



## **Encounters between East and West**

### **Intercultural Perspectives**

Series Editors: F. Dervin, T. Jin

This book series publishes volumes problematizing the issue of East versus West. The topics covered in the series represent past, current and future trends in intercultural encounters and communication between the East and West, including: - The role of language in such encounters, for example plurilingualism and English as a global language. - The impact of digital technologies in East/West interactions. - The construction of the East/West in different kinds of discourses, such as in media, fiction, educational products and services, marketing and tourism. - Diachronic examinations of encounters between the East/West. - The impact of mobility/migration. - Comparison of different but similar populations in the East/West (e.g. migrants, teachers, etc.). - Redefinitions of the East/West, in terms of changing frontiers, political terms. The series also demonstrates innovative ways of conducting intercultural research. It has now become a cliché to say that intercultural encounters have increased over recent decades. Interculturality is not new – far from it! Encounters between people from different backgrounds speaking different languages have always taken place, but the difference today is the speed and ease with which they occur. Research on interculturality and intercultural communication dates back to the 1950s with different paradigms emerging over the years. However, we have now reached a mature stage of scientific development and discussions on this topic. While initially a simple understanding of ‘national culture’ was used to explain what happened when people from different countries met, today analyses of interculturality are more complex and also take into account elements such as gender, religion, social class and age. The last decade has seen major changes in the way interculturality is studied, with a shift from an overemphasis on culture to a focus on identity. Global politics has also changed since the 1950s and some countries that used to be colonies or ‘closed’ societies have (re-)emerged and in some cases taken on economic, political and symbolic positions. The dichotomy of the East vs. West has also reappeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This largely imaginary and political characterization of our world now deserves more attention, especially in relation to intercultural encounters and communication between these two spheres.

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