists George Berkeley and David Hume; full-blooded Positivists included the sociologist Auguste Comte [1798–1857], the physicist Ernst Mach [1838-1916], and the mathematician Henri Poincaré [1854-1912].) According to hardcore Positivism, anyone who tries to say something that can’t be verified or falsified by possible sensations is literally uttering nonsense. Positivists hold that most metaphysical statements (i.e., traditional philosophical statements purporting to be about the ultimate nature of Reality) are just nonsense.

C. The German contribution to Empiricism and Positivism was to apply it to statements about the mind itself – and especially (as good Positivists) to attempt to verify or falsify statements about consciousness “scientifically”, in the laboratory. The German Positivists modeled their “science of consciousness” on the physical natural science of Galileo and Newton in the 17th Century. Thus experimental, “scientific”, psychology was born in Wilhelm Wundt’s (1832-1920) laboratory in Germany. It made its way to the United States in the early 20th Century, and has been here ever since.

V. A fairly natural consequence of Positivism when applied to statements about the mind was Psychologism, which was pioneered in England by John Stuart Mill (in his 1843 *System of Logic*) and became a popular view in Germany by the late 19th Century. Psychologism – like Empiricism and Positivism generally – is an extreme form of Naturalism in a *narrow* sense (vs. Descartes’ naturalism in a broad sense; cf. II above). Psychologism is the view that all meaningful questions can be answered by using a *particular* science: psychology. Psychologism has two senses: one narrow and one broad.

A. Psychologism in the narrow sense

1. is the attempt to reduce logic and mathematics to psychology. It views the laws of logic and mathematics as nothing but empirical generalizations based on observations of how actual human beings do in fact think. Thus what, say, the law of excluded middle (“Either *p* or not-*p*”) really means is not what it seems to (i.e., that every proposition is either true or false), but rather that, as a rule, people *tend* to regard every proposition as either true or false.

2. faces a major problem. In two important ways, it fails to account for the *use* that we actually make of logic and mathematics in science and daily life:

a. First, a Psychologistic account of logic fails to account for the fact that we treat logic and math as *necessarily* true, not contingently (or accidentally) true, like empirical generalizations. Whereas it is an accident that all human beings happen to be under 9 feet tall, it *must* be true (and thus *could not* be false) that either *p* or not-*p*, or that 1+1=2.

b. Second, a Psychologistic account of logic also fails to account for the fact that we do not *justify* claims about logic or mathematics by appeal to observation or experience. Indeed, we use such claims to *correct* or *reject* our empirical observations. For example, we assume that someone who claimed that someone was both 9 feet tall and not 9 feet tall *must* be wrong. And we assume that someone who claimed that he had one apple, added another apple, and came up with three apples *must* be wrong. In this way, we treat logic and mathematics as *normative* – i.e., telling us how we *should* think – and not merely as descriptive – i.e., telling us how we actually *do* think. Someone who thinks that 1+1=3 isn’t just *weird* (i.e., deviating from a statistical mean), but *wrong*.

B. Psychologism in the broad sense

1. is the attempt to reduce *all* mental content – i.e., *what* people think – to things actually (“reelly” in Husserl’s terms) going on within their minds. One way to put this is that nothing is true or false except statements about actual mental events. Furthermore, since your mental events are numerically distinct from anyone else’s, no two people can ever have exactly the same thought, but at best similar thoughts (cf. Descartes’ II E).

**(Note the important distinction between 2 senses of “mental content”:**

**a. “reelly immanent” = what’s actually contained within my mind (sensations are good examples), and would not exist if my mind didn’t exist;**

**b. “intentional” content = *what* I’m thinking: what can be shared with someone else’s mind, and that thus *could* exist if my mind didn’t exist.)**

2. also faces a major problem. This can be seen as soon as one asks about the status of such psychological claims themselves. There seem to be just two options, both of which are unacceptable:

a. On the one hand, the psychologist could accept a Psychologistic analysis of his or her own claims. In such a case, such psychological claims would be treated as nothing but claims about empirical regularities among the beliefs of the *psychologist* him- or herself. That is, just as what appears to be a logical law is really just a statement about how people in fact think, the psychologist’s statement about how people think is really just a statement about how the *psychologist* actually thinks. The problem with this option is that the psychologist fairly obviously does not mean to be speaking about *just* his or her own mind, but rather about what goes on in other people’s minds. That is, consistently applying Psychologism to psychological claims themselves would appear to be self-defeating.

b. On the other hand, the psychologist could claim some sort of privilege for the field of psychology. That is, the psychologist could claim that, whereas all other sciences (such as logic, mathematics, and physics) are really just disguised statements about one’s *own* mind, psychology somehow has the right to talk about something else – namely, about *other* people’s minds. The problem here, of course, is that it is difficult to see why there should be any such privilege to psychology over the other sciences.

VII. As an antidote to Psychologism, Positivism, and Naturalism, Wilhelm Dilthey (in his 1883 *Introduction to the Human Sciences*) attempted to give an account of the human sciences as essentially distinct from the natural sciences. Husserl and Dilthey learned from each other from 1903 through 1911, and Heidegger studied Dilthey intensely from 1919 through the composition of *Being and Time* in 1926.

A. For Dilthey, the goal of the natural sciences attempt to *explain* (*Erklären*) observable regularities by subsuming them under general causal laws (such as the law of gravity and the other laws of motion). Accordingly, the natural sciences follow the “hypothetico-deductive” method of testing (= confirming or disconfirming) theories (“hypotheses”) by attempting to observe phenomena that follow logically from them.

B. The goals of the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) – such as, history, anthropology, sociology, biography, and psychology – are quite different from those of the natural sciences. Human sciences do not seek to *explain* observable phenomena through general theories. Rather, they merely *describe*, in an attempt to gain an *understanding* (*Verstehen*) of the *lives* of the human beings one studies. This involves getting “inside the shoes” of the individuals one studies – seeing the world from their point of view. It importantly includes understanding their values, which may be quite different from one’s own.

C. Distinguishing natural from human sciences in this way allows Dilthey to break with the Naturalism (in a broad sense) that so much dominated late 19th-Century German thought.

D. Dilthey saw a *descriptive psychology* as the basis for all human sciences.

VIII. A second German antidote to Psychologism emerged during re-discovery in the late 19th Century of Immanuel Kant’s (1724-1804) “transcendental” philosophy.

A. Kant’s method in philosophy was to “step over” – literally “trans-cend” – empirical experience (such as the particular claims that people make about which causes produce which effects), and look to the basic forms without which empirical experience wouldn’t be possible. Such a method is known as “transcendental philosophy”. For Kant, transcendental philosophy attempts to uncover the “transcendental” conditions of the possibility of empirical experience. Although such forms are necessarily involved in all of our empirical experiences, they are not *derived* from such experiences. Instead, they are *a priori*, i.e., “from before” sense-experience.

B. Kant argued that two basic kinds of *a priori* forms are presupposed in empirical experience.

1. The basic logical forms of judgments are not the product of human minds – but rather as necessary for *any* kinds of thought to take place. Logic involves *a priori* analytic truths, which are necessarily true independently of our minds.

2. Space and time, the basic forms by means of which the mind orders the objects given to it through the senses, are literally produced by the mind. Space and time are the forms of the mind’s “intuition” (*Anschauung*) of the object. Kant argues that we can’t even imagine intuiting any *physical* object that’s not given in (the form of) space, nor can we even imagine intuiting any object *at all* that’s not given in (the form of) time. Truths about time and space are *a priori* synthetic – meaning that they are necessarily true, but only of our experience.

IX. The re-discovery of Kant in Germany is known as “neo-Kantianism”. Neo-Kantians admired Kant’s method of transcendental philosophy, and its attempt to discover the *a priori* forms that are the condition of the possibility of experience.

A. *Neo*-Kantians, however, rejected Kant’s view that some *a priori* forms were produced by the human mind. Instead, they regarded *a priori* forms of experience as Platonic universals – non-physical objects with which the mind can be acquainted independently of its bodily senses. In treating *a priori* forms as mind-independent, neo-Kantians thus broke decisively with Psychologism.

B. Sense:

1. Also unlike Psychologism, neo-Kantianism held that *what* is thought (= form in a broad sense) – the *sense* of a mental experience – is not itself something mental, and certainly not something physical. Instead, it is something that is either true or false – and thus that has *validity* (*Gültigkeit*). German neo-Kantians called the realm of validity (ominously enough), the “*third Reich*” – beyond the “first realm” of the physical and the “second realm” of the mental. The neo-Kantian picture is that validities – i.e., senses, including *a priori* forms – *are valid of* (*gelten von*) particular physical or mental things.

2. Whereas everything physical or mental is particular, validities are *universal* – of the same metaphysical status as Plato’s Forms. Unlike physical objects or mental experiences, which really *exist*, valid senses *subsist* ideally and timelessly.

3. Since the senses of mental experiences have validity, and are thus universal, different minds can literally think the same thought. 1+1=2, for example, is a content (or “validity”) that can be thought by different minds, and that is valid whether or not anyone happens to think it.

C. The neo-Kantian picture of consciousness:

**mental act** (including sensations) <-------- *judged* --------< **(transcendent) sense**

(mere representations, without form) *(by the mind)* (= *what* is thought)

 *as containing* (contains *a priori* forms)

Neo-Kantians hold that mental acts refer to external objects only when the mind *judges* that they are subsumed by some form. But mere representations – such as fantasies or idle musings – contain no judgments (about what’s true or false). Thus neo-Kantians deny that mere representations (= sensations) refer to any objects outside the mind. (They thus agree with Descartes’ II B.)

D. German neo-Kantianism was divided into two schools:

1. On the one hand, there was the Marburg school, founded by Hermann Cohen in his 1871 *Kant’s Theory of Experience*, and espoused by Paul Natorp.

a. It tended to regard *all* *a priori* forms (including mathematical ones) as purely logical. It thus regarded all *a priori* truths as analytic, rejecting Kant’s notion that there could be *a priori* synthetic truths or knowledge.

b. For the Marburg school, there is no *absolute* distinction between *a priori* form and sensible matter (i.e., sensations [1919/20: 132, 225]). Instead, each is relative to the other, and emerges gradually in the process of knowledge. Knowledge involves a continuous progress toward an unreachable ideal: complete knowledge. Such complete knowledge would be a perfect mathematical physics, which used only the ultimately true forms to grasp sensible matter, which they conceive as sensations. The Marburgers hold:

(i) Knowledge is just the application of (conceptual) form to sensations.

(ii) There is consciousness only when there is (conceptual) form.

(iii) Sensations have no (conceptual) form.

From this, it follows that

(iv) There can be no consciousness of sensations.

Heidegger’s criticism of this view is that it ultimately fails to account for how knowledge gets started in the first place. If knowledge involves applying (conceptual) form to sensations, but sensations aren’t given to consciousness, then knowledge doesn’t seem possible.

c. Its goal was to lay out the logical structure of natural-scientific claims, concepts, and theoretical deductive systems (such as arithmetic, geometry, or physics). In this sense, the Marburg school of German neo-Kantianism was basically a kind of philosophy of natural science. (The so-called “analytic” philosophy popularized in the United States by Rudolf Carnap, beginning in the mid-1930’s, was largely inspired by the Marburg school. It differed from the Marburg school mainly in using much-improved modern logic, and focusing on the *language* of scientific claims rather than the mind’s consciousness of them.) Heidegger criticizes Marburg neo-Kantianism for ignoring the human sciences, as well as the pre-scientific living of life itself (a field opened up by Dilthey).

2. On the other hand, there was the Southwest German school, founded by Wilhelm Windelband (around 1873, borrowing much from his teacher Hermann Lotze’s 1843 *Logic*), and developed by Heinrich Rickert and Emil Lask. Heidegger’s academic introduction to philosophy was to this school; he studied with Rickert in Freiburg, and wrote his Ph.D. dissertation under his direction in 1913, and his habilitation in 1916. By 1919, however, Heidegger had become sharply critical of this school. It differed from the Marburg school in two ways:

a. It did not regard all *a priori* forms as purely logical. Some forms are “contentful”, or “material” – i.e., specific to certain fields, such as physical objects, cultural institutions, and even mathematics. It thus agreed with Kant that there are *a priori* synthetic truths or knowledge. Both Husserl and Heidegger agree with this, and make it a central part of their phenomenologies.

b. For the Southwest school, valid senses (forms) are themselves *values*: what *should be done*. Thus one slogan of the Southwest school was *the primacy of practice over theory*, or *the priority of “should” over “is”*. The ultimate metaphysical distinction is thus between (particular, existent, real, sensible) facts and (universal, valid, ideal, thinkable) values. This naturally raises the question about how these two realms are related. Emil Lask combated this dualistic “two-world theory” by proposing “truth”, i.e., *formed matter*, as the “overlap” between fact and value. It’s fairly obvious, however, that merely interposing an intermediate realm won’t by itself solve the problem. (Heidegger’s critique of such neo-Kantian talk of “validity” and “values” occurs at *BT*, pp. 145-6, 199-200.)

c. Like the Marburg school, the Southwest school held:

(i) Knowledge is just the application of (conceptual) form to sensations.

(ii) There is consciousness only when there is (conceptual) form.

Unlike the Marburg school, however, the Southwest school held:

(iii) Sensations have (conceptual) form (1919: 54-57).

This allows the Southwest school to hold, also against the Marburg school:

(iv) Sensations *are* given to consciousness.

Heidegger’s criticism of this view is that it is simply false that (iii) sensations have (conceptual) form. Sensations – if there are such things at all – are just unprocessed data from our senses. Ultimately, he and Husserl will reject both (i) and (ii).

d. It attempted to incorporate Dilthey’s broadening of the scope of philosophy of science to include not just the natural sciences, but the human sciences as well. It agreed with Dilthey that there are methodological differences between the natural and human sciences. (Natural science presupposes only the value of truth, and seeks general truths about value-free continuous series [the number-series being the most obvious]; human sciences presuppose a system of values, and seek particular truths about valued discrete individuals.) But the Southwest school left out Dilthey’s call for a descriptive psychology as the foundation of the social sciences. Heidegger regards this attempt as largely a failure, because it simply imposed methods upon science (especially the human sciences), without first critically investigating whether they were in fact appropriate to the kinds of objects studied by the particular sciences. Heidegger also criticizes the Southwest German school for, like the Marburg school, focusing exclusively on the philosophy of science, and ignoring the pre-scientific living of life itself (a field opened up by Dilthey).

X. A third German alternative to Psychologism came in Franz Brentano’s 1874 *Psychology from the Empirical Standpoint*. (Heidegger’s first introduction to philosophy began in 1907, when his local priest, Conrad Gröber – who would later become the Bishop of Freiburg – gave him Brentano’s 1862 book, *On the Manifold Meaning of Being in Aristotle*.) Brentano’s main innovation was to define the mind, or consciousness – and to distinguish it from real, physical things – by a particular feature: intentionality.

A. Intentionality comes from the Latin word “*in-tentio*”, meaning “to stretch, or tend, toward” – for example, the way in which an archer aims an arrow at a target. For Brentano, intentionality is the property of being directed toward something as an *object* (whether or not that object really exists). *Every* mental experience has such an object, which Brentano calls the *intentional object*. As Heidegger emphasizes, consciousness is not some “box” that from time to time enters into a relationship to a real object outside of itself (*HCT* 30; *BT* pp. 56-7).

B. In general, the intentional object of an experience is not literally contained within (what Husserl would call “reelly immanent to”) the experience. (If you think of a chair, the chair is not literally inside your mind!) Nevertheless, in the experience the intentional object is “in mind”. Brentano coined the phrase “intentional in-existence” for the peculiar way in which an intentional object is “in” the experience that’s directed toward it.

C. Brentano’s basic distinction is thus between *immanent* consciousness (including sensations) and *transcendent* intentional objects (including physical objects). Brentano’s picture of intentionality:

**(immanent) mental act** >-------- *about* --------> (**transcendent) intentional object in itself**

(including sensations)

(Note the important terminological difference:

* **transcendental** = an *a priori* condition of the possibility of experience.
* **transcendent** = an intentional object outside the mind.)

Brentano *disagrees* with the neo-Kantian view that representations – such as fantasies or idle musings – lack intentionality. Thus judgments have no monopoly on intentionality.

D. Brentano attempted to classify the various kinds of mental experiences according to their differing kinds of intentionality. The most basic kind of intentionality, and the one involved in all others, is mere *representation*, in which an object is simply “given” to the mind. Another kind of intentionality, which occurs on the basis of mere representation, is *judging*, in which the mind takes a stand – true or false – on what’s represented. A third kind of intentionality is *valuing*, or desiring what’s represented.

E. Because Brentano held that intentionality was crucial to the nature of the mind, but that intentional objects were literally within the mind, he holds that an investigation of consciousness must involve more than things literally within (= reelly immanent to) the mind. This directly contradicts Psychologism in the broad sense. Like the neo-Kantians and Dilthey, Brentano’s descriptive psychology was therefore not Psychologistic.

1. In this course, we will use “act of consciousness”, “mental act”, “lived experience”, “mental experience”, “psychic occurrence”, etc., interchangeably. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)