



avantgarde

What is exactphilosophy ?

exactphilosophy n.

A way of doing philosophy that aims at producing scientific hypotheses, while avoiding logical inconsistencies (or making them explicit) and correcting factual errors whenever detected. It avoids to make things too specific unless they are carefully settled, influenced by ancient Asian traditions, especially by the Tao in Chinese philosophy. It can be imagined as floating above reality like a magic carpet, while gently trying to settle down to the ground, approaching it only when and where it comes into accord with the ground.

Note that this is about *exactphilosophy* in one word and not capitalized.

A little background and explanations

The fox icon of this website is related to hexagram Wei Chi (64) of the I Ching, especially as translated and interpreted by Wilhelm/Baynes, which mirrors the above definition of exactphilosophy closely, see next page.

You might also want to add playfully that “The *exactphilosophy* that can be *exactphilosophized* is not the true/eternal/unchanging *exactphilosophy*.”

The concepts of exactphilosophy were also influenced by and are related to Kant's *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Present Itself as a Science*, and other of Kant's works.

Conversely, exactphilosophy is not related to *The Society for Exact Philosophy* (founded 1970), although some of the rigorous methods developed there might become useful also in exactphilosophy some day.

Note that exactphilosophy is intended to be a *word in the dictionary*, a name given to a novel concept that did previously not exist in this form; it is not a brand or organization, hence never in competition with anything of that kind.

Feel free to add or associate more texts from Taoism, or not. For example, see chapter 66 of the Tao Te Ching or Zhuangzi's “Zauberperle” in Wilhelm's translation to German. In that sense, the “magic carpet” might also float below or within reality and the above definition is still somewhat in flux. . .

Finally, remember that philosophy is already a composed word, composed of philo and sophia, roughly “love of wisdom” .

I Ching – 64. Wei Chi / Before Completion (Wilhelm/Baynes)

above LI THE CLINGING, FLAME
below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

This hexagram indicates a time when the transition from disorder to order is not yet completed. The change is indeed prepared for, since all the lines in the upper trigram are in relation to those in the lower. However, they are not yet in their places. While the preceding hexagram offers an analogy to autumn, which forms the transition from summer to winter, this hexagram presents a parallel to spring, which leads out of winter's stagnation into the fruitful time of summer. With this hopeful outlook the Book of Changes come to its close.

THE JUDGMENT

BEFORE COMPLETION. Success.
But if the little fox, after nearly completing the crossing,
Gets his tail in the water,
There is nothing that would further.

The conditions are difficult. The task is great and full of responsibility. It is nothing less than that of leading the world out of confusion back to order. But it is a task that promises success, because there is a goal that can unite the forces now tending in different directions. At first, however, one must move warily, like an old fox walking over ice. The caution of a fox walking over ice is proverbial in China. His ears are constantly alert to the cracking of the ice, as he carefully and circumspectly searches out the safest spots. A young fox who as yet has not acquired this caution goes ahead boldly, and it may happen that he falls in and gets his tail wet when he is almost across the water. Then of course his effort has been all in vain. Accordingly, in times "before completion," deliberation and caution are the prerequisites of success.

THE IMAGE

Fire over water:
The image of the condition before transition.
Thus the superior man is careful
In the differentiation of things,
So that each finds its place.

When fire, which by nature flames upward, is above, and water, which flows downward, is below, their effects take opposite directions and remain unrelated. If we wish to achieve an effect, we must first investigate the nature of the forces in question and ascertain their proper place. If we can bring these forces to bear in the right place, they will have the desired effect and completion will be achieved. But in order to handle external forces properly, we must above all arrive at the correct standpoint ourselves, for only from this vantage can we work correctly.

Tao Te Ching – Chapter 66 (Legge)

That whereby the rivers and seas are able to receive the homage and tribute of all the valley streams, is their skill in being lower than they;—it is thus that they are the kings of them all. So it is that the sage, wishing to be above men, puts himself by his words below them, and wishing to be before them, places his person behind them. In this way though he has his place above them, men do not feel his weight, nor though he has his place before them, do they feel it an injury to them. Therefore all in the world delight to exalt him and do not weary of him. Because he does not strive, no one finds it possible to strive with him.

Zhuangzi – Zauberperle (Wilhelm)

Der Herr der gelben Erde wandelte jenseits der Grenzen der Welt. Da kam er auf einen sehr hohen Berg und schaute den Kreislauf der Wiederkehr. Da verlor er seine Zauberperle. Er sandte Erkenntnis aus, sie zu suchen, und bekam sie nicht wieder. Er sandte Scharfblick aus, sie zu suchen, und bekam sie nicht wieder. Er sandte Denken aus, sie zu suchen, und bekam sie nicht wieder. Da sandte er Selbstvergessen aus. Selbstvergessen fand sie. Der Herr der gelben Erde sprach: "Seltsam fürwahr, dass gerade Selbstvergessen fähig war, sie zu finden!"