

**Failures East and West – Scheitern zwischen Ost und West  
International Symposium**

**Universität Trier, Gästeraum der Mensa  
7 - 9 June 2018**

Cultural encounters between East Asia and the West have received ample attention in various fields of studies ranging from cultural and literary studies to history and economy – failure in these encounters, however, has not. Often, the story of encounters between Asia and the West has been told as one of success, of cross-fertilisation, reciprocal stimulation and an exchange of commodities and knowledge. Yet, while individual encounters might indeed have been beneficial to the parties involved, the history of East-West encounters is riddled with prominent examples of failure caused by misunderstandings, ignorance, unrealistic expectations or unbridgeable cultural differences. These failures are often occluded by historiography and neglected in academic research in favour of interactions deemed more successful. We believe this to be an unduly limited approach and would hold that the study of failures might prove as fruitful as the study of seemingly successful encounters. For failures can be telling failures indeed, revealing culturally informed expectations and biases, performative and linguistic practices and imaginative horizons specific to the cultures involved.

Our symposium aims to discuss cases of failure in encounters between East Asian cultures such as Greater China, Japan and Korea on the one hand, and those of Europe and North America on the other, ranging from first encounters in the early modern period to contemporary examples. Anyone interested is warmly invited to join us in the Guest Room of the Mensa from 7 - 9 June 2018. More information about the symposium, including the conference programme, can be found on our website

<https://failureseastwest2018.com/>