

Understanding Ur-Fascism: Absurdity, Control, and Resistance

Adapted from Umberto Eco's 'Ur-Fascism' (1995), with modern parallels, historical quotes, and references from Star Trek and Laibach. Compiled for analysis and resistance.

1. The Cult of Tradition

Mythologized pasts replace complex realities. E.g., MAGA, 'traditional values'.

2. Rejection of Modernism

Complexity, ambiguity, and intellectuals are vilified. Simplicity = purity.

3. Action for Action's Sake

Thinking is weakness. Acting on rage or impulse is glorified.

4. Disagreement is Treason

Critique = enemy behavior. 'You're with us or against us.'

5. Fear of Difference

Targets the 'other'-immigrants, queer people, minorities.

6. Frustrated Middle Class

Authoritarianism feeds on lost privilege and status anxiety.

7. Obsession with Conspiracy

Everything is orchestrated by 'them'. QAnon, globalist cabals.

8. Enemies Strong & Weak

They're both pathetic and omnipotent. Classic doublethink.

9. Pacifism = Complicity

Violence is seen as virtue. Peace is painted as cowardice.

10. Contempt for the Weak

The poor, disabled, and marginalized are scorned as burdens.

11. Heroism for Everyone

Everyone must be a martyr or warrior. Propaganda valorizes sacrifice.

12. Machismo & Weapons

Hypermasculinity, gun culture, military cosplay.

13. Selective Populism

The Leader *is* the People. Anyone else is an enemy.

14. Impoverished Vocabulary (Newspeak)

Nuance vanishes. 'Fake news', 'woke', 'patriot', etc.

Additional References & Parallels

Star Trek: The Next Generation - 'Chain of Command, Part II'

Captain Picard is tortured and told to say there are five lights when he sees four. A metaphor for authoritarian control over truth.

Laibach (band)

"We are fascists as much as Hitler was a painter." A satire of totalitarian aesthetics that highlights the absurd theatricality of power.

George Orwell - 1984

Doublethink, Newspeak, and the Party's control over reality mirror fascist tactics.

Dorothy Day

"Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy, rotten system." Refusal to comply is the beginning of resistance.

Umberto Eco

Wrote 'Ur-Fascism' to show how fascism is a style of thought, not just a regime.