

Fundamental Dynamicity

A Metaphysics of Time and Process

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Abstract

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This book continues a long tradition in philosophy going back to the pre-Socratics, who made a rather simple observation that still holds true today: *All things flow*. We experience this flow, *flux*, in abundance: the seasons coming and going, the sun rising and setting, plants, trees, children growing, ageing, and in many other respects. However, we also experience things persisting. We meet people again, visit places twice, wear clothes again, or live in the same city all our lives.

That things flow, that they persist, and how they do both has been a (persistent) puzzle throughout the history of philosophy. The proposed answers come in abundance, but two central ideas stand out. One is to explain flux by what persists. Namely, flux is explained by *change*, which typically is understood to be grounded in substances and their properties. Accordingly, this explanation of flux is called *substance metaphysics*.

On the other hand, there is *process philosophy*, which emphasises the pervasive dynamic character of reality. According to this view, *dynamic* entities like processes should be the basis for our conceptualisation of the world, especially flux; it claims that dynamic processes are fundamental.

Process philosophy, which gained significant traction in the latter half of the 20th century, offers a compelling perspective that integrates scientific findings and everyday experience. However, it raises several crucial questions: What are these fundamental processes? How can we metaphysically understand them? And most importantly, what is dynamicity and how can we distinguish dynamic entities from static ones? I propose and defend answers to these questions, which connect to the philosophy of time, another influential philosophical topic. I advocate a view that posits dynamicity as a forward-directedness, suggesting that dynamic entities are inherently oriented towards the future.

While this commits the process philosopher to accept the reality, directedness, and dynamicity of time, I argue vice versa that dynamic time views, in turn, require fundamental processes. What results is dynamic metaphysics—a package deal of process philosophy and dynamic views on the nature of time.