

ASIEN 76 (Juli 2000)

Abstract

Asienstudien und Wirtschaftswissenschaft - Facetten einer spannungsreichen Komplementarität

Werner Pascha

This is an introductory paper to a series of three papers which cover the relationship of (East) Asian studies and economics in the current issue of ASIEN. The subject is particularly topical, because the Asian crisis and the financing limitations of the German state challenge the prospects of Asian studies in Germany. As for consequences of the Asian crisis, it is argued that a convergence of economic structures will not necessarily become the dominant trend. Rather, competitive environments are characterised by a highly complex process of homogenization and heterogenization. If Asian economic studies contribute to understanding these phenomena, their status within the scientific community could rise significantly. As for what should be regarded as the core competence of Asian economic studies, problem orientation should be considered rather than language. Asian studies approach problems which defy conventional interpretation; its students do this on the background of solid knowledge and experiences in collaborating with other people and other knowledge bases. Such a view has important implications on how to organize curricula. Finally, in terms of organisational problems it is argued that networking between locations will become increasingly central to the success of East Asian (economic) studies. While many associations and networks exist, they are still far from transparent and satisfactory for the challenging issues ahead.