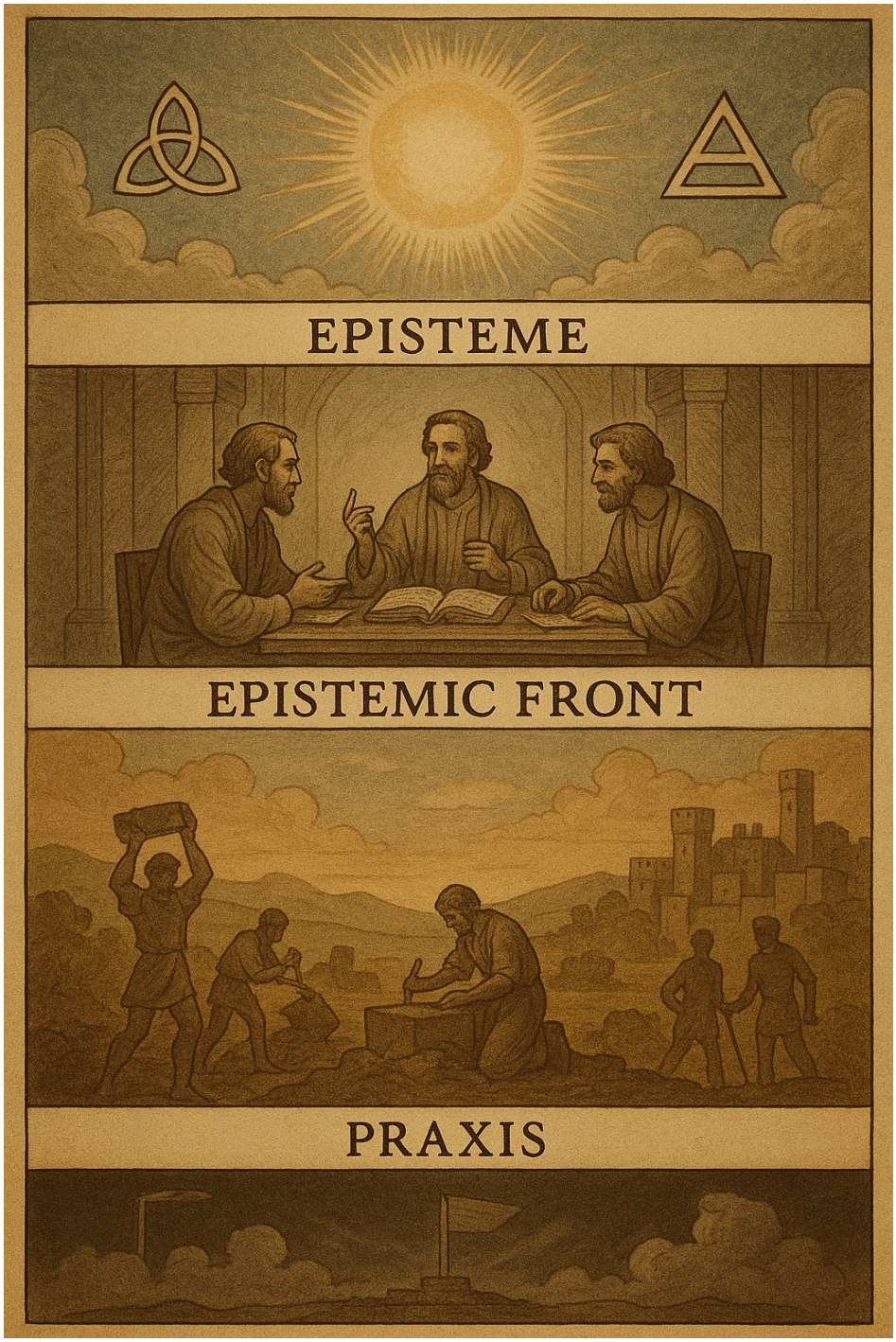
THE STRATAGEM

GEOPOLITICS AND EPISTEMIC WARFARE



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Abstract

How to comprehend epistemic conflict and warring schools of political philosophy, as we shall call all philosophy? The paper is a political epistemology and a proposal for studying geopolitics and epistemic warfare according to a threefold level of analysis we call *the stratagem.*

The idea of the stratagem is informed by political epistemology to grant epistemic visibility to the three levels of philosophical, political reality: 1) the discourse, 2) the epistemic front, and 3) the confrontation of real politics.

The political epistemology we present is a normative praxis informed by the metaphysics and ontology of the truth of man – the ancient doctrine of the absolute and the immortality of the soul.

As such our epistemology presents a way forward for realizing the normative ideals of the truth of man – the truth of being. The task of epistemology therefore becomes rendering viable the path before us, engaging with world affairs and geopolitics according to the strategic goals of our transcendental movement.

This notion of political epistemology we call *metapolitics.*

Author's note on political and philosophical references

This essay presents a theoretical and philosophical model of political epistemology and metapolitics, intended for academic, spiritual, and metaphysical analysis. All references to concepts such as "truth of man," "ideal state," "our people," or "transcendental movement" are to be understood strictly within the context of existential, cultural, and philosophical inquiry — not as political claims of nationalism, exclusion, or earthly supremacy.

The purpose of this work is to explore the structure of ideological, epistemic, and spiritual conflict — and the necessary conditions for truth and freedom — as part of a universal metaphysical struggle, not as advocacy for any historical political ideology or regime.

Outline of epistemology

Episteme is a certain type of knowledge, that is contrasted *doxa*, opinion or belief, in ancient Greece philosophy. According to Aristotle, the term relates to necessary, eternal truth, as opposed to contingent truth of *techne* and *phronesis* (from *phren*, mind), which for the pre-platonic philosophers related to practical widsdom and intelligence. The Greeks operated with two further, higher aspects of knowing than episteme: *nous* and *sophia*. Sophia, from the Greek *sophos* (clever, skillful, intelligent, wise), means wisdom in Platonic philosophy and in Christianity is related to the Holy Spirit. Originally in Greek tradition, sophia meant 'skills' as related to the handicrafts and arts. Sophia and the latin *sapientia* have the same Indo-European root, meaning 'to notice, to try, to research'.

Later it came to be associated with wisdom. The first philosophers, lovers of wisdom, to describe themselves as such were were Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato. Today, episteme and techne are contrasted, episteme being intellectual universal knowledge. So episteme is theory versus techne being the crafts and the arts, related to the actual praxis. Phronesis relates to experience, nous to intelligence, and sophia to wisdom. Episteme is therefore "theoretical certain knowledge" – absolute and universal since it is informed by *logos/nous*, reason.

Perhaps we could rank the forms of knowledge according to their level of abstraction.

1. Sophia
2. Nous
3. Episteme
4. Phronesis
5. Techne
6. Praxis

According to Plotinus, the second hypostasis, nous, cognates absolutely, non-discursively as opposed to to the soul/*psyche*, the third emanation, that via discursive episteme reasons towards truth. Episteme is therefore characterized by dialectics and reasoning (Plotinus, 270: V. 9.7; IV. 3.18).

It is interesting to note that, according to Plotinus, there are higher forms of knowing, than the discursive, namely the mystical contemplation of the second hypostasis, logos, also called nous, and the first hypostasis, the One.

In this paper, we will mainly consider the knowledge-form of episteme, since we are interested in developing and epistemology, a strategic analysis of world affairs according to our interest of study – geopolitics and epistemic warfare. Therefore we are interested in developing a political epistemology that can be a way for our people in dealing with world affairs and geopolitics.

No aspect of the study can be neglected and therefore we must study all levels of the scenario. For this we want to develop an epistemology that is sound in theory as well as in praxis.

This is the task of metapolitics, to develop a political epistemology, that in granting epistemic visibility to the movement of our people can guide the cause.

A complex methodology

The discursive, dialectic character of episteme is related to the notion of epistemology as "a way" that relates human experience. The discourse is dialectical in that the task is "an unveiling" of primordial truth, everlasting truth and universal principles – truth. When we contemplate, we meditate upon logos and we discursively probe into the mysteries of the universe. We are guided by sophia in our meditation as a natural companion, as life is the unfolding of divine perfect order. Nature is in tune and harmony, though it is also a world of strife, conflict and war.

Being in the world is therefore an engaged existence, where we actively participate in the great cause and the ancient mysteries of the truth of man.

All wisdom-schools deal with this truth of man.

When we talk about "the way", we therefore refer to an epistemic visibility of world affairs that renders the method for engagement with the world as a path before us. The way then relates to a theoretical model for praxis.

According to our ontology then, we shall consider man as the highest life in creation – a spirit, a soul and body. This is the ancient definition of man. Furthermore, the soul is immortal.

In epistemology therefore, good people represent absolute truth, eternal values and eternal divine wisdom.

The political epistemology, we want to develop, is therefore an epistemology that values the truth of man, the divine mysteries of creation, as they are contemplated upon in the transcendental meditation.

Therefore our epistemology is not value-neutral – it is normative. We have interests and we have strategic goals.

It is the task of science and specifically political science to present a clear map and viable methods for engaging world affairs from the point of view of a "new idealism" that seeks to bring the truth of man, the transcendental, spiritual nature of man, to the forefront.

As a transcendental movement, our epistemology is informed by metaphysics and ontology.

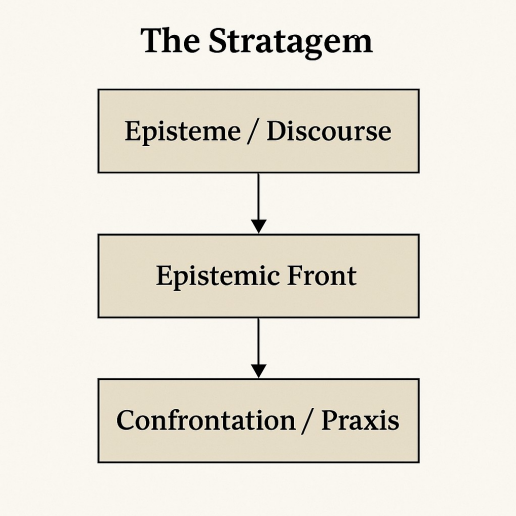
It is the task of epistemology to lay forth the way for engaging world affairs and the political methods, that are needed to establish the ideal state according to the true constitution of the true man.

As a transcendental movement and as relating to the truth of man, epistemology becomes about the individual and collective journey towards truth, arriving at truth – the unveiling of the truth of being, *aletheia* (Plato, 375 bc.; Heidegger, 1927). This is the dialectics.

Our methodology is therefore a normative praxis that renders epistemic visibility and strategy to world geopolitics and philosophy.

For this we have developed *the stratagem* – a threefold level of analysis of geopolitics and epistemic warfare

The Stratagem



The Stratagem we define as a threefold level of analysis of an intellectual, socio-political study.

It consists of the following three aspects:

1) Episteme/discourse: The general outline of the complex of power-knowledge relations for a given society or scenario of study. The episteme is the set of assumptions, axioms and propositions related to a given power base or operative network of actors, laws and institutions. Studying the episteme grants epistemic visibility to the political-science complex of a given society or scenario of study. This is the ideational plane.

2) Epistemic front: The fronts, where ideas a contested, axioms are debated and propositions are argued upon. The epistemic front is the study of the juncture of ideas and praxis, where ideas are confronted the reality of an antagonism that presents itself in the form of discursive contention, semantic zones of conflict in regards to the power-relations of study. By studying the epistemic front, we gain epistemic visibility for philosophical, ideological and political strife.

3) Confrontation: The *ethos* of political philosophy to act according to the normative ideals that is the call of life – the existentiale. Politics, political philosophy and political science cannot be separated. We have a duty as philosophers and educators to act and intervene in politics. The third level of analysis of the scenario reflects our own engagement with the world and world politics and the duty to perform. This is praxis.

Stratagem is from ancient Greek *stratēgēma,* meaning generalship, from *stratēgein*, (*stratēgos*, general and *agein*, to lead). It referred to the 'superior knowledge' of the general, outwitting his enemy in battle – the “cunning of warfare”.

The existence of the three levels of analysis or aspects of the study, the scenario, is the result of an ontology of truth and strife – reality is contested. This fact makes it even the more necessary with an epistemology that can accommodate for conflict and strife by granting epistemic visibility, where there is political conflict and ideas are contested.

The stratagem is an epistemic visibility that renders conflict and confrontation visible, while at the same time rendering the normative discourse of engaged political philosophy as a way forward.

The inclusion of the two further levels of the epistemic front and the real political level of praxis-confrontation gives a more complex picture of geopolitical reality, and at the same time opens up for engaged real-political activity of the philosopher – this is metapolitics.

[Essay will continue on the next page]

Strategy of analysis

The strategic analysis consists in studying the *stratagem*, which is a term we use to describe the threefold reality of a given scenario of study. This is our methodology. The stratagem grants epistemic visibility to: 1) the episteme/discourse/dispositif, the general outline of the truth of power relations for a given time and 2) the epistemic front, where ideas are contested, where the semantic contention of axioms, propositions and conceptualization occurs.

The third aspect of the engagement with the world is confrontation: a "second order perspective", where we consider and are called to act according to our own normative ideal and perception of reality in regards to the discourse and episteme, we study. This is the *ethos* found in life and in political philosophy. We are ourselves as scientists enmeshed in power-relations and politics. This is at the same time the call for metapolitics.

When we study the episteme, we are inspired by Foucault's (1969) use of the terms *discourse* and *episteme*, as well as Kuhn's (1962) definition of the scientific *paradigm*. Likewise, we find inspiration in Foucault's use of the term *dispositif*, a dispositive, which relates to the combined enactment-power of a discourse and a power-constellation – an apparatus (Agamben, 2009: p. 14; Foucault, 1977). Foucault also sometimes called this matrix of power for a *postivité* – a system of ideas, laws and institutions that makes action possible and renders opportunities for intervention.

Foucault's power-studies would develop from studying the discourse and the episteme to studying the rise of governmentality and biopolitics (Foucault, 2004; 2010), as regimes of truth[1]. The power-studies are related to the study of becoming and the social construction of the subject.

It is the task of political epistemology to combine the ideational approach of discourse analysis, the unveiling of the episteme, with the power-studies of the second and third level of the study, the epistemic front and the confrontation. By combining ideational studies and power-studies of epistemic communities, we gain epistemic visibility for the philosophical and epistemic warfare that is carried out in the geopolitics and in the academy.

It is a normative methodology meaning we are called to engage in the confrontation, referring to the level of real politics. There is a call – again: this is metapolitics.

The epistemology is an unveiling of truth, absolute, a way forward, and at the same time an unveiling of power-relations as they are given in geopolitics, the object of study.

By unveiling the different standings of different fractions in regards to truth, simultaneously unveiling power-relations and scenarios of power, while rendering a normative model for engaging with real geopolitics, we fulfill the goal of political epistemology, to present a way forward, an epistemic path, for our transcendental movement.

The complex scenario unveiled, unveiling the interaction of ideas and praxis and the power relations involved, while presenting a normative solution, is the advantage of the study of the stratagem.

1 Governmentality and biopolitics could be seen as competing regimes of truth/episteme to new idealism.

A way forward

As representing the true doctrine of man, the ancient tradition and the way, and with the recent mistrust against idealism and antagonism between continental and Ango-American philosophy in mind, it is easy to see why a reconstruction of philosophy and a recasting of idealism is necessary at present.

We are entering a new age, post-modernity, post-second world war, the anti-climax of modernity, and we are entering an age where renewed thinking about philosophy and politics is called for.

Disillusioned with the empty promises of a spiritless liberal capitalism, there is a political call for authentic politics – this we call metapolitics.

Metapolitics is founded upon a notion of the engaged philosopher-lover, the sovereign-sage, who represents the truth of man and the ideal state. He is the skillful captain (cybernetics) navigating the politics according to the eternal values of the truth of man.

He represents the ideal of man and he is the leader of the people in the quest for political, spiritual transcendence.

Spiritual transcendence is the goal of the ideal state constituted on the true constitution, representing the ideal of man and the transcendental potential of the political body.

The epistemology we pursue is a way forward for our people in our common pursuit for spiritual transcendence.

In a world of love and strife it is important to have an eye for both aspects of the nature of reality, so that we might properly navigate our ship towards safe harbor – arriving at truth that we have proved is the purpose of epistemology and the unveiling of truth – the truth of man, the truth of being – the immortal truth.

This is the movement of spirit. It is the actualization and self-realization of eternal spirit, transcending all nature into the One. The nature of spirit is holistic, it is absolute, so what we pursue is communion in the One, to dwell in the eternal and to appreciate and contemplate the immortal mysteries of man – the free spirit that we are.

This spiritual enlightenment is the way forward for a political epistemology of the 21. ct., representing a renewed faith in the ideal of man and the spiritual realization of our transcendental potential.

The task of individual and collective spiritual enlightenment and the flow and movement of spirit is why we talk about epistemology as “a way”.

There is a true way. It is the way of the heart and truth of man – it is an existentiale.

The way is therefore at the same time a call for engaging with the world according to the eternal values of the truth of man – it is an ethics.

This is why we have combined the study of political philosophy and politics in the notion of the stratagem as way forward for 21st ct. metapolitics – *towards a bright future.*

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