

69. Politics

Chapter Summary:

Between 2020 and 2022, Elon Musk's political views underwent a significant transformation, marked by his reactions to government mandates during the COVID-19 pandemic and his discontent with progressive politics. His refusal to shut down Tesla's Fremont factory in the face of California's COVID-19 stay-at-home order highlighted his anti-authoritarian stance. Musk's resistance to conformity and regulatory directives became more pronounced as he clashed with local authorities, ultimately keeping the plant operational despite the looming threat of legal action.

Musk's political shift was also fueled by personal experiences, including his opposition to what he perceived as political correctness and the "woke-mind virus," a metaphor he used to describe progressive social activism that he believed undermined science, meritocracy, and humanity's potential. His daughter's transition and political views, along with his growing frustration with the humorless nature of woke culture, notably stirred his disillusionment. Musk's criticism of progressive Democrats marked a notable pivot from his previous support for Barack Obama, leading him to voice support for moderate and Republican candidates.

Amid allegations of misconduct surfaced, Musk saw these as part of a politically motivated campaign against him, further pushing him towards conservative politics. Additionally, his exclusion from a White House event celebrating electric vehicles—despite Tesla's significant contributions to the industry—underscored his belief in a partisan bias against him by the Democratic administration. This incident was emblematic of Musk's growing disillusionment with Democratic policies and personalities, aligning him more closely with libertarian and conservative circles.

Musk's engagement with figures known for their controversial views and anti-woke rhetoric, such as Joe Rogan and Jordan Peterson, and his interaction with a set of friends from his PayPal days—who leaned towards libertarian and right-wing ideologies—played roles in shaping his political outlook. Despite his fluctuating political expressions, at heart, Musk's stance was driven by a libertarian skepticism of government authority and regulation, extrapolated from his experiences in technology and business ventures.

Endowed with a deep-rooted passion for video games, Musk related life strategies and business acumen to his experiences in gaming, indicating a preference for strategic thinking and competitive gameplay. This hobby not only offered him an escape but also reinvigorated his analytical and tactical skills, influencing his approach to business challenges and ideological confrontations.

In this period, Musk's journey reflects a complex interplay of personal experiences, business challenges, and ideological shifts, illustrating his evolving stance from a tech entrepreneur to a provocative figure in political and cultural debates.