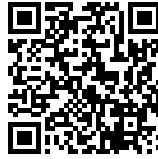




# THE IMPORTANCE OF GAETANO MOSCA

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A great book opens one's eyes to processes that one may have missed had one not read it. Likewise, its power lies in activating one's own abilities of thought to see more clearly what others may not notice at all or merely glimpse as a blur in the fog.

Few books I have read are better guides and eye-openers about how to think structurally, historically, and comparatively about politics generally, and the major crises of our time, crises that have largely been induced by a ruling class that has globalist ambitions, than Gaetano Mosca's *Ruling Class*. Reading it can also help one be better attuned to the political fluxions that draw us toward the break-down of politics as the means for staving off those terrible forces of human destruction and rejuvenation—war and revolution, which are the inevitable consequences of a failure to adequately maintain and cultivate the powers of peace.

The ruling class of the West, which forms the core of a globalist elite, draws us into an external war—that remains at this stage a proxy war—and (most conspicuously so in the United States and Europe) a civil war that is playing itself out politically and institutionally and has already destroyed the very possibility of a common political culture.

## **1. Canonical and Great Books**

Some books found peoples and nations; some assist in the founding of institutions; some open pathways for new types of orienting of human beings and help us forge a new reality; some provide the language and thought patterns of an epoch; some books are prophetic; and some provide the wherewithal that best defines the problem of an age. The most influential of these great books are canonical. And in spite of the ideological attack upon the canon which was part and parcel of a sweeping attempt to accommodate Western institutions to the knowledge and intellectual capacities of poorly-educated and under-read undergraduates and graduate students, canonical books exist because our world would simply not be the same were they to not have existed. This was also why it was commonly assumed amongst professors, teachers, and the professional classes that every educated person should acquaint himself with certain books at some point in his life-time.

The canon also reflects the problems of the ages and the most significant of attempted solutions—which is why it is so diverse, if I may be permitted to use a word that has become an ideological truncheon in the arsenal of managerial and progressive moral absolutes. A canonical work

might not be error free, or it may be fraught with problems (Marx's *Communist Manifesto* or *Capital* or Rousseau's *Émile* and *Social Contract* are obvious examples), or just simply defiant of traditional ethical appeals (Machiavelli's *Prince*). Nor does the canon contain a collection of like-minded sentiments or responses to the human condition. And the idea that it is simply the point of view of white men makes no sense, given the shoddiness of the category—are people from what is now the Middle East, Northern Pakistan and Central Asia white?—or the authors of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the *Koran*, the *Analects*, the *Tao Te Ching*, and the *Bhagavad Gita*, which all are canonical works?

Then there are books which, though lesser known, if read attentively, can change how you see the world forever. They may not be canonical, but they express profound insights which, if remembered, would help us greatly in making sense of our world. I consider the writings of J.G. Hamann and Herder, of Franz Rosenzweig and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy to be good examples of these kind of books. In the case of both pairs of thinkers, they were contemporaries of much more influential and famous philosophers—viz., the former were contemporaries of Kant, the latter of Heidegger. But whereas Kant and Heidegger remain essential to the philosophical tradition and hence to the curriculum of Philosophy (at least to that curriculum that breathes outside of the straightjacket of Analytic Philosophy), if one has attentively read Hamann et. al., then one can quickly identify a range of egregious deficiencies in the philosophies and legacies of Kant and Heidegger, and his '68 progeny.

Then there are books that were ignored at the time of their publication; or having made a strong impression upon a discipline or the public have faded from view, only to undergo a revival because they have been (re)discovered by later generations who see that they address something of profound importance about their lives and times. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, for example, were "stillborn" only to be reborn; while Mises's *Socialism: An Economic and Sociological Analysis*, took on a new life when the Soviet Union was collapsing.

Explosive times, invariably, call out for the most thoughtful and inventive of people to make sense of them. And great books are inevitably forged out of the explosive fall out; the materials and problems of times in great crisis. Though, we should note, that human beings are crisis producing creatures—which is why those who believe in progress invariably are forced to temper their enthusiasm when their own circumstances and age go to hell.

But let us first address the tumult of our time, which is the reason I suggest Gaetano Mosca's *Ruling*

*Class* is a *must* read.

## **2. Global Leadership Aspirations versus those Non-Compliant Critics from the “Led-ship”**

We are living in a period of civil wars in the West being played out in its institutions, as the ruling political class, and the various interests it represents and deploys for its objectives, overturns (in large part by redefining the character and roles of all) traditional social institutions. It is a civil war that is rather typical of all civil wars—a ruling class furnishes the world in a way that suits its interests; but such furnishing requires great sacrifice from those whose lives are an important part of this new furnishing. And the proposed purpose, the changing circumstances, and the new future being made, do not fit well with the interests (the ways of being in the world) of those who are required to get in step with the dictates of the ruling class.

The civil war of our time, in other words, is the struggle over whether the future will be dictated by a globalist elite and those who (often unwittingly) work on their behalf, or by those who oppose the goals and means of that elite, and the sacrifices that are required to achieve it. On the one side stand those who believe they are striving for human progress, and that progress involves greater “emancipation,” “safety,” “diversity and inclusion,” and “equity.” Yet, as their critics point out, they are creating a world which is far less equitable, safe or free. They are contributing to a divide between the immensely rich, the highly paid leaders, and administrators, celebrities, elite athletes, and all those who are employed to do their bidding by supervising and instructing everyone in what to think and say, on the one hand, and the rest.

The rest are those who are meant to make up the great “led-ship,” who are to do the bidding the various leaders, the “representatives” of sustainability, global justice, world health—and pretty much anything else said leaders can think of—and thus the “rest” find themselves increasingly beholden to leaders. Irrespective of their intentions, the more vocal opponents of this ruling elite can see that they are aiding and abetting corporate technocratic globalism, and its accompanying suppliers of governance (administrative states beholden to larger global administrative powers, such as the EU, and the UN), knowledge (from big tech/media and its fact-checkers to the requirement that scientific research be funded by state-corporately authorized research institutions and bodies which comply with consensus that are manufactured within various professional associations, again complying with corporate and state requirements, and standardized curricula crafted around ostensibly universal rights), health (Big Pharma, and WHO, medical associations, and boards), and safety (the Industrial

Military Complex and international military alliances whose very existence requires manufacturing wars, which may never be won, but which help ensure a continuous resource stream from tax-payers to arms manufacturers, bureaucrats and the military so that a global standing military reserve will never cease to exist).

What to those who embrace this globalist order and its rulers and minions is a more caring, safe and compassionate, environmentally sustainable world order, is to others but mindlessness and mental enslavement, infantile indulgence, and the suppression of the more traditional institutions and roles, which have provided people with a sense of the fit between themselves and the kind of freedom that was worked out over multiple generations in the numerous spheres of sociality. Whereas supporters of globalism can be found everywhere—though, the further away one gets from the West, such supporters exist in ever smaller numbers—the opponents of this global elite do not form a natural alliance: being a traditional Muslim, Jew, or Christian does not mean that the common ground—one's traditional faith—is very common or solid as a base for an alliance. Conflict and wars are the inevitable accompaniments of traditional life-ways. But the delusion of the globalist elites is that under their direction there will be perpetual peace.

Again, critics of the globalist elite (which take NATO as its military shield) will point out that what is happening is not that war as an existential feature of human existence has ceased, or even diminished, but the grounds for its existence have shifted, and the beneficiaries for its existence have assumed the authority of being the planetary peace-providers.

If nature abhors a vacuum, then the nature of our global administrative, financial, communication systems have created a vacuum that has been filled by a globalist ruling class—a *Superclass*, as David Rothkopf, who served in the Clinton administration, formulated it in his book of that name. (Rothkopf, who is not at all hostile to this elite, makes the case that while membership is relatively mobile, it numbers around six thousand people at any given time). In filling that vacuum, the global elite have required that the world adopts itself to their interests, which are the interests that support their authority. But, again, their interests, simply do not suit the overwhelming number of people who live on planet earth, and do not feel that this superclass is of any benefit to them—critics of the superclass go further and see it as a class whose ambition wildly outstrips its competence, and is thus a destructive force, far greater than what nature and our other social formations would generate.

The globalist ruling class inaugurates another fundamental break with tradition—and at the danger of

repeating myself—the *modus operandi* of the globalist elite is its break with all real traditions, involving a kind of substitution racket, like fake gold being passed off as real gold. This particular break is that previously whereas power formations which move beyond those of outright enslavement or tyranny are historically formed symbiotically, so that a sacrificial order is established—no serious sacrifice is required of the globalist elite themselves: they can pay others to enforce others to make the sacrifices that are intrinsic to social reproduction (notably sacrifices of the independence of mind to the ruling ideas, the sacrifice of one's faith to the higher absolutes of globalist/corporatist/progressivist ideology, and sacrifice of one's relative economic well-being).

For all its aspirations, though, Globalism Inc. remains largely politically ineffective outside of the West, and the great geo-political non-Western globalist alternative to Western globalism, China, is one that far more carefully attends to bringing along the ruled with its ruling class—which is not to say that on certain divisive issues it will not do what ruling classes always do, i.e., brutally enforce its authority. The way it has managed to cement its authority by avoiding a civil war is to ensure its adherence to traditions in a way that makes it something of a mirror image of the West. But, to repeat, there is no natural allegiance between the traditionalism of the Chinese and those in the West, who find greater solace in their traditions than in the new elite counterfeit fabrications. To question these fabrications in the West as counterfeit, based upon (collective self-)delusions and/or deception, is now to be a "right-wing extremist," and to question any of the ticket items that are advanced through these fabrications, and to even speak of a globalist elite is to be a dupe of a conspiracy theory, which is to say that those making a play to be the global ruling class smother resistance by ideological indoctrination, accompanied by social, economic and political enforcement.

The primary reason that the West has been the leader of the globalist agenda, from its social alliances, to policy, to ideology is because the West has been created through wars and revolutions, and the relative success of its institutions, prior to breeding a class determined to destroy them, has been the incorporation of a dynamic which enables adapting to its changing technological and socio-economic circumstances. In the West, it is not the case that those who wish to preserve their traditional way of life are wishing to leap back to pre-modern times, as, for example, has been the case in much of the Islamic world's response to modernization. Thus, for example, in the United States, those who are most outspoken against the progressive direction of their country identify themselves as "patriots," i.e., as defenders of the American revolution and the principles it founded and which have evolved in its wake.

Today, the ruling class in the United States has largely embraced switching the founding of the United

States from the date marking the independence of a colony from a foreign oppressive power it defeated in a civil war by declaring "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," to a date which takes its founding as an act of enslavement, and its perpetuity as one of a trail of injustices that must now be rectified by those who will lead its people (who no longer are merely the citizens and their children) via the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, the media, the classroom, and wherever else people may assemble, speak, or reflect.

Of course, there are still some people who belong to the political class who are on the "wrong side of history," the side that identifies in the United States with the founding fathers, who are appalled that the new ruling class works in tandem with the youth of the nation and its educators to overturn institutions, tear-down statues, change the names of military bases, schools and other buildings and, rewrite their history books and school curricula, so that the men who founded the United States may have their status removed and their personage shamed, and the more diverse, and the tolerant ruling class who represent the truth of power and an emancipated future may live in safety, free from the "moral odium" of their forebears. The civil war that is taking place is one which exists because the ruling class has changed. It has gone globalist, become "virtuous," and got "woke."

There is, I believe, no better book for making sense of what is now transpiring than Gaetano Mosca's *Ruling Class*.

### **3. Mosca Elements of Political Science and Their Importance for Understanding the Affinities Between Totalitarian Ruling Classes**

Apart from its providing a number of key elements to help make sense of the times we are living through in the West, I came to the conclusion, right at the end of my academic career, after picking the book up again for the first time in nearly fifty years (when I had been too young and stupid to realize what gold it was) that Mosca's *Ruling Class* is, along with Aristotle's *Politics* and Thucydides' *Peloponnesian Wars*, probably the best foundational text for studying Political Science that has ever been written. (For all its greatness, I would not say that Quigley's *Tragedy and Hope* is a foundational text for studying Political Science)

The Italian title of *The Ruling Class* (when literally translated) is *Elements of Political Science*, the first edition of which appeared in Italy in 1896; the English translation of the revised edition of 1923 appeared

in 1939. The English title is perhaps a more catching one, and it does capture the content of the book. But I think it regrettable that in an age where Political Science is little more now than a disciplinary name rather than a genuine academic discipline that this book is rarely read by those who study Politics. Today, as would be evident to anyone who simply read the titles of papers presented at the American Political Science Association, with the possible exception of rational choice theory (which I think is irredeemably flawed by its inattention to culture and history), most who teach Political Science are morally committed political partisans who have little or no interest in exploring their role within the ruling class. Or indeed thinking outside of the two-dimensional model and its intersectional variant, which would make them and their chosen groups oppressed members of a society they wish to transform, instead of being paid employees (mostly of) the state whose task it is to educate and socially prepare the next generation for reproducing the kind of society that its "leaders"—its ruling class—deem as desirable.

As the Italian title suggests, in dealing with elements of a science of politics Mosca's book is one that cuts across cultures, which is to say it is a structural examination, a study of the laws that lead to rulership and its class-based nature. Though the structures and laws examined by Mosca are analyzed in their historical genesis and mutations, which is to say Mosca's study is also an historical study, as it must be given that history provides the condition of our circumstances, just as our response to circumstances also make history. Thus, it examines the changing conditions which give birth to the different social needs and opportunities for different types and classes, and hence the different priorities of governance and those who form the political class of a time and people. It is also comparativist in its approach. In his "Introduction" to the *Ruling Class*, Arthur Livingstone provided a good summation of Mosca's method:

*He will of course take the facts about society from any source or method that can supply them, only so they are facts—from economics, from anthropology, from psychology, or any similar science. He does explicitly reject for the political-social field any absolute exclusive acceptance of climatic or north-and-south theories, anthropological theories based on the observation of primitive societies (the question of size is important), the economic interpretation of history (it is too unilateral), doctrines of racial superiorities and inferiorities (many different race theories have had their moments of splendor), and evolutionary theories (they fail to account for the rhythmical movement of human progress—biological evolution would require continuous improvement).*



The book opens with Mosca showing the inadequacy of most competing approaches to Political Science, noting that various claims to Political Science "are still, little more than philosophical, theological or rational justifications of certain types of political organization which have for centuries, played and in some cases are still playing, a significant role in human history." Then, it proceeds to lay down the foundational fact upon which there can be political life, as well as a science of it:

*Among the constant facts and tendencies that are to be found in all political organisms, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye. In all societies—from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawns of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies—two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first; in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent, and supplies the first, in appearance at least, with material means of subsistence and with the instrumentalities that are essential to the vitality of the political organism.*

Mosca then notes that "in every political organism there is one individual who is chief among the leaders of the ruling class as a whole," but that person may not hold supreme power according to law. No head of state can rule without the support "of a numerous class to enforce respect for his orders and to have them carried out." Indeed, it is because of the need for competing and potentially conflicting forces to be coordinated, so that peace between them reign, that a figure symbolizing unity and bearing ultimate sovereignty can act as a mediator between them. That is, it is sovereignty which is a consequence not a precondition of a larger class of "interested" parties; but once established its success depends upon a fit between the sovereign's interests and that powerful class that commands and coordinates subordinate powers. Of course, that power is originally martial—and the Ruling Class is particularly attentive to the importance of the changing nature of armies in the transformation of ruling classes.

Mosca also notes that just as states require a unity of ends and agreeable means between the sovereign and the most powerful class which girds its authority, there is also a need to draw from the "masses" a group to facilitate and enforce the functions of the rulers. As he puts it:

*and granting that he can make one individual, or indeed many individuals, in the ruling class*

*feel the weight of his power, he certainly cannot be at odds with the class as a whole or do away with it. Even if that were possible, he would at once be forced to create another class, without the support of which action on his part would be completely paralysed. On the other hand, granting that the discontent of the masses might succeed in deposing a ruling class, inevitably, as we shall later show, there would have to be another organized minority within the masses themselves to discharge the functions of a ruling class. Otherwise all organization, and the whole social structure, would be destroyed.*

...the real superiority of the concept of the ruling, or political, class lies in the fact that the varying structure of ruling classes has a preponderant importance in determining the political type, and also the level of civilization, of the different peoples.

In the chapter "Principles and Tendencies in Ruling Classes," Mosca notes that it is the middle-class that generally supplied the personnel for the bureaucracy; that it is the moral level of the bureaucracy that signifies the moral level of the ruling class; and that the members of the bureaucracy tend to "believe in their own infallibility," and are "loath to accept criticisms and suggestion from persons who are not of their calling." With the expansion of the state into ever more areas of what were once considered private domains of life, and the expansion of those who work with the state, combined with those who are not of the bureaucracy generally but who are affiliated to a party and/ or committed to a political program and work in the corporate and private sector to achieve the kind of state they desire, this combination of moral assuredness and hostility to criticism threatens to generate the kind of opposition that typically leads to the overthrow of a ruling class. Just as the partitions between private and public spheres, the market and state have been pushed aside, thus indicating the death of old fashioned liberal democracy, the bureaucracy no longer has either the aspiration or pretence of being non-partisan. Its members now almost totally represent the program of the "liberal (anti-democratic) progressive."

The totalitarian trinity of people, party, and leader(ship) has been a complete success in the United States, while most other nations still play by two party rules when it comes to the parliament, but administrations, service providers, school and university curricula, legislation regarding sexuality, policies for multiculturalism, advancement of identity politics and minorities, hate speech etc. are systematically progressive and utterly globalist. And when even it comes to the parliament, as the example of Boris Johnson and BREXIT illustrates, today there are all manner of serpentine ways that political rulers may slip from defender of the nation and its mores to employee of Globalist Inc. Ultimately the most ambitious and most driven members of a ruling class have little regard for older

rules of etiquette precisely because of their own sense of moral conviction, and the ability they have to appoint and reward those who share their convictions.

The greater part of the *Ruling Class* is an historical analysis of the varying ruling class structures and the historical and social conditions that have given rise to them. Apart from any comparisons between Mosca and his contemporaries, who also were developing an elite theory of politics, which I touch upon below, the idea of a ruling class is most commonly associated with Marxism. But the difference between the Marxian deployment of the term to advance its own political program, and Mosca's analysis, is two-fold—and it is this difference which I think enables us to see why Marxism is ideology, while Mosca's work a contribution to Political Science.

First, the Marxists promise a future where there will be no ruling class. But that future could only be realized if there were a unity of purpose and such a vast coalition of interests that politics, rulership, class, and divisions between people would have ceased to exist. Thus, Marx's claim that communism would eliminate the division of labour whilst providing material abundance of a sort so that all could live according to their ability and needs. This is a unity that simply has never existed for any protracted period of time, and could only exist were different social interests eliminated—but they are generated out of the division of labour—and it is the division of labour that is the *sine qua non* of large-scale production, not the desire of someone to dabble in one or other form of creative productivity as it suits him.

Marx simply could not demonstrate how the elimination of the division of labour could defy everything known about economic production and create more abundance than it did when groups existed on such a small scale that what division of labour existed (such as between the sexes and the ages) was negligible. Which brings us to the second point: the Marxist future, irrespective of Marx's own inability to see what he was doing, is nothing more than a verbal conjuration. In that sense it is the perfect means for those whose primary "skill" is rhetoric. The link between oratory, sophistry (the use of education for the advancement of one's political power), demagoguery, and tyranny was critically observed by Plato; and that link has only become more intense within the displacement of the old ruling class by one in which verbal prowess and rationalization is fundamental to political legitimation.

Marxism is but one means by which a class, trafficking in words and ideas and persuading people to follow the objectives they lay down, and the means they authorize to achieve those objectives, has come to rule. Of course, that class needs resources; and the most common means available to it are:

theft (a means used by the Bolsheviks for a relatively short while, and a means which the United States and, with the European Union, set to follow, are using in their proxy war against Russia), taxes, and donations to political parties.

Marxism did not die with the end of the Soviet-style central planning. In the West, it has survived in its non-Leninist incarnation, as an intrinsic ideological component of the Humanities curricula of elite Western universities. It has survived because it is an ideology whose endgame irreality is of no relevance to its success as an ideological way of oversimplifying reality for an aspirational ruling class keen to find a path to professional careers providing them with the power to build the world around its leadership. The particular interests of those who identify with any one of the radical variants that have come out of Marxist critique is to rule and thus decide how resources are to be deployed for which purposes by which people. This is ideologically passed off as achieving an absolute good - universal emancipation.

Marx himself appealed to a future of spontaneous universal cooperation based upon the complete mutuality of interests of the species (once the bourgeoisie were eliminated). But the impossibility of having large scale productivity and consumption growth without a market and capital investment, and of having political direction without a ruling party and state has meant that Marxism, and its various academically refined spawn, is but one piece of the ideological puzzle justifying the actuality of a ruling class that deploys a combination of value imposition, technocracy—its inevitability and spread being well noted in another very important book, James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*—and financial control. It is achieved by a completely politicised social, pedagogical, and economic alignment or coordination of human action- what the Nazis call *Gleichschaltung*, which in turn requires suppressing any resistance whether of thought or deed. In so far as the process is ideological - the result of thinking built around political ideational alignments—this ruling class is far more attuned to the dangers of thoughts and words than were any inquisitors or contemporary mullahs.

In sum, while Mosca sees the ruling class as the inevitable accompaniment of all large-scale social organization, Marxism passes off the notion of the ruling class, and indeed politics itself, as but a transitory phase of social existence, whilst creating a rhetorical smokescreen for the rise of a political class that, if successful, claims to speak on behalf of universal interest and thus, if successful, should be able hold its power into perpetuity.

Typically, when Mosca's work is raised, it is grouped along with other theorists of political elites, most

notably Roberto Michels and Wilfried Pareto. Unlike Michels who had been a Marxist before becoming an anarcho-syndicalist and supporter of Il Duce, and Pareto, whose support of Mussolini was brief (Pareto died in 1923) and something of an ill-fit, given the liberal nature of his economic thought, Mosca was a liberal, but not one who was oblivious to its failures and shortcomings, and the threats posed to it by fascism—he wrestles with the problems of representative government in the book's final chapter.

Although there was some dispute between Pareto and Mosca over who should get the prize for being the first to focus upon political elites as forming the basis of political science, the more important contrast within the elite theorists is between Mosca and Michels.

Michels's study of the social democratic movement had led him to the observation that oligarchy was the inevitable type of all political organization; and his support for Mussolini expressed his willingness not only to embrace the fact of the inevitability of elite authority, but to endorse a political ideology in which elite power was openly factored into the political program and party.

Ironically, today, while fascism is the pejorative hurled about to discredit anyone who objects to the ticket items of globalist progressivism and corporatism, the globalist program and agenda is built around the unquestionable moral and political authority of cultural and global "leaders" who are increasingly schooled in leadership programs. The preoccupation with leadership today reaches from culture to industry to universities to politics. A jarring example of how central leadership is to politics today was to be seen in an election poster I saw nailed up all over the place in Australia's recent election. When the poster is translated into German my point needs little further comment: "Australien braucht einen Führer, keinen Lügner."

People in liberal democracies so frequently and blithely speak of politics in terms of the need for political leadership that they seem completely ignorant of the fact that unlike fascist, or communist states, in liberal democracies the most important role of the government (at least in peace time) was not to lead but to provide the conditions so that people might peaceably lead their own lives as best they saw fit.

Michels, like our present globalists, is rather typical of a certain kind of mentality that begins with abstractions and ideals about what political power may achieve if expressing the popular will, but which, in dealing with the actual requirements of maintaining political power, readily either abandons its more democratic rhetoric or simply twists it haphazardly so that it can get on with the business of

directing who does what. The business of deciding who must do what—and along with this, who gets what from whom, and deciding what occurs to them, if they won't do it, is the end of politics; and thus, a task that befalls every ruling class.

Moreover, for all the idolatry surrounding politics today, as if it is the means for solving all our problems, the state, though impossible to do without, is a blunt means (its powers are force, persuasion, and bureaucracy) of orchestrating human action. The problem with totalitarian forms of government is not that their political class makes political decisions, but the expansive combination of the range of decisions and components of life that become absorbed under their political reach and authority, and the intolerance shown towards those who question its authority.

Apart from the idolatry of progressive ideas, and leadership, the use of the state and corporations to ensconce a technocratic elite doing the ideological bidding of a globalist ruling class that demands unity in peacetime, of the sort that in a traditional liberal democratic society would only be required in wartime, is indicative of the totalitarian nature of the modern globalist project. Hence too it must control what can be said, and the best way to control that is to indoctrinate children into the values and narratives that the ruling class holds as absolute.

Also, all distinction between war and peace is being destroyed in Western democracies—we are being attacked by a never-ending series of threats requiring militant response, from the destruction of the planet due to anthropogenically induced climate change, to viruses and infectious diseases that can only be stopped if we all follow the leadership provided by pharmaceutical companies and state authorized medical “advisors,” and the numerous others who have been authorised to identify the correct information and “facts” on any topic warranting totally unified militant action.

Thus, there can never be a time when the ruling class takes a step back from its leadership role. Now we have the impending threat of an actual war—just yesterday General Milley advised the graduating class of West Point of the “increasing risk of global war.” There is, indeed, an impending threat, though the question is not only why, but whether the alliance of Western powers is actually less rather than more totalitarian than the global powers it opposes.

The great challenge of modern liberal-democracy is to maintain a political culture in which the social tensions are fecund enough to make social adaptations of a sort that prevent the political body from succumbing to either traditional ossification or progressivist delusions of governance becoming a mere

shell concealing implacable wills. It is an irony that the ruling classes supporting fascism and globalism respectively positioned themselves in antithetical ideological terms with respect to the past and future—whilst both were captured by the internal dialectic of their political means: the fascists presented themselves as Rome reborn, but their emergence and the forces they mustered were all extremely modern. The globalists, on the other hand, appeal to a future free from oppression (a utopia); but they can only achieve this by the old-style means of enforced unity; what Friedrich von Hayek saw as the limited power flow of an order of taxis, which is typical of military and bureaucracy.

The Marxist tradition had gone along with the Saint-Simonian formulation that the future would be free of politics; and in its place there would simply be the administration of things. That tradition had a longer pedigree in utopian writing generally, though Rabelais' depiction of the Abbey of Thélème had identified the nub of a tradition that runs through Rousseau, and the various socialist writers like de Mably through Saint-Simon and (in spite of their polemics against utopians) Marx and Engels: that nub was political unity. As in the Abbey of Thélème, there would be no leaders because everyone wanted the same thing and everyone did exactly what was required at the time of its requiring.

Both fascism and Marxism were born out of this faith in unity—though in the case of fascism the unity (people, state, party) required at its theoretical foundation an all-knowing, caring leader. In the case of communism, the cult of the personality was not something that was forged theoretically but developed out of necessity, as a party that had seized power in a coup, and defended it in a civil war, was faced with conflicting decisions about what to do about the food supply—should it be collectivized immediately, or allowed to operate through market inducements?—and workers who did not like the labour conditions required of them by those who had promised such liberation and now were shipping people off to prison camps.

Whether fascist or communist, these two modern responses to future-building not only required a mass that complied with what its ruling class dictated, but a mass which was ideologically committed to that ruling class and hence indoctrinated in supporting all its choices. The real difference between liberal democratic regimes and fascist and communist ones had nothing to do with abstract theories—which were, of course, prevalent enough—but with how openly one might grumble about the ruling class. One might say that the grumbling made little difference; but taking away someone's right to grumble involves deploying state and corporate resources to that end - and hence job opportunities - it also only fuels the grumbling and discontent. Which is also partly why the levels of social discontent in so much of the Western world is so high.

The ruling class of today's Western democracies now has no compunction in doing what the fascists, and Marxists before them did: and ultimately that is because it is the same kind of people demanding the same objective—that their will be done on earth as it is in the heaven of their ideas.

Reading Mosca will not help anyone prevent this; but reading him does help one place what is happening now in a larger, historical perspective, whilst also providing one with a healthy dose of scepticism, so that one does not fail to note that the primary interest of a ruling class is the preservation of its right to rule. In and of itself that is understandable; but the matter of whether they are doing a good enough job in facilitating the interests of the ruled is something else. And a ruling class that must control information-flows is one that has shown that it no longer cares about the interests of those they rule—which is always the beginning of their own demise.

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*[Featured image](#): "New Gods, Old Monsters," by David Whitlam; painted 2020.*



