

Here's why you might be a fascist pig

When their enemies were at the gates, the Romans would suspend democracy and appoint one man to protect the city. And it wasn't considered an honor, it was considered a public service.

- Harvey Dent

41% of Americans think “having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament or elections” is a very good or fairly good system(Earth4all) This is not an isolated statistic. A median of 31% across 24 nations are supportive of authoritarian systems. According to Pew Research Center a diverse range of countries such as The UK, India and Argentina to name a few . We like to pretend that we are highly evolved intellectual beings, but deep down we are still the primeval sheep who confide in populism. And love when we are led by an all-powerful, ever-right, revered being, against the common enemy. The golden age of democracy is long gone and we're beyond fascism just ushering in. It's not about one leader or one nation, but the direction our world is headed in as a whole. It's rather too simplistic and convenient to believe dictators are in power due to propaganda and only stupid people fall for it, not smart people like us. But the reality is much more gruesome and we cannot diagnose a problem we don't acknowledge, We love Dictators

No, most of us don't fanboy Adolf Hitler (Kanye being an exception) or similar historical figures. All of us have our fair share of gripes with the inefficient, boring, lacklustre bureaucratic system. Corruption, scandals, the economy, all these complicated issues. Yet It's all so easy, the solution is right there,

someone just needs to step up and do it. I certainly could fix up all this mess and make a perfect haven if I had the authority. Deep down all of us think like that. As Richard Branson once said “I believe in benevolent dictatorship provided I am the dictator.”



There are multiple reasons as to why people seem to be energised by the idea of a dictator. These factors work individually as well as collectively with each other, amplifying the desire for a ruthless dictator. This is not a new phenomenon. “Early in the twenty-first century, the number of democracies surged past the tally of authoritarian states worldwide. By 2019, dictatorships outnumbered democracies.” (Sergei Guriev and Daniel Treisman) This century has Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un. The previous had Mussolini, Stalin and Ho Chin Minh. Even going back 255 years in the past the world had Napoleon Bonaparte and over 2000 years ago Julius Caesar. Dictatorship nor our fascination with it is a new concept. According to Jean Kim M.D a Psychiatrist, this fascination starts early, as early as our birth. “ One fundamental concern in human nature, that draws them to the idea of a higher authority or power, is the need for an idealized parental figure. Partly because while growing up, parents loom large as the overseers of your consciousness. Conversely, they can devastate you with their absence or cruelty.”

Parents are the basis of our survival in childhood and things can often go wrong with flawed parents. Due to this for many of us, this intrinsic thirst for such a perfect yet non-existing figure looms and increases. A tyrannical leader knows how to exploit this universal feeling.

Though this is not to say that deep down everyone wants a dictatorship, in fact, a recent Pew Research Center report indicates that Representative Democracy remains a popular ideal even in these times of global uncertainty (which is historically the time dictatorships rise) “The health of democracy has declined significantly in many nations over the past several years, but the concept of representative democracy continues to be popular among citizens across the globe.” Even when people are unsatisfied a good majority of them still view Democracy as a better form of government. Which brings me to my next point. Groupthink is “ a phenomenon that occurs when a group of well-intentioned people makes irrational decisions spurred by the urge to conform or the belief that dissent is impossible. The consensus may be due to group members valuing harmony and coherence above critical thought.” (Psychology Today) Human beings are swayed by what people around them believe, and the scary part is often those around them might not actually agree with what they are preaching either. And in turn they might have picked it up from people around them. A long chain of groupthink. People might be afraid to speak up when they feel like they’re alone and eventually confirm and give in despite their actual beliefs. It’s like when in school you had a doubt but were too scared to ask, only to later realize that everyone had the same doubt.

Feeling weak and uncertain in one's own life is yet another factor. People who feel powerless, who have no control over their own lives like to attach themselves to an overly powerful figure as a means to feel what they lack. Social media has amplified this weakness and authoritarian leaders love it. “ Many authoritarian regimes have already established a very active presence online. They are constantly designing new tools and learning new tactics that range from producing suave online propaganda to

cultivating their own easily controllable alternatives to services like Facebook or Twitter.”(Evgeny Morozov)

We must recognise these tendencies, instead of shoving them deep into ourselves we should let them out and introspect. It’s better to feel a moment of discomfort than decades of oppression. “After the mass death and destruction of World War I, with their economies shredded by inflation and unemployment, Italy and Germany turned from democracy to dictatorships. UC Berkeley scholars see troubling parallels in contemporary American democracy.”(By Edward Lempinen) Edward talks about how it’s not simply about the similarities between such leaders but rather the similar conditions that led to their rise.



I believe the most important and common factor among such rulers is not the external conditions but our internal turmoil. It’s difficult to change the way we’re hardwired. I believe it would be a big step to simply understand the root cause of such a desire. We must accept the problem to combat it and not discriminate against those who are yet to do the same. People who fall for such tactics are not necessarily

evil but could be victims too. It's important to remember what the 35th president of the United States said.

“The ignorance of one voter in a democracy impairs the security of all.”

- John F. Kennedy

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