

Here's one way to approach "being **is** time": Time is the "stage" on which entities "perform."

An entity manifests itself through its aspects, one aspect at a time. So we call these aspects moments. Since many entities aren't given visually, while all entities are given temporally, this is especially appropriate. But Husserl's analysis of the transcendent spatial object is what we generalize. The following is from *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*.

For it is the characteristic feature of nature and everything that falls under this title that it transcends experience not only in the sense that it is not absolutely given, but also in the sense that, in principle, it cannot be absolutely given, because it is necessarily given through presentations, through profiles...

The thing is given in experiences, and yet, it is not given; that is to say, the experience of it is givenness through presentations, through "appearings." Each particular experience and similarly each connected, eventually closed sequence of experiences gives the experienced object in an essentially incomplete appearing, which is one-sided, many-sided, yet not all-sided, in accordance with everything that the thing "is." Complete experience is something infinite. To require a complete experience of an object through an eventually closed act or, what amounts to the same thing, an eventually closed sequence of perceptions, which would intend the thing in a complete, definitive, and conclusive way is an absurdity; it is to require something which the essence of experience excludes. Of course, this is here an assertion only, the full justification of which we cannot give here, although you can see it, if only you immerse yourselves in the sense of the thing-perception.

The object is not exhausted by its appearings so far. The object includes its future "appearings." I use "aspects" or "moments" the way that Husserl uses "appearings" above. The object is the temporal synthesis of these actual and possible (past/present and future) moments. The intentional object is just the intended object, the object "grabbed" by the concept. Logical unity, temporal synthesis. And of course this is automatic. The object is "originally" a familiar tool (for instance) in

the nexus of the practical situation. But we can examine its way of being and see that it is a temporal synthesis, by seeing **its** aspects.

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Am I myself time ? Heidegger asked this in a famous lecture, and he answers yes. The stream of phenomenal consciousness “is” time. What glues this stream together **as** a stream in the first place ? Memory, expectation, a sense of identity, a relatively durable system of purposes. Heidegger already sketched all of this in his early work. So here we focus on a demystification of basic concepts like being and time.

Being is not some stuff. Being is nothingness in the sense that it is no being in particular. It is the negation of all determination. A being is a generic entity. And being is all that such a generic being has. The word cries out for mystification. Following James, we can say that there are lots of kinds of things in the world. No stuff called “being,” but lots of kinds of beings.

How are these beings arranged or presented or given or found ? Now we get to the issue. I live my little life. You live yours. I have my private self-world. You have yours. And yet we act in the same world, discuss the same world. I want my ontology to apply to the world as you know it, and the reverse is true. But the world is, in some sense, given to me in a personal way. I see the room that my body is in. I do not see Calcutta, as mentioned in J.S. Mill’s excellent example. I feel the pain when my thumb is hammered, and I do not feel the pain when another’s thumb is hammered, especially if they are a stranger on the other side of the planet.

So the world is given to individual bodies, with individual “souls.” Theory can challenge this starting point, but I think most of us can agree that this is how things seem. My body is in the world, and I know the world through my body. Of course I include a functioning mind along with this body. The point is to express that the sense of here and now follows the body. The sensually available world is always gathered around my body, especially to the front of that body, before the eyes and ears that aim “forward.” We call “forward” what our eyes aim at.

So this body moves through its routines “in time.” And various tools come and go as needed, as we move from situation to situation. Consider **as** time (as an ontological ego, as a stream of experience), we “are” the moments of these familiar items. My face in the mirror is one more entity with the mirror, which is “for” a “vanishing pure witness consciousness.” But being is not a stuff and witness consciousness is not a stuff. It’s a name for the variable moment, for the passing or streaming time that we (as ontological egos or anonymous consciousness) **are**. That old song got it right: we are the world. We, as streamings, together constitute the world. And within that world there are our bodies, our thoughts, our toothaches, our faces. And these entities scatter their moments across many streams, not just ours. Each stream, as far as we know, is tied to a sentient body at the center of that stream —just as the stream is “at the center” (in the head) of that sentient organism.

So being is time in the sense that entities are given through moments that appear in coherent streams. An analysis of existence is an analysis of the relationship between being and time. Being is also “nothingness” in that it involves the negation of all determinate content. To “see being” is to notice that there **is** a world in the first place. A cause for wonder. To “wonder at a tautology.”

Time is not primarily or originally clock time. Heidegger already crushed this issue, so I refer readers there. Here it suffices to reflect on what gives continuity to a “stream” of experience. Why do we call it a stream in the first place? As Locke saw, memory and identity are closely related.

Being is time is an “unrolling contexture.” This is the opposite of anything mystical. This is just life in its mundane typicality, but also life’s wonderful and terrible moments. The world is “always already” “significant” or structured. I am in a room of familiar objects, that are for this or for that. I have things to do, a person to perform, an overall vision of what my life is for. I do **not** find a jumble of random sensations. I see a familiar well-worn context. I see my books, my car keys, my Falim gum. I hear my wife cooking dinner in the other room. Entities are side by side, mostly not focused on in my field of vision.

The world pours in. Time pours through. The world streams. And I trust that also for my wife the world streams. She “finds herself” at the center of a streaming of the world. In my stream I am central and she is a close second. In her stream she is central and I am a close second. As Harding saw, I am headless for myself, though I can see pictures and reflections in the mirror. The same is true for her no doubt.

Our bodies are in the same world, on the same ontological stage. This stage is what must be explained or interpreted. And it is also the place where this interpretation must play out. Already we share language and a world. We share this ontological forum. We the players are to articulate our own situation.