

Monarchism and fascism today

"It's not fascism. But it's still pretty based."

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[Here is a transcript from memory of an improvised lecture delivered with a bullhorn on top of a green picnic table in Plummer Park, West Hollywood, December 12, 2021. Large dogs patrolled the skirts of the crowd as I spoke, protecting us from the local ruffians, actors and transsexuals—a test of strength and vitality in Sodom’s rotting, delicious California heart.

Results: no one, except a couple of squirrels (an invasive species, anyway) was harmed. Many were at once inspired to enter their poetry in the famous [Passage Prize](#), which I have the honor to be judging—you must submit! Also, listen to my [podcast](#) with the mysterious Default Friend—it’s about Usenet. You get to be young, but I get to have been on Usenet.]

Sweet friends! Brothers and sisters! Zoomers and boomers!

I am a monarchist (an [absolute monarchist](#), not a [costume monarchist](#)). I believe the best form of government, for America now and also for most places in most times, is a “benevolent dictator”—an absolute (yet accountable) monarch or “sovereign CEO,” governing autocratically under the simple, ancient principle of [salus populi suprema lex](#).

But lots of folks think I’m a fascist and are afraid of me. Since I have been doing this for almost fifteen years and now my people are everywhere (do you know one? You must know one—but would he say?), I thought it’d be good to clarify the difference.

Monarchism is not fascism. In an age of democratic apathy, monarchism is the only alternative to fascism. [Fascism is an inferior version of monarchism. Historically, fascism is Sulla or Marius; monarchism is Caesar or Augustus. Kids: to stop fascism, support monarchism.](#) (But don’t confuse it with [monachism](#) or [monorchism](#).)

Or you could like the way that power works now—this would make you not a populist political democrat (ie, a fascist, or [at least a type of fascist](#)), but an elitist progressive oligarch. Institutional oligarchy—centerless bureaucracy—was the 20th century’s alternative to fascism. It won. It also had its merits and also its problems. Some of these problems disappeared over time. Others have appeared over time.

If you are a (cultural) liberal, fascism is your enemy. You think the oligarchy is your friend. The oligarchy is rotting. Support monarchy as your defense against fascism and democracy. Democracy is also your enemy, and fascism (populism) is democracy.

If you are a (cultural) conservative, liberalism is your enemy. The oligarchy is your enemy. The oligarchy may be rotting, but it will not clean itself up. Support monarchy as the radical cure for the liberal oligarchy of all fancy institutions.

If you are a (cultural) fascist, monarchy is the closest thing to your kind of fascism that is maybe possible today. It's not fascism. But it's still pretty based. Support monarchy as the only realistic cure for the old liberal-conservative monopoly of power.

Monarchy is for everyone, you see. Basically, *salus populi suprema lex* means everyone is a protected class. The purpose of the government is to nurture and protect its human beings, all of them.

Unfortunately, after the 20th century, this has to be said. Also, no one with eyes can say the current regime is doing a good job of nurturing and protecting any class of human beings—except, possibly, Yale graduates. [Laughter.]

Monarchy has nothing against any class of human beings—not even Yale graduates. Unfortunately the political engineering of fascism prevents it from working as well. Fascism needs a popular support base, and that base implies an opposite anti-base. This gives fascism the toxic aftertaste which has brought it such a bad name, despite its well-known achievements in the areas of transportation, rocketry, uniforms, etc.

Absolute monarchy

I would argue that assuring the “benevolence” of the “dictator,” or as I would say the accountability of the sovereign CEO, is not as impossible as it looks. Sovereignty is a nontrivial variation on the conventional corporate-governance model, which seems to do an okay job of grilling trillions of rubbery burgers without any overt poisonings. Yes, McDonald's (not affiliated with [Kevin MacDonald](#)) would face legal consequences if they started drugging their Hebraic guests. Still: is that the main reason they don't? [Confused muttering, some laughter.]

There is an engineering tradeoff between autocracy and accountability. An accountable monarchy cannot be *perfectly* autocratic or *perfectly* accountable. Accountability is not management; it needs the lightest possible touch. A classic corporate board meets four times a year and has zero power to manage the company—only to replace the CEO. A board can and ideally should go decades without taking any meaningful action. The less it does, the better.

In any case, the problem of choosing the “benevolent dictator,” making sure he or she stays “benevolent,” and replacing her or him with an equally benevolent successor, is not an impossible and unimaginable paradox. It is an engineering problem. One must consider the possibility that it is actually solvable—or at least, solvable enough. One such deranged solution, in fact, is sketched out below.

Classical (20th-century) fascism

I am not a fascist—as a Jew, I cannot support fascism. As an Aryan, I must respect it. [Laughter.] As a student of history, I have sworn an oath to respect and understand all things and peoples I meet in the past, whether or not they would respect me. If I am tempted to ostracize them, they must be tempted to ostracize me—we will never get along so. As von Ranke said: “every age stands equal before God.”

From an engineering perspective, a fascist regime is a monarchy which is accountable to a democratic political movement. Hitler and Mussolini did not rule by mere force, like William the Conqueror. They took power through political popularity; in power, they stayed obsessed with political popularity; their legitimacy derived from political parties which became ruling parties in their one-party states. Mussolini was actually *fired* by his own Grand Council of Fascism. Doh! [Laughter.]

And in power, they used the levers of powers to manipulate their own support bases. The classic fascist regimes of the early 20th century were propaganda regimes. They were really accountable to no one, since they could brainwash the party rank and file. Capturing one’s own accountability mechanism is a common failure mode.

Most important, any kind of one-party state is a permanent civil war—between party members and non-members. If the ruling party is associated with an ethnic group or geographic division, the table is set for civil war. Even massacres of civilians do not happen in cold blood—they require the mentality of war.

Fascism is monarchy which is existentially dependent on a popular support base. It easily tends to mobilize this support base against its subjects outside the base, creating the conditions for civil war and/or human-rights abuses. Generally speaking, this is not a problem we see in stable historical monarchies.

Classic fascist regimes can no longer exist in the Western world, since these regimes require a popular energy that no longer exists. Not only will 21st-century Americans not dress up in costumes and march, 21st-century Germans won’t either. Classical fascism requires levels of democratic passion and martial virtue now far beyond reach. Fascists and liberals alike do not want to hear that we suck too much to be fascists. [Applause, laughter, a couple of boos.]

Hypermodern (21st-century) fascism

Instead, there are three kinds of fascism afoot in our hypermodern world: from best to worst, post-communist fascism, post-democratic fascism, and performative fascism.

Post-communist fascism (as in China) avoids the civil-war problem, or most of it, because the ruling party originates as a national party of government.

The Chinese Communist Party may have some deep sectarian roots, and perhaps does not truly represent some other sectarian groups—such as the Uighurs. But most people in the PRC are Han Chinese and the Party is inevitably Han-centric. Also, political activism outside the Party is forbidden, and only about 1/10 of Chinese citizens are Party members—only about 100 million. Still quite a big auditorium. Obviously, the CCP has a nontrivial claim to being the best government on earth, though by historical standards it is not that impressive.

[Audience silent here.]

Post-democratic fascism (as in Hungary) is built on the lower middle class—the same support base as Hitler or Trump. It manages or perverts democratic mechanisms to produce an informal simulation, never formally acknowledged, of a dictatorship. Our grand Trumphenreich was a kind of counterfeit version of post-democratic fascism. [Confused, angry muttering.]

These regimes do have some good incentives and will occasionally pursue the *salus populi*, or some cousin of it, for some people, at some times. They are not into mass murder, nor do they need to be. They are into mass corruption, and they need to be. They are invariably temporary and will all disappear in a burst of bogus liberation. [A few boos, muttering.]

Performative fascism (as in high school) involves dressing up in army-surplus clothes and making Hitler salutes. Performative fascism is generally harmless, except to the fascist. But it is occasionally dangerous, since rogue, literature-crazed teenagers kill more Americans every year than either white or tiger sharks. [Laughter.]

Fascism is 100% a dead end because classical fascism is out of reach; post-communist fascism requires going communist first; post-democratic fascism just plain sucks; and performative fascism is not a form of government, but a psychiatric condition—or, at its absolute best, an artistic achievement.

One common quality of all these four fascisms is the sense of direct collective action. As in all democratic ways of thinking, “we” are always doing something together. This is a pathognomonic sign of political childhood—at least in a society where democracy of this form does not work, and has not worked for many years.

Monarchism, apathy, and militarism

Classical fascism is out of reach because it requires violent, energetic engagement with power by a mass constituency. America has no army of bloodthirsty, medieval-minded, spike-helmeted World War I veterans. A political strategy that mobilizes people who don't exist is unlikely to work.

Historically, mass engagement with politics is rare. Most of the time, in most places and eras in history, most people are apathetic and disengaged. Why did the Roman Empire not have mass politics, whereas the Roman Republic did? Because no one really cared, and if they did there was nothing for them to do.

Universal political apathy and a healthy, flourishing, stable monarchy go together like cheese and a burger. As Charles I put it, "a subject and a sovereign are clean different things." When apathy increases, a true, non-fascist monarchy becomes more possible. It feels good to be on the right side of a trend for once. And of course, this is more or less exactly how the Roman Republic turned into the Roman Empire.

A fascist regime depends on its support base. That support base—some incomplete fraction of the population—biases the policies of the regime. This leads to racism, hate, xenophobia and/or the Holocaust. I mean maybe it doesn't have to. But it can. [Laughter.]

A true monarchy is naturally neutral across population inhomogeneities, because it rules by technical means uncorrelated with popularity. In the Roman Empire, this technical means was the Roman military. Caesar, of course, started as a politician on the side of the *populares* (populists, Trumpists, etc), but took power as a general.

The army had long since ceased to be, as in the early Republican days, merely the people in arms, becoming instead almost a separate social order. Any military is a machine—a machine, made of human beings, for killing human beings.

But as a mechanism for ensuring stable, effective sovereignty, military despotism did not serve the Romans well. Eventually their "selectorate" narrowed to the Praetorian Guard—the purple bought and sold, etc—"and where are they now, these Romans?"

The steadfast iron will of unstoppable code

Many problems in political science were not solved in the ancient world. Some also have gone unsolved in modernity; some that were solved have been unsolved. But the hypermodern too stands equal before God, and presents to history—the *blockchain*. Something new under the sun.

The problem with the military machine is that its muscles are made of flesh and its nerves of words. The army's obedience of the general, the general's obedience of the king, are mere human habits.

Once no honor restrains these habits, coup will follow coup; the lust for power splits the habit of obedience at every stitch and seam. Military anarchy is military anarchy, whether in 3rd-century Rome or 19th-century Argentina.

But what if mere discipline were backed by—the *steadfast iron will of unstoppable code*?

This is a fundamental mechanism in nuclear security: the [permissive action link](#) (PAL). Together with the “nuclear football,” the PAL cryptographically ensures that only the legitimate President, not some rogue Air Force general high on testosterone, quaaludes and Revelation 3, can turn all of Eurasia into a smoking radioactive hell.

You know what? That's cool. And in the 60s, it was cooler. What would be cooler, though, is if the power of nuclear hell was—*on the blockchain*? [Laughter.]

You guessed it. If you're the king, you actually have, like taped behind your balls, a non-fungible token (NFT) which controls the nuclear deterrent. Now that's power. [A few laughs, some nervous muttering.]

But this key need not just be for nuclear weapons. Rather, *all* the military's weapons can be prevented from operating without it. While anyone who truly cares about guns knows that the only worse thing than a “smart gun” is an *Internet* gun, the military is after all a special-purpose use case. It is not that hard to build a weapon that disables itself if it doesn't get today's downstream key. It's for killing people, not culling hogs.

The result is that, in any civil conflict, any military formation not acting under the king's orders will have their weapons stop working and get totally pasted by the first loyal units on the scene. With end-to-end cryptographic weapons control, the classic military coup, like the VCR, the chariot or the carburetor, belongs to the past.

Ideally, of course, the military machine would literally be a machine—fully automated luxury warfare. Only the king, from his special command pod, can command this drone death-swarm. Once he removes the USB stick from his secret place, then inserts it in the royal command port, he alone can stand against the whole nation. No ragtag mob of mutinous rebels shall again trouble the sacred memory of Charles I—the king's robot drones will sweep these worthless scum from the land... [Laughter.]

The anonymous trustees

Recall that our accountable monarchy, or “benevolent dictatorship,” has two sides: the authority of the king (stiffened by the steadfast iron will of unstoppable code), and the accountability of the king.

The king does have a token that controls the military. But he answers to a board of trustees that can, by majority vote, cancel that token, and give a new one to someone else. But the trustees really try not to do this if they don't, like, *have* to.

The trustees do not have the power to command the king's death-drone swarms. They do not have any power at all; they cannot micromanage past the king. They do not develop any attachment to the process of government, only the results, which they can evaluate neutrally and at a distance.

These are exactly the powers and behavior of a normal corporate board of directors. However, at the sovereign level, this structure has an additional problem. It is not in practice possible to pressure, say, Microsoft, by kidnapping or bribing 2/3 of its board. This is because Microsoft is protected by the operating system of actual government. Here, we are trying to run the corporate operating system on the bare metal of power.

It must be impossible to coerce or corrupt the board of trustees. Since they should be prominent individuals, there is only one way to protect them: to keep their identities secret. *No one* knows who the trustees are, not even the king, not even each other. So not even the king can pressure them, sabotaging his own accountability.

Each trustee has an NFT, of course. With this token he can do three things: converse anonymously with the other trustees; help them elect a new king, and designate a successor or string of successors. If he does not check in to the board meeting every two weeks, a deadman switch gives his powers to his designated successor. It is also conventional for a trustee to retire if doxed or identified in any way.

These hypermodern illuminati are impossible to coerce, because they are impossible to identify. They are distinguished figures—but not even the king knows who they are. And they choose their own successors, who are other distinguished figures in their social circle.

The result is a completely invulnerable decision-making structure, which is not close enough to the actual job of managing the state to be captured by interests within it. The initial trustees on the board still have to be good, of course. Which leads us to...

The velvet coup

But how does this system get started? Which comes first, for example—the king or the trustees? Obviously, no king can crown himself—not with just a crown.

The simple answer is that the first king is special. He appoints, as trustees, people he trusts. His goal is to in a sense perpetuate the promise of his initial message; to create a board which, initially stamped with his image, will retain it permanently. But the first king picks the first board and knows who they are—although the initial trustees should probably start their careers by retiring in favor of someone fully hidden.

Here is the other resemblance between monarchism and fascism: both have to start with those two essential ingredients, a mass movement and a charismatic leader. The leader must use the mass movement to win the democracy game, then demand and take absolute power. The mass movement must delegate absolute trust to the leader.

But for fascism, this is the end state. For monarchism, it is an intermediate state. For monarchism, the mass movement is like the first stage of a rocket—which will never reach space. It will never become part of the government. It will splash into the ocean and become a house for the fishes.

The conflict of the orders in Rome, under various names, had existed for essentially the whole historical memory of the Roman Republic. At various times it boiled over into a hot civil war. Usually it was a cold civil war. Caesar was the champion of the populares, Pompey of the optimates; but after Augustus prevailed, there was no politics and no politicians. And the class conflict in Rome was never heard from again.

This is the important difference that separates Caesar and Augustus from Marius and Sulla. We might say that Marius was a communist and Sulla was a fascist—or perhaps, the reverse. In either case, neither governed as the leader of Rome. They governed as the leader of a faction within Rome.

This is the essence of fascism—a fundamentally democratic mechanism. The leader is still the agent of the principals, the party members, who are acting collectively. There is no collective action in monarchism; the king is God's vicegerent on earth; all things that happen, or at least all things the government does, are directed by him. But in fascism, the real government is the people (ie, the people within the support base).

The fascist party is a mass movement which is not designed to detach from power. The party activists who brought fascism to power in Italy and Germany became what the Germans called *bonzen*, small-time bureaucratic leeches, the Nazi equivalent of the nosy HR lady. Maybe if all these people had been sent to sea in submarines, Hitler could of won the war. [Laughter.]

This is why, from the perspective of hypermodern monarchism, 20th-century fascism looks like an incomplete development, a larval form, mutated and horribly wrong—a political axolotl—adult baby, with fangs and scales.

The character of a monarchist mass movement must be totally different—since such a movement is not designed to take power, but to shift power. The party is a pop-up restaurant, a purely temporary one-time organization. Its goal is to succeed and then not have to exist.

Accordingly, it requires much less commitment and participation than a 20th-century fascist or communist party. Participation in the movement feels less like enlisting in an *army*, more like playing a social *game*. And instead of beating your enemies up in the streets, the moves in this game are purely symbolic non-actions—like voting.

As for the charismatic leader and would-be king, he must combine the two most important ingredients of hypermodern political communication: *irony* and *sincerity*.

This entire project of 21st-century monarchism (on the blockchain!) is both utterly ironic, and completely sincere. Every part of making it happen will feel like a joke. The result, however, will be completely real—both sincere, and irreversible.

Electing an absolute king is the essence of both the fascist and monarchist programs. But fascism conceives that king as a servant of the movement; monarchism conceives the movement as a servant of the king.

And once he is king, and commands the police and the military, what does he need with a political movement? When politics itself is a thing of the past?

Fascism is in a way easier to get people to sign up for, because supporters of fascism keep their democratic power, or at least feel they have kept it. They are acting collectively through the leader; the leader is their instrument; if he does not perform, they would have to find a new instrument.

Supporters of monarchism use their democratic power only once—to give it away. They do not feel they are participating in any collective direct action. They never posture at all. To a fascist, this kind of experience seems feeble and unstimulating, like nonalcoholic beer. Not like World War I.

Yet because the monarchist is performing a permanent regime change, one which bids fair to start a new historical *era*, this one exercise should be epic and orgasmic—as well as ironic and sincere. To be part of it is to be part of something amazing, a birth of a new world, which will never happen twice—a revolution, yes, but also a mere piece of *art*. “But to be young was very heaven.”

Questions? [Applause, some laughter.]



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Based Dec 15, 2021

"I'm a crypto-fascist, but like, literally."

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Nick Nick's Newsletter Dec 15, 2021

> Yes, McDonald's (not affiliated with Kevin MacDonald) would face legal consequences if they started drugging their Hebraic guests. Still: is that the main reason they don't?

Quite probably. Still, many companies do everything in their powers to poison their customers for profit within the confines of the law or grey areas of it (from tobacco companies adding addictive substances, to Sony adding rootkits, all the way to drug companies wining and dining doctors to over-prescribe drugs, modern web "dark patterns", Facebook's "dopamine-binge" engineering and socio-political meddling and so on).

Hell, many companies poison their customers even outside what's legal to make a profit (from the car industry emissions scandal, to construction companies using subpar materials to cut costs, to the tons of scandals in the food industry).

That doesn't even touch the kind of scumbuggery involved in financial and/or white crime, from otherwise "respectable" CEOs of huge multinational and national banks, insurance companies, and so on.

And that's before we get to externalities, which those companies can conveniently ignore, but the monarch/government can't (or shouldn't) - because unlike a company, the domain of the government is the totality.

That is, if Exxon poisons some ecosystem, it's still fine (for Exxon and it's CEO, some damage control aside, iff they are found out, and even if found out, only iff they can't negotiate a good deal to get out of it with the political lackeys they sponsor). Exxon cares for "salus Exxon" alone. If the government does it, it's not OK, because the government is supposed to care for the "salus populi".

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