

THE ALT-RIGHT & MISAPPROPRIATIONS OF CLASSICAL GREEK PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT



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Abstract

The Alt-Right frequently cites classical Greek philosophical thought to support their mission of white supremacy. However, many contemporary progressive classists push-back against the Alt-Right's dangerous rhetoric, claiming the movement is ignorant of Greek antiquity and therefore misappropriates great thinkers such as Aristotle. I argue, however, that a more nuanced view of classical Greek philosophical thought is necessary to properly characterize the way in which the Alt-Right uses Greek antiquity to justify their actions. Additionally I argue that the basis of the Alt-Right's misappropriation stems from a their manipulation of history rather than ignorance of it.

Research Question

Are the dangerous beliefs of the Alt-Right regarding race supported by classical Greek philosophical thought or does the Alt-Right misappropriate the great Greek thinkers?

Methods

I completed a qualitative study using both primary and secondary sources. Primary classical sources, such as Aristotle's *Politics*, were references in translation. Primary contemporary sources included investigative articles and scholarly research.

I particularly focused on the misappropriation of Sparta as a key case study due to its frequent use in Alt-Right rhetoric. The militaristic city state where slavery was based on conquest versus race demonstrated the Alt-Right's manipulation of history.



<https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-the-far-right-perverts-ancient-historyand-why-it-matters?ref=scroll>

Conclusions

Generally speaking, the Alt-Right is well-versed in classical Greek philosophical thought; however, they fail to properly contextualize it and thus they manipulate history.

So, what can be done? As one solution, scholars and classists must accept that the Alt-Right is not ignorant of classical philosophy and then continue their work to push-back against incorrect interpretations of antiquity by highlighting the lack of proper historical contextualization.

References

Central sources:

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