

## PREFACE

The subject of this volume is so vast and rich that it can only be explored in broad interdisciplinary dialogue. Our aim was to include a wide range of disciplines from the humanities to address different facets of the fascination with time and to open up new avenues for its analysis by transgressing established disciplinary boundaries. This endeavor was largely made possible by the fertile and flexible framework for transdisciplinary collaboration offered by the German Young Academy (*Die Junge Akademie*) at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. Since its foundation in 2000, *Die Junge Akademie* has enabled vibrant cooperation and exchange among researchers from a wide range of disciplines in the sciences and the humanities. It also facilitated a project in which three scholars, working on early modern English literature, contemporary Chinese Studies, and medieval history, respectively, collaborated to explore a challenging and multi-faceted subject. Our work in the context of the Young Academy's Research Group "Fascination" resulted, amongst others, in a three-day conference at Berlin (9–11 July 2014) at which the first drafts of the contributions to this volume were presented and discussed in a committed, vivid, and—most of all—friendly and productive atmosphere. Based on this conference and the great potential of the transdisciplinary approach to the fascination with time, we decided to compile a volume on the topic to introduce this new research area and promote further research on the topic.

We thank all the contributors for engaging in the interdisciplinary dialogue, both at the initial conference and during the preparation of this volume, and for their constructive feedback and their patience during the editing process. We are particularly grateful to Walther Ch. Zimmerli, who, as our keynote speaker at the conference but also beyond, provided important input from a philosophical perspective. Our thanks also go to the Young Academy for funding a conference on this topic and to the team of the Young Academy's office in Berlin who helped tremendously with the logistics connected with both the conference and numerous meetings of the working group on "Fascination." We also thank Christof Diem for his editorial assistance in preparing this volume for publication. Finally, we thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful suggestions and the editors at Palgrave Macmillan for their superb support in bringing this book to publication.

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