



# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Faculty of Philosophy

## PART II METAPHYSICS – TIME :: MICHAELMAS TERM 2017<sup>1</sup>

### Recommended reading

These items from the [Faculty Reading List](#) will be especially relevant:

- EARMAN, J., 1974: 'An Attempt to Add a Little Direction to "The Problem of the Direction of Time"', *Philosophy of Science* 41, 15–47. [jstor.org/stable/187375](http://www.jstor.org/stable/187375)
- EDDINGTON, A., 1928: *The Nature of the Physical World* (Cambridge University Press), especially chs. 3–5. [archive.org/details/natureofphysical00eddi](http://www.archive.org/details/natureofphysical00eddi)
- HORWICH, P., 1987: *Asymmetries in Time* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press) [First chapter online here: <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?type=2&tid=9315>]
- MCTAGGART, J.M.E., 1927: 'Time', in his *The Nature of Existence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), vol. II, ch. 33. Reprinted in R. LePoidevin and M. MacBeath, eds., *The Philosophy of Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); and in P. van Inwagen and D. W. Zimmerman, eds., *Metaphysics: The Big Questions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998). [Difficult – next article is an alternative]
- MCTAGGART, J.M.E., 1908: 'The Unreality of Time', *Mind* 17, 457–474. [jstor.org/stable/2248089](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2248089)
- MAUDLIN, T., 2002: 'Remarks on the Passing of Time', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 102: 232–272. [jstor.org/stable/4545373](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4545373)
- MAUDLIN, T., 2007: *The Metaphysics Within Physics*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- MELLOR, D. H. 2009: 'The Direction of Time', in Le Poidevin et al., eds., *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics* (Oxford: Routledge). [prce.hu/w/teaching/TimePartII/Mellor-TimesDirection.pdf](http://prce.hu/w/teaching/TimePartII/Mellor-TimesDirection.pdf)
- PRICE, H. 2011: 'The flow of time', in Craig Callender (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Time* (OUP), 276–311. [philsci-archive.pitt.edu/4829/](http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/4829/)
- PRICE, H., 1996: *Time's Arrow and Archimedes' Point: New Directions for the Physics of Time* (Oxford University Press), especially ch. 1 (<http://prce.hu/w/TAAPch1.html>). [Whole book available at Oxford Scholarship Online: DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195117981.001.0001]
- PRIOR, A.N., 1968: 'Changes in Events and Changes in Things', in *Papers on Time and Tense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Also in R. LePoidevin and M. MacBeath, eds., *The Philosophy of Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). 1993).
- SKLAR, L., 1981: 'Up and Down, Left and Right, Past and Future.' *Noûs* 15, 111–29. [jstor.org/stable/2215319](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2215319)
- WILLIAMS, D.C., 1951: 'The Myth of Passage.' *Journal of Philosophy*, 457–72. Reprinted in R. Gale, ed., *The Philosophy of Time* (London: Macmillan, 1968). [jstor.org/stable/2021694](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2021694)

### Lecture outline

- (Week 4) Two views of time: 'dynamic' v 'static' conceptions ('A-series' v 'B-series'). Three (independent?) ingredients in the dynamic view: (i) a distinguished 'now' (ii) 'flow' (iii) direction. McTaggart's argument against (i), and responses. Price on the incoherence of 'presentism' and 'the moving spotlight'. [Reading: McTaggart 1908, Price 2011]
- (Week 5) The 'flow' of time. D. C. Williams on 'the myth of passage'. Maudlin on 'passage' and 'rate of flow' and Price's responses. The distinction between the 'flow' of time and the direction of time. Boltzmann's suggestion that there might be no such thing as the direction of time. [Reading: Williams 1951, Maudlin 2007, Price 1996 (ch. 1) & 2011]
- (Weeks 6–7) The 'direction' of time. Boltzmann on past/future, up/down. The thermodynamic 'arrow', and reasons (Earman, Horwich) for not equating it with a direction of time. Kant's left hand. The direction of causation and the direction of time. [Reading: Price 2011, §3, Earman 1974 [hard], Mellor 2009, Sklar 1981]
- (Week 8) Eddington on Time's Arrow.

<sup>1</sup>This version 23.10.17. You can find a PDF copy (with working links) here: [prce.hu/w/teaching.html](http://prce.hu/w/teaching.html). Lecture handouts will also be available there (usually a day or two after the lecture).