

Editors' Notes

Claus Oetke (Jan. 3, 1947–Dec. 17, 2019) received his doctorate (1973) and postdoctoral qualification (1983) at the University of Hamburg, held a professorship at its *Institut für Kultur und Geschichte Indiens und Tibets* from 1983 to 1993, professorships on deputation in Kiel and Vienna, and a *Heisenberg Professur* of the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* which led to visiting professorships at universities in the USA and Australia. From 1993 to 2014, he was head of the Section for Indology at the Department of Oriental Languages at Stockholm University. After his retirement he lived in Costa Rica.

One of his first publications was a book on philosophical issues of logic and linguistics, *Paraphrasenbeziehungen zwischen disjunktiven und konjunktiven Sätzen* (1981). He published numerous articles and monographs on Indian philosophies, mainly dialectics and logic, after his monumental *“Ich” und das Ich: Analytische Untersuchungen zur buddhistischen und brahmanischen Ātmankontroverse* (1998). In the Indian field, Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka philosophy, the *trairūpya* logic, and Dharmakīrti's logic and theory of causality were his main interest.

The present volume contains two essays from Claus Oetke's literary estate, “Truth Paradoxes and Varieties of Meaning” and “Fact, Fake, and Fiction in Historical Interpretation”, that he had planned to integrate into a book. Both essays are self-contained, but Oetke's Preface highlights their conceptual and argumentative connections.

The most elementary case of a truth paradox is generated if one assumes that somebody makes the statement ‘What is asserted in this very utterance is not true’. By a reasoning that follows *prima facie* impeccable rules of derivation one arrives at the unacceptable conclusion that the sentence the speaker uttered expresses a truth if and only if it does not express a truth. Using the apparatus of classical logic (in the style of Gentzen's calculus of natural deduction) Oetke's first essay

presents a variety of paradoxes that all deserve the title 'truth paradox' if one endorses his explanation of this title. In each case, he argues, the paradoxical conclusion can be avoided without putting blame on any principle of classical logic or on our pre-theoretical understanding of the predicate 'true'. What is really responsible for the conceptual embarrassment that arguments with paradoxical conclusions cause is rather a failure to take a certain kind of (truth-value bearing) content into consideration that can often be safely neglected. Oetke elaborates a distinction between (1^a) content as conventional lexico-grammatical meaning, "linguistic meaning" in his terminology, (1^b) content as something that is determined by lexico-grammatical meaning and certain elements of the context of an utterance, *and* (2) content as "holistic meaning". The need to distinguish between (1^a) and (1^b) is well known: utterances of indexical sentences like 'It's my 30th birthday today' made by different speakers or at different times can have different truth values (hence differ in content) in spite of having the same lexico-grammatical meaning. What is original with Oetke is the invocation of notion (2). The elucidation, and the application, of the concept of holistic meaning takes centre stage in the first essay in this book, for it is by bringing this kind of content into play that Oetke tries to (dis)solve all truth paradoxes.

This notion plays a key role not only in the contribution to the *philosophy of logic and of language* that the philosopher Oetke bequeathed to us in the form of the first essay, but also in his contribution to *hermeneutics* that the Indologist Oetke bequeathed to us in the form of the second essay.

An earlier version of this second essay under the title "The Fallacy of Historical Interpretation" was meant to continue a five-paper discussion on the *sadvitīyaprayoga* (the proof-formulation that entails a counterpart) which appeared between 2012 and 2016 in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. On April 20, 2016 Oetke informed E.S. in an e-mail that he wanted to submit the above paper for publication in the same journal. But the journal's editor added a note at the end of the last article in the series, "Final Notes on the *Sadvitīyaprayoga*," in vol. 44 of 2016: "With the publication of this paper we hope to end

this debate here. The Editor.” In any case, on August 29, 2016, Oetke reported in a further e-mail to E.S. that he had tried to increase the interest of his paper not only by arguing with his opponent’s last paper on the topic proper, but also by entering on more general questions of a theoretical and methodological nature. He also mentioned that he had not yet received either an answer or even an acknowledgement of receipt from the journal.

To all who knew Claus Oetke it can be no surprise that this silent indication of “enough is enough” stoked the fire of his brilliant mind. The second essay in this book is, therefore, a more expanded presentation of the thoughts he had offered in his contribution to the series on the *sadvitīyaprayoga*. Oetke is not only relentless in his critique of his opponent, but also critical of some of his own contributions to the series. Indeed, he goes far beyond them, discussing essential issues of methodology that are worth considering and deliberating for all who are concerned with documents of Indian or other philosophies, be it from a historical or philosophical point of interest.

We are deeply grateful to one of the anonymous evaluators for the Academy, who provided many helpful corrections, comments and suggestions for further improvement, and to Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek, who gave this book its final form.

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