

Section II

CHRONOLOGICS

Contested Ways
of Thinking Time

Chronologics

An Introduction

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This section of the book presents contrasting approaches to world history, beginning with Michael Geyer's analysis of the unknown and prescient work of Marshall G. S. Hodgson who, since the 1940s, had attempted to “recast, quite literally, the sense or ‘experience’ of space and time,” thus to create a “post-Western,” and truly “global timescale.”¹ This section illustrates how different actors at different times developed and advocated their specific ways of conceiving space-time, the *chronotope*, or, to put it another way, how they formed and formulated their individual *chronologics*. It upholds, with Heather Ferguson and Özen N. Dolcerocca, an awareness of the internal logics of periodisations, following Sanjay Subrahmanyam in reflecting on periodisation as a problem of investigation, not just *about* the past, but *in* the past.²

These essays argue that conflicting logics of revelation and history, sacred and secular, the anecdotal local and the generalisable global, born out of shifting sociospatial identities, in turn shape different types of *chronotopes* (i.e. specific narratives of time-space). Investigating these, including variant projects of meaning-making that construct or reinforce particular power formations through the manipulation of time, we can avoid discourses that both oppose and exclude Other times and histories. Instead of simply assuming that Jack Goody's “Theft of History” is a given, this section makes visible the often heated negotiations accompanying attempts to define time through relationality.

The authors in this section consider emblematic moments and their historicised narration: zooming in and out on specific *chronoscales*—from the planetary world, to nation, to the minority (religious) group; also considering different *chronoscapes* (bringing to the fore multiple temporalities and their technologies of power)—in Europe, the Middle East and India. They contemplate how, each and individually, specific emblematic moments and their epochal force is recounted, while sometimes grappling with given *chronotypes* and/or (*Euro*)*chronologies*. The individual chapters cover a variety of sources, from school textbooks to literature, to journalistic, historical and religious writings, encyclopedias and universal histories.

1 See the chapter by Michael Geyer in this volume, 146, 148.

2 See his Conclusion to this book.