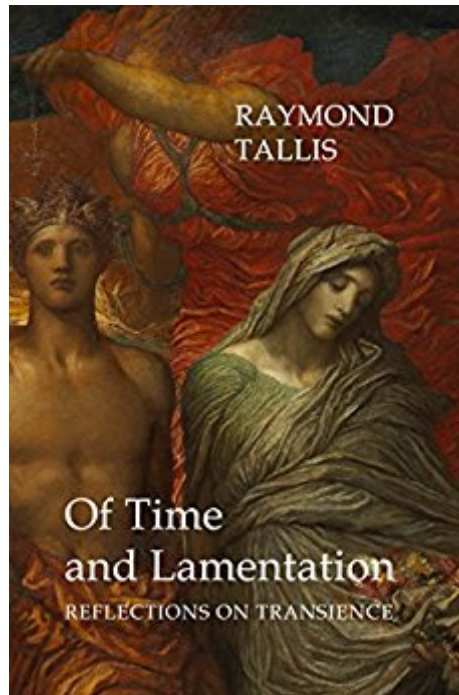




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Of Time And Lamentation



Synopsis

Time's mysteries seem to resist comprehension and what remains, once the familiar metaphors are stripped away, can stretch even the most profound philosopher. In *Of Time and Lamentation*, Raymond Tallis rises to this challenge and explores the nature and meaning of time and how best to understand it. The culmination of some twenty years of thinking, writing and wondering about (and within) time, it is a bold, original and thought-provoking work. With characteristic fearlessness, Tallis seeks to reclaim time from the jaws of physics. For most of us, time is composed of mornings, afternoons and evenings and expressed in hurry, hope, longing, waiting, enduring, planning, joyful expectation and grief. Thinking about it is to meditate on our own mortality. Yet, physics has little or nothing to say about this time, the time as it is lived. The story told by caesium clocks, quantum theory and Lorentz coordinates, Tallis argues, needs to be supplemented by one of moss on rocks, tears on faces and the long narratives of our human journey. Our temporal lives deserve a richer attention than is afforded by the equations of mathematical physics. For anyone who has puzzled over the nature of becoming, wondered whether time is inseparable from change, whether time is punctuate or continuous, or even whether time, itself, is real, the book will provoke and entertain. Those who seek to find a place at which the scientific and humanistic views of humanity can be reconciled, will celebrate his placing of human consciousness at the heart of time.

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book. It is written from an old man's perspective. It is also a difficult book. Tallis is a polymath. The range and variety of reference material he cites is astonishing. Contemplating the end of consciousness, Tallis attempts to reconcile time as understood in science with lived time, the time of everyday living. Is the cessation or surrender of consciousness the end of life? Tallis sees the possible. If you undertake a reading, be patient. Limit your reading to a few pages at a sitting. Here is a work of an exceptional man, summing up a life time of thinking.

Recently several booklets have been published to clarify the notion of time in the light of the latest knowledge of physics: The time reborn by L. Smolin, The Now by R.A. Muller and The Order of Time by C. Rovelli. It is a demonstration of great interest in this topic, which concerns not only scientific but also cultural aspects in general and above all existential. Tallis's book, 708 pages, addresses all these aspects in a comprehensive, arguable and clear way. Underlining how time can not be reduced to a single mathematical dimension, but viewed from different points of view; None of which prevails but must be integrated into the different contexts of research or life. A pleasant and stimulating reading for all those interested in the subject, accompanied by an impressive bibliography and notes system. A five star book surely. Florindo Pirone

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