

## **Solving Prior's Problem with a Priorean Tool**

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In my presentation, I will show how a metaphysical problem of Arthur Prior can be solved by a logical tool he developed himself, but did not put to any foundational use: metric logic. The broader context is given by the key question about the metaphysics of time: Is time *tenseless*, i.e., is time just a line of instants; or is time *tensed*, because the perspective of the present is irreducible? I take sides with Prior and the tensed theory. Like him, I therefore I have to deal with a more specific metaphysical question: How can the instants of tenseless time be reduced to tensed time? This is the point where, on the technical level, hybrid logic and metric logic come in. For present purposes, both can be seen as species of tense logic; and both are creations of Prior. In his argument for the tensed theory of time, Prior used hybrid tense logic to reduce instants. But, as he himself pointed out, this reduction runs into deep problems, because it immediately generalizes to other categories, for example and most importantly to persons. My main aim is to show that metric logic does not run into similar difficulties: It will help the tensed theory reduce instants, but it leaves persons untouched. Before I develop this main argument, I will give reasons for preferring metric to hybrid logic of time that are independent of the metaphysical issue of reduction, but concern temporal reasoning in natural language and the epistemic side of time-keeping. I thus intend to forestall possible objections of ad hocness against my argument for preferring metric to hybrid logic when it comes to foundational matters.