

ASIEN 83 (April 2002)

Abstract

Strategien für ein spillover des Diskurses unter Intellektuellen auf die Reformdebatte unter Politikern in Japan

Karin Adelsberger

In the 1990s Japan was facing diverse problems. This situation led to a vigorous debate on political reforms to adjust the political system to the changed circumstances; a reform of the electoral system and an administrative reform were implemented. Especially in the case of such far-reaching political reforms, politics must not be regarded as being separated from the discussion among intellectuals. Rather, politics is influenced by those debates. New ideas and policy proposals are not only generated by zoku politicians (experts in certain topics) or the bureaucracy, but also diffuse into politics from the discourse among intellectuals. This paper analyses how this diffusion of ideas and policy proposals, the so-called spillover, from the discourse among intellectuals onto the debate among politicians does happen in Japan. By focussing on intellectuals, this paper analyses spillover by groups, that are experts in certain topics, but usually do not have close relations to the political establishment. This paper is based on interviews conducted by the author herself in September/October 2001 in Japan.