Abstract

Japanische Ordnungsprinzipien - einige Parallelen zwischen Schule und Unternehmen

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To Western observers, Japanese society often appears to be based on different social and psychological laws. This otherness tends to be explained by "cultural differences/peculiarities". However, the underlying concept of "culture" too often remains vague, and statements are overly generalized. From a sociological point of view, a direct transfer of supposed cultural patterns to individual behavior ignores the important part that institutions play in shaping social reality. This paper therefore attempts to compare the institutions of kindergarten, school, college and company according to those rules and norms that appear specifically Japanese [from a German perspective]. Such comparison yields hitherto unnoticed parallel features. These will be discussed as pointing towards four principles relevant to Japanese society at large: the ideology of educational meritocracy, a high regularity of life patterns, conflict avoidance as a major tool of conflict management and a widespread understanding of institutions as social communities.