

Consistent conservatism in changing times: An analysis of Japanese conservative intellectuals' thought

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Abstrak

Conservatism is about defending the status quo; in both Germany and Japan, the status quo is the postwar democratic regime. However, while the representatives of Germany's intellectual conservatism have come to accept the democratic status quo of the postwar period, the same can hardly be said about intellectual conservatism in Japan, despite the two countries' similar modern histories. This article seeks to explain this puzzle by pointing to a lack of pressure to adapt and the resulting freedom allowing Japanese conservatives to take a peculiar and consistently negative view of the postwar system's foundations, which they do not recognize as a new tradition worth building on, but rather a deplorable ideological import forced upon Japan. Based on those observations, the article makes a case for an autonomous intellectual conservatism.