

Political Studies as Mysticism

© Ian Popken
 University of Amsterdam
 Merwedeplein 13
 NL-1078 NA Amsterdam
 drjpopken@prettel.nl

1-Introduction

We are used to see political studies as an academic specialisation in which at least two assumptions are taken for granted. The first is that politics are an important social (or even cultural field) that can be more or less delineated. The second is that within this field events, data, or facts do exist in such a way that they are more or less suitable to speak about in an objective, systematic way, that is, that political “things” do really *exist* and have dynamics of themselves, to be discovered¹ by the one doing political studies, and surely not imposed by her/him. These assumptions make political studies a positive academic discipline (positive meaning here: related to things as they really exist outside the mind of those doing political studies).

These assumptions have never been undisputed but they have never been more disputed than in the last 100 years, though we must bear in mind that e.g. Wittgenstein, Popper, philosophical pragmatism etc. in fact do stand on the shoulders of giants like Pyrrho of Elis (360-270 BCE) and Sextus Empiricus (2nd century CE).² Often forgotten also is the sceptical turn given to Platonism by Plotinus³ and philosophical theologians

¹ Speaking of discovery more or less implies a language of science. If it would no involve a longish *detour* I would have used the word invention because this suits far more with my opinion (bias?) that political studies belong to the humanities. And the “things” political studies are dealing with are, in the same vein, rather misleading: we do not, of course, study the physical bodies of those doing politics, but their spirits, or, perhaps better their spiritual informed doings. I will come back about it.

² See for a fine translation Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, Cambridge UP, 1994, transl. and intr. Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes. The original title was *Pyrroneuoi hypotyposeis*. The influence of scepticism on (early modern) thought is nicely documented in Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism; from Savonarola to Bayle*, Oxford UP, 2003, rev. and exp. and Richard H. Popkin, *The History of scepticism; from Erasmus to Spinoza*, U. of California Press, 1979 (1960), its predecessor. Richard H. Popkin wrote also *The High Road of Pyrrhonism*, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993 (1980), ed. by Richard A. Watson and James E. Force, with a much larger scope. An overview of radical mystic thinking as messianism is given by David S. Katz and Richard H. Popkin, *Messianic Revolution; radical religious politics to the end of the second millennium*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.

³ For Plotinus two introductory titles. The authors do not agree on essential points. Lloyd P. Gerson, *Plotinus*, Routledge, 1994, and Margaret R. Miles, *Plotinus on Body and Beauty; society, philosophy, and religion in third century Rome*, Blackwell, 1999. Of a different league is Pierre Hadot, with no hidden axes to grind. See his *Plotinus; or the simplicity of vision*, Chicago, 1993 (1889³), transl. Michael Chase. See his very instructive presentation of the contrasts between Platonic activist ‘masculine’ love and Plotinian passive ‘feminine’ love on p. 56. For a recent philosophical approach, called pathic by the author see Cornelis Verhoeven, *Inleiding tot de verwondering (Introduction to astonishment)*, Baarn: Ambo, 1967. It is a shame that this

following him, notably Pseudo-Denys (better: Dionysius) the Areopagite (and a seemingly independent school in the second century known as the Cappadocians), and their followers still practising today and known as apophatic or negative theologians.⁴ Their practices are mostly called mystical (though they do not use that word themselves: probably no mystic does) and they are a (largely) peaceful nuisance to instituted theologies and ecclesiastical establishments. The common denominator of these schools of thought was and is, that like other sceptics thinking about “natural phenomena” they denied that there was any knowing of God possible, let alone his essence (God being darkness, or like Exodus 20:21 has it “... while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.” And stayed I would like to add. This “drawing near,” or in later parlance, this *via mystica*, but never arriving *and* reporting about the voyage, is not unlike the looking for the “philosophers’ stone.” In political studies one could say that the cosmological assumption of a *hypostasis*, or *ousia* of the “*homo politicus*” is a concept like this. The main difference is that one hardly ever hears comments, of those doing political studies, on the frustration of never having arrived at the *homo politicus*, or having met him.

But then, perhaps, one needs a (political) philosophical inclination to worry about things like this. The purpose of this paper is to show that such an inclination could be fruitful, and that, giving in to it, one could develop a “style,” not abandoning political studies altogether, but of distinctive academic quality sophistication.

2-Political studies and its discontents

John Ruskin famously, paradoxically, and perhaps hypocritically, remarked that one of the deciding characteristics that make human animals distinctively human, was its ability to see more than first meets the eye. Ruskin defined this ability as: “to see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion - all in one.” It is useful to spell out the paradox: Ruskin could also have said that to see clearly is nearly impossible. Who of those gathered here would dare to pretend that he/she sees political events clearly because of being poetic, prophetic and religious - all in one? More than 150 years later one should, perhaps, define this ability more “secular” and say that human vision is essentially *spiritual* - spiritual meaning more or less the opposite of “material” as in materialism. That is, humans as persons, as authentic persons as liberal thinkers would say today, have an authentic human selfhood, which makes them more than pawns on a chessboard. Humans are not moved by a reductionist abstraction called *homo politicus*, but are self-conscious, active and responsible players in human life as it evolves collectively. Against this vision it could be argued that assuming the *homo politicus* is not merely positing an abstraction, but a necessary tool for doing political studies. The concept itself is cosmological, but as I said before, in practice it is not used very much, let alone discussed.

Whether this helps us very much will be doubted, I suppose. When I repeat the question I just asked: who of those present would dare to say that he/she sees political things clearly because of the spirituality of the approach? Most of us, I suppose, would

book is not available in an English translation.

⁴ For Denys, see Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite*, London, 1989. Paul Mommaers wrote a fine critical treatise on negative theology. See *The Riddle of Christian Mystical Experience; the role of humanity of Jesus*, Louvain: Peeters, 2003.

boast the empirical nature of the approach and empiricism and spirituality seem to exclude each other. But, it should be admitted that empirical in fact means “realist” here. No one here, I hope, supposes that political studies can be done as empirical as is the practice in natural sciences. “Realist” political studies should be done in accordance with a weak version of a combination of as well the correspondence and coherence theory of truth. Arguing for a spiritual approach is easily thought of as incompatible with these theories because such an approach is thought of as blatantly subjective. This is a mistake, I think and will first show why.

If one assumes that the styles of thinking about the political can be quite divergent (not an unreasonable assumption I think) one could distinguish between a more personal (spiritual) approach and a formal (material) approach, The cosmologies likewise could be distinguished as respectively an apophatic (searching) attitude and its opposite, a cataphatic (legalist) attitude. The last distinction comes from the history of theological doctrine,⁵ but as such there is nothing wrong with this. If one also assumes that these attitudes and approaches *somehow* have something to say about the *homo politicus*, four types of doing political studies are possible, all resulting in a way of dealing with the (admittedly) rather abstract *homo politicus*. The styles can be put in a diagram.

figure 1 *homo politicus*

		cosmological attitude	
		apophatic	cataphatic
approach	personal	1	2
	formal	3	4

The four positions in the diagram, representing four different styles of doing political studies could be given names. 1, the personal apophatic approach/attitude could be called pure mystical: one cannot searching for the political grail without doing it solitary (though, of, course, assistance could be welcome) but the outcome must be made public. For early modern political thought one could think of Montaigne as an example⁶

⁵ As a matter of fact the distinction stems from Denys the Areopagite. See for a more contemporary theological treatment the rather dated Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, Cambridge: James Clark, 1991 (1957). The book was originally published in French in 1944. Of cataphatic or positive (in the sense of factual) way Lossky says that it “leads us to some knowledge of God, but in an imperfect way. The “perfect” way “... leads us finally to total ignorance. ... It is by *unknowing* (*agnosia*) that one may know Him who is above every possible object of knowledge.” (25). Political studies necessarily being far less transcendental one could amend Lossky’s statement by saying that the cataphatic way starts with certain knowledge of things political, and the apophatic way with postponement of such knowledge in order to enhance spiritual vision. As such it is not unlike phenomenological thinking. See e.g. Richard M. Zaner, *The Way of Phenomenology*; criticism as a philosophical discipline, Indianapolis: Pegasus, 1970.

⁶ See David Louis Schaefer, *The Political thought of Montaigne*, Cornell UP, 1990, or more recently, Anne Hartle, *Michel de Montaigne: accidental philosopher*, Cambridge UP, 2003, who is largely a victim of the fallacious idea that Montaigne’s intuitive philosophy can nevertheless be characterized as having a systematic method. None of both authors make much of his obvious

But, of course, there is also a lot of bogus mysticism.⁷ 2, the personal cataphatic approach/attitude, is the style that could be associated with the egghead who, when successful becomes of course the scientific genius. I suspect that a political genius can not be found in political studies, because if the potential genius in search of the “laws” of human conduct, would choose economics. And rightly so. There are Nobel prizes waiting for this type. But we do not need to be contemptuous about the egghead in political studies, because she would be the one who could point out where the limits of political arithmetic are as it stands and what has to be developed. 3, the formal apophatic approach/attitude is the style of those doing political studies in a ritual way. Who adapts the style belongs to the foot-soldiers of political studies. But there is neither reason for contemptuousness here. Political studies could not exist without them. Perhaps the foot-soldiers are motivated by the idea (illusion?) that they are in a position to debunk the political thought of their contemporaries. If they choose for journalism they can become quite famous. Christopher Hitchens comes to mind.⁸ Or Gore Vidal. 4, the formal cataphatic attitude/approach is the style of those who think of political studies as politicology, a science and we all know that the dream of a politicology (as old as Spinoza⁹) is dreamt quite often.¹⁰ The danger of practitioners type 4 is that they think of

and sincere mysticism: the way I like to read him. Montaigne’s personal philosophy (subjective philosophy has become a pejorative qualification) makes him a sceptic who does not take his own musings (never propositions) very serious. Authenticity is what he is looking for. Not a theory. Modern thinkers like Martha Nussbaum, Richard Rorty, Bernard Williams, Richard Rorty and Michael Oakeshott (bien étonné de se trouver ensemble, no doubt), often seems to think like him. Oakeshott says somewhere: “The irony of much theorising is its propensity to generate, not an understanding, but a not yet understood.” That’s something Montaigne could have said.⁷ See for instance Derrida, analysing a letter of Gershom Sholem to Franz Rosenzweig, written in 1926, on Zionism and the return of Hebrew in Palestine: “the evil will not only consist in the loss of sacred language, thus of Hebrew, and thus of what is essential to Zionism, but in an avenging return of the sacred language that will violently turn against those who speak it, against those who have desecrated it,” in Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, Routledge, 2002, transl. Gil Anidjar, p. 195.

⁸ Christopher Hitchens debunking biography of Bill Clinton, *No One Left to Lie to*, London: Verso, 1999 is very instructive. This lying “great communicator,” and a-moral political leader was far more inspirational for George Bush jr. than the last ever has wanted to admit. Note that both are “born again” Christians (like all post-war protestant American presidents before him). Clinton facilitated the creation of a “political-military-industrial complex,” the infrastructure of the rise and fall of a “bubble world” as described by Nick Cohen, *Pretty Straight Guys*, Faber & Faber, 2003, and the great example of probably all “leading” politicians in the West, Tony Blair being his most obvious heir.

⁹ See e.g. Baruch Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, Leiden: Brill, 1991, transl. Samuel Shirley, p. 115: “love of God arises from the knowledge of God, a knowledge deriving from general axioms that are certain and self-evident,” and p. 71 “since Nature’s power is nothing but the power of God, it is beyond doubt that ignorance of natural causes is the measure of our ignorance of the power of God.” For the sake of completeness: “civil society” has natural causes for Spinoza.

¹⁰ See for a quite recent example Raymond Plant, *Politics, Theology and History*, Cambridge UP, 2001. Plant’s book appeared in the series “Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion.” The trouble with Plant’s book is firstly its inconsistency: after having used the empty, but dangerous, concept of community for 9 chapters, he does away with it in chapter 10, but nevertheless picks it up again in the last chapters (11 and 12). And Plant is too much an Hegelian. This blinds him that much that he can not understand that the Old Testament prophets are quite like responsible utopian mystics (of which I come to speak later on) of our

the *homo politicus* as a observable phenomenon in stead of an abstract category. But the type is easily recognizable in the history of political thought. Thus, in medieval political thought I would not call the nominalist scholastics of William Ockham¹¹ dangerous. Dangerous are the realist scholastics of Aquinas, that is, for those who are not practising Roman Catholics. They demand belief, not faith.

I hope to have shown that a mystical style and approach are not only a plausible option for doing political studies, but also that political studies as mysticism is perhaps a realist position, wrongly or perhaps mistakenly denied its place. Before demonstrating in a concrete case I will make a short comment on why the mistake could arise. The notion that we are all spiritual beings stems of course from the essentially Judeo-Christian tradition we are born in (and I do not forget the Greeks, because they have been incorporated in this tradition). And that its core is religious, through and through. Of course many of those doing political studies would deny that their notion of being authentic persons is spiritual and that they are therefore restricted by moral considerations when shaping the world: the art and crafts of politics. Thus, they deny that there political projects are rather transcendental than mundane.¹² Political studies, therefore, are inescapably mystical, even if they are at their best hardly religious according to this political philosopher. The four styles our types are not meant to make separations or factions within political studies, but are meant to be reminders of distinctions within political studies. They point to ways of making political studies more encompassing.

And shaping the world is something that requires *invention*: shaping the world is essentially a creative act. It means, at least, imagining possible worlds urged by a sense of wrongness of the existing world. And here the scientific world view is ill equipped. Science can only *discover* something that is already there, though we do not know when and/or where. A good scientist is a good imitator of Dr Livingstone, and there is not a little irony in the fact that he was trained as a theologian and a practising missionary, who had to invent his "real" God for the Africans he tried to convert. Becoming a discoverer must have meant to him that his real vocation was something else. One could even say that the persons of scientists are rather irrelevant, because even the most spectacular scientific discovery would sooner or later have been discovered by someone else.¹³ Scientists discover reality. The humanities have to transcend reality. Doing political studies and not aiming to invent new policies is to forsake their very reason of existence.

time and not at all like the courtly Hegel: his philosophy was essentially ideological, subservient to the powers that were.

¹¹ See e.g. William of Ockham, *A Short Discourse on the Tyrannical Government; Over Things Divine and Human, but Especially Over the Empire Usurped by Some Who Are Called Highest Pontiffs*, ed. Arthur S. McGrade, transl. John Kilcullen, Cambridge UP, 1992.

¹² Jürgen Habermas, *The Future of Human nature*, Oxford: Polity, 2002, transl. Hella Beister, is a nice example: he admits (by the way, like Sartre) the influence of Kierkegaard, but thinks that his refusal to accept a theocentric view of the person, makes him non-religious or, I would prefer to say now, unspiritual, in his thinking. Nevertheless he calls his effort "transcendental," albeit that his God, like the God of mystical theology, is an unknown one. Well, as we have seen, this is not mystical thinking if there never was such a thing.

³ See Bill McGibben, *Enough; genetic engineering and the end of engineering*, London: Bloomsbury, 2003, for an accessible and debunking essay affirming the role of religious faith in scientific methods.

Practicians of political studies who emphasize quantifying methods in stead of qualitative ones are not worth the salt of the earth.

3-What has te be done?

I promised to return to the mistaken view that spiritualism and empiricism (masked as realism) are mutually exclusive. The best way to make my point is, I think, to go back to basics, and to articulate what political studies are all about in the first place. Textbooks are of course not useful to answer this question because they patently start with the second or even a further place. Perhaps being a political philosopher makes it easy for me to discard them here. Routinely done political studies will not help me either because they cannot bother to speak what political studies are about but have to take this for granted. Anyhow, it would not be polite to suggest to those who fund these studies that they are perhaps not in the know about this. I cannot spoil your time with a detailed exposition where me definition comes from, and how it differs from some of my colleagues. Therefore you get my definition as if it comes from nowhere but my own brain (or typewriter: the role of the typewriter in thinking is hopelessly underestimated): **political studies are the ways of thinking of people about how to make the world a habitat that is worth living in, and of how to implement these thoughts in world transforming or conserving conduct.** The use of the word habitat is lent from ecology, where it refers to arrangements of all animals to survive and ro procreate. I call the world a habitat because it is a term referring to something local, but also because it implies that, by now, all sensible people share the opinion that it is the responsibility of human animals to make the whole world worth living for all animals who accidentally came to live on the planet and to take care that the physical environment (in the broadest sense of the word) is not endangered.

You may have missed a few things. The first may well be that I do not see political studies as activities that are particularly done at universities or academies. The reason for this is very simple. At universities, as far as I know, the idea that the first task of those doing political studies is incompatible with my very definition of what political studies are. The prevalent thinking there is that they have to earn a living by what *other* people think of how to make the world a habitat worth living in. One could call this professional irresponsibility. Those doing political studies behave as if their profession is not involved at all in what I, to be short, shall call *world making*. This can be left to others, professional politicians, mostly an irresponsible sort themselves¹⁴ and their electorates, mostly considered as dumb, because they do not know their own interests: one can find working class Conservatives all over the world. I will come to speak about professional politicians later on. Therefore I can limit myself to the electorate (political studies practitioners ought to behave as model electors, examples for the population at large, and if they do not behave in such a way, they are, again, professionally

¹⁴ The English should be happy to have such fine political biographers as John Campbell. See his 2 volumes biography of Margaret Thatcher, Cape, 2002 and 2003. Thatcher's obsession for what Campbell calls "secret state," the link between intelligence services, the arms industry and foreign policy and her negative definition of Thatcherism (not labour) makes one shudder. But the same goes for the monarchical style of Tony Blair as described by Nick Cohen. Both are, from my point of view, essentially mystics, not only bogus mystics like Derrida, but evil ones. I just had comments on the professional irresponsibility in political studies. The fact that, as far as I know, one can not specialize as political biographer, is another sign of irresponsibility.

irresponsible). Electorate as a concept, suggests a passivity that could very well be appropriate if one wants to indicate the power they wield factually, but from a mystical, normative point of view, it should refer to the power they *could* wield. I will call them unprofessional politicians or, perhaps better, unknown politicians (or short: unknowns).

Unknowns come in sorts and I will restrict myself to those who could be called responsible ones, the ones who are trying to do world making. Some of them are organized, but the problem with them is that they tend to think that world making is something that can be done by isolating problems. There is, of course, nothing against those with special interests in the very may who belong to the world's *tear groups* (a nice word for those interested in enlarging their vocabulary of apparently cynical words): the poor, the powerless, the endangered, the uneducated ... well you can enlarge the list until you arrive at the hole in the ozone layer, a very tragic ecological tear group). But the point is that world making should not be approached piecemeal but as a total problem (I am too shy to use the very adequate word "holistic problem") and as I cannot begin to give solutions. I suggest that these unknowns are mystics who imprison themselves (a contradiction in terms) because of their naive making of boundaries for their activities.

One other sort of responsible unknowns I would call the *silenced utopians*: they love world making and they know that it cannot be done, but they nevertheless report on their failures to be or become a political factor that can not be ignored by elected professionals, nor by practitioners of political studies. The last thing is a last example of the professional political studies being irresponsible. The elected professional seem simply to cynical, reckless and contradictory to mind these unknowns. Mrs Thatcher provides us with a very nice example. She wishes to promote a new entrepreneurial class and cultivated her East African and Jewish voters in her Finchley constituency while at the same time, biting in a feeding hand by advocating the racist policy of an "English" cultural homogeneity - just another example of bogus mysticism - whatever the economic costs.¹⁵ One would prefer the evil mysticism of Enoch Powell in his infamous "river of blood speech in Birmingham, 20 April 1968 about the then proposed Race Relation Bill. I will cite what he exactly said:

Here is the means of showing that the immigrant communities can organise to consolidate their members, to agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens, and to overawe and dominate the rest with the legal weapons which the ignorant and the ill-informed have provided. If I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'The river Tiber foaming with much blood.'¹⁶

This is, of course, evil mysticism, but Powell seems to be aware of it. And of course he knew that his audience shared his opinion, so that what he accomplished was to make their primitive evil mysticism more or less canonical. In comparison Mrs Thatcher was - and is - mystical illiterate.

¹⁵ See Campbell, o.c., vol II, The Iron Lady, 2003.

¹⁶ J. Enoch Powell, *Reflections*, London: Bellew, 1992, ed. Rex Collings, p. 168

I did not lose the thread of my argument. I promise to indicate some apparent oddities of my definition of political studies. Therefore a last one. You will have missed references to antique thinkers, who must have invented the discipline. The reason for this is that, let us say the Greeks, had a very limited view on the range of political studies (the *polis*) and the participants in it (the aristocrats). This will not do these days, of course. When we speak of globalization we imply that the inhabitants of the world all live in the same world, all have responsibilities for this world, and that the way to keep the global *polis* running, depends on exhaustible funds. The Greeks could not have imagined such a thing. The Jews of their time arguably could, but the idea that they could be people doing proto-political studies is hardly common.¹⁷

5-The abuses of mysticism

In order to make my case, and to conclude my paper I will cite extensively from Nick Cohen's *Pretty Straight Guys*. Because I did not have the opportunity to check Mr Cohen, the citation has, from an epistemological point of view, only - but in fact, as you perhaps know, that can be pretty much - the status of metaphorical truth. I quote:

(Bernie) Ecclestone provided a taste of what was to come when he slipped New Labour £ 1 million just before the elections under conditions of the strictest confidentiality. New Labour had been committed to banning the tobacco companies from sponsoring sport. Ecclestone collared Blair and warned him that Formula One would be driven overseas if the prohibition was enacted. There weren't many who understood the economics of motor racing who agreed with him, but Blair did. He ordered his health ministers to make Formula One a special case, while imposing the ban on Old Labour sports such as darts, greyhound racing and snooker, which would suffer more from the loss of tobacco money. This was a shocking betrayal. Most of the progressive middle classes regarded smoking as an unpardonable sin. It was a greater social error to light up a fag in their living rooms than sexually assault the family pet. After weeks of lying, the government admitted that it had been paid by Ecclestone. The whole affair reeked. But, as the government pointed out, there was no smoking gun to settle the matter. 'Closure' was obtained by Blair going on the BBC's Sunday political show and saying.

I hope that the people know me well enough and realise the type of person I am ... I would never do anything to harm the country or anything improper. I never have. I think that most people who have dealt with me think that I am a pretty straight sort of guy.

"How did I do?" Blair asked Alistair Campbell when the cameras stopped rolling.

"It did the job," Campbell replied.¹⁸

¹⁷ See however Raymond Plant, *o.c.*, especially chapter 2: Theology and politics: context, community and prophecy. See my earlier comments. I can add to this that O.T. prophets did not make prognoses for the people of Israel (not the community) like political analysts of today, occupying themselves with the outcome of election.

¹⁸ Cohen, *o.c.*, p. 260.

I can nor resist to give another citation to indicate the brand of Mr Blair's mysticism. Cohen again:

Cherie Blair's Catholicism and Tony Blair's Anglo-Catholicism and interest in Islam coexisted with paganism, Ouija board tapping, pseudo-science and New Age quackery. ... During their stay at the Maroma Hotel, a pricey retreat on Mexico's Caribbean coast, Mrs Blair took her husband by the hand and led him along the beach to a 'Temazcal,' a steam bath enclosed in a brick pyramid of an Aztec design. It was dusk and they had stripped down to their swimming costumes. Inside they met Nancy Aguilar, a New Age therapist. She told them that the pyramid was a womb in which they would be reborn. The Blairs became one with 'Mother Earth.' They saw the shapes of phantom animals in the steam an experienced 'inner-feelings and visions.' As they smeared each other with melon, papaya and mud from the jungle, they confronted their fears and emitted a primal scream. The joyous agonies of 'rebirth' were upon them. When the ceremony was over, the Prime Minister and his wife waded into the sea and cleaned themselves as well as they could.¹⁹

It is quite easy to give Britain's Prime Minister's brand of mysticism a name. It is Junk. Junk mysticism has made political discourse in England as bubbly as bubbly can be. The svelte sellers of New Labour, New Economy and New Communication are of course conspiring with large parts of the mass media, thus creating quite another 'secret state' as Mrs Thatcher did. But this is the easy part. The difficult part is to understand how this utterly vulgar, banal, diarrhea of political Michelin Men can function as, what Erving Goffman aptly described as "impression management," by delivering a sham performance.

Of course having Junk mysticism is not an English disease. One can see it all over the world. Philosophically speaking the *homo politicus* is threatened by extinction. This means that studying politics becomes akin to the study of phantoms. We should become adults doing political studies and not allow this to happen. The only way to do this is as to claim the mysticism of the *homo politicus* back to where it belongs. Our plight is to have world making at the centre of the stage. Near the typewriters we do our thinking with.

¹⁹ Idem, p. 153, 4.