

Funding the Future

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Fascism is not just about Mussolini or Hitler. It is an ideology that divides humanity into “superior” and “inferior” groups — with catastrophic consequences. In this video, I explain what fascism really means, why its essence is exclusion, and why true democracy depends on equality and respect for all.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7pjd_G3088?si=Q3q0xk89WD5dhAyD

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=ehiti-19828c0-pb&from=pb6admin&s hare=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

What is fascism? I mean, what is fascism really? What does it actually mean when we say that somebody is a fascist, or an ideology is fascist?

There have been a lot of lists produced over time, and some of them are really quite useful. Have a look at the one by Umberto Eco, for example.

But I saw a definition recently, which I thought was really good. It was written by a chap whom I vaguely know called Umair Haque, and he suggested that fascism divides humanity into superhuman and subhuman groups, and that's all that we need to know to define whether a person is fascist or not, or whether an ideology is fascist or not.

Now, I don't think that the idea is completely unique to Umair. I think that actually it comes from others. David Graeber and David Wengrow, for example, did work around this idea as well. But the point is that if this is the case, the true opposite of fascism is respect for all human beings as equals, and it is not democracy as such. It is deeper than that. It's about literally our human relationships.

And understanding this matters now, because what this says is that fascism is not really Mussolini's corporate state. Nor is it Hitler's national socialism or Nazi Party. And it's not just strong leaders dominating weak parliaments that are subject to their will. These are symptoms, but they're not the core disease that fascism represents.

The essence of fascism is eugenic. It is its claim that there are people who have worth over others as a fact of nature, when there's absolutely no evidence whatsoever to support that claim at all.

Fascism tries to split humanity into categories of worth.

Rights are made conditional and not universal.

And from this division, the horrors of fascism naturally follow.

The rule of law is suspended as a consequence of this division. It's suspended for the subhuman.

Violence against those subhumans is then justified and celebrated.

And conflict becomes permanent proof of the worth of the superhuman.

Fascism persists not as a passing aberration, but on the basis of its compounding of cruelty.

How then do we build an opposition to this ideology of cruelty?

Let's be clear, democracy is important, but it is only an institutional form in that sense because, without values, democracy is hollow. There can be no true democracy unless it is based upon the belief that every person should be equally represented within the society and the political system that democracy claims to represent.

Respect for all humans as equals provides those values that make democracy real.

That respect resists exclusion and affirms universality.

So the principles of respect need to be spelt out.

They are dignity, every person has equal worth.

And there is liberation, the idea that freedom from oppression is inherent within a

political ideology.

There is transformation. This is the rejection of the idea that people are naturally born to a state, which they cannot change. Transformation makes clear that people can grow and change and flourish and are not either superhuman or subhuman, but are just simply people on a pathway through life.

These ideas directly oppose the determinism which is inherent in fascism's view of what humanity is. They do essentially respect diversity when fascism deems that we are all fixed to a stereotype, which we cannot change.

And this matters because democracy collapses if rights aren't universal.

Conditional rights corrode equality, and societies can't survive on that basis.

Exclusion hollows out the political system. Fascism thrives when rights are denied.

This also has economic implications. Fascism reduces people to a status and not to dignity.

Neoliberalism echoes this by treating people as costs. Respect for equality requires an economy of care and not one in which people are simply treated as means of production. We are not that. We are people of worth, deserving of public services and redistribution to make sure that we have what we need to survive in the society of which we are a part. And justice is essential inside a system of politics, but also of economics, so that everybody can partake.

So what must we do? We must name fascism for what it is. The division of humanity. That is what fascism's aim is, and it is what it does. It literally says you are superior, you are inferior; we will divide the world so that the spoils go to the superior, and if you are inferior, you are going to be in deep trouble.

We have to call that out because that is happening here in the UK right now, and it's happening in so many other countries as well. In the USA, it's now almost embedded in law. Instead, we need to embed the universal nature of rights into law and policy. And we need to build economics around dignity and inclusion, and not about the exclusion on which it is currently premised.

We must resist the politics of fear and exclusion. Fascism divides us. The respect for all humans as equals amongst others unites us, and democracy depends upon that universal equality. The choice is between exclusion and fear, or dignity and equality. Humanising economics and politics is our only choice now.

What do you think? Do you think we're all equal? Or do you think we should build our society on the basis of division? Do you think there are some people who are superior and others who are inferior? And do you think some should be rewarded just because of

who they are, and others should be punished?

Let us know. There's a poll below. This is a matter which affects you and one with which you must engage.

Poll

[poll id="223"]

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