Aristotle defined time as the measure of motion according to a before and an after, from which it follows that the instant wherein that measure is determined by the hand of a clock, presents itself as a limit which separates the past from the future, and at the same time possibly connects them by simple contiguity, in such a way that that instant remains immobile in its punctual instantaneity. This immobility of the instant as such, renders the motion of things incomprehensible, seeing that this motion should necessarily coincide with an infinity of purely static positions. It is clear that the point in time is but an abstraction, albeit a necessary one for measurement. But to define the instant as a point is to reify an abstraction which amounts to a suppression of the future itself.

It was only in the first part of the twentieth century, that, with the development of the phenomenological method, Husserl was able, in the third phase of his creative activity, to grapple with the problem of temporalization in the living present and, thereby, transcend the Aristotelian difficulties by bringing to light the dialectic of the instant in the instant itself.

It is true that Husserl's thought on the Living Present was limited to the domain of the pure subjectivity of lived experience. We can, however, take up its essential content again, giving it necessary development and transformation in order to elaborate a dialectical logic as a general dynamic of temporalization, in other words, a general logic of being in its motion and objective and subjective becoming.

Such a logic would open the way to the task Husserl left to posterity in the Krisis, the elaboration of a really universal conception of the exact, historical, social and human sciences, which in turn would lead to an effectively rational comprehension of the problem of man and his values in its dialectical complexity, a globalistic conception of the history of mankind.

We can now give a more precise description of the living present by considering the situation of the actual Now, and by bringing to light the internal retention of the present instant in the flow of the Now to protention. This gives us a diagram of temporalization:
situation of the Now N in the Instant I

situation of the Now N₁ in the Instant I₁

situation of the Now N₂ in the Instant I₂