

## 对谈、真理与宗教语言性

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### [英文提要]

George Lindbeck of Yale Divinity School in his book *The Nature of Doctrine* (1984) proposed a cultural-linguistic understanding of religion in which doctrines function like a Kantian *a priori* that shapes the entirety of believers' life and thought. This postliberal approach is in contrast with two rival theories of religion and doctrine: [i] the premodern "cognitive-propositional" theory in which doctrines function as informative propositions or truth-claims about objective realities; and [ii] the liberal "experience-expressionist" theory in which doctrines function as noninformative and nondiscursive symbols of a common core of human experience of inner feelings, attitudes or existential orientations. Lindbeck argued that his is a better approach in terms of contributions to ecumenical dialogues.

What is new in Lindbeck's approach is his emphasis on the "performative", or "regulative" function of doctrine. While shedding some new lights on the nature of religion and the rule-function of doctrine in "cultural-linguistic" terms, Lindbeck in effect reduces religion to nothing more than an in-group language,

and doctrinal truths to what he calls the “intrasystemic truths” where consistency and coherency within the system are most important. It is argued that, contrary to Lindbeck’s claim, language systems are not unrelated to reality, and natural sciences cannot be reduced to symbolic systems without remainder. Moreover, in learning a language, one is not only concerned with grammar but also with content, not only with the how-question (the art or rule of speaking) but also with the what-question (its truth). Finally, Lindbeck appears to confuse Nicene *homoousion* with *communicatio idiomatum* in his notion of *homoousion* as a second-order rule of speech, and confuse “use” with “truth” in his insistence of valid performance as a condition for truth. In spite of Lindbeck’s good intention, theology becomes solipsism and ecumenical dialogue becomes meaningless and impossible. While insights offered by the “cultural-linguistic” approach are welcomed, without a proper grasp of the objective and ontological truth, Lindbeck’s reductionist approach fails as an adequate interpretation of the Christian faith.

当代基督教神学的特色是对谈 (dialogue)。即使神学家不是刻意或明显地进行对谈，他的神学工作仍然无可避免地把他带入一个对谈的处境。例如，当神学家阐释任何一个基督教教义时，他不可能完全抽离这教义的圣经基础，也无法完全漠视基督教传统中不同宗派或神学家对同一教义的立场及看法。不但如此，作为普世宗教的基督教，其思想必须同时面对其他宗教或意识形态（如哲学、政治学、社会学或甚至科学等）对人生或实在的不同诠释的挑战。固然，对谈并不仅局限于当代基督教神学，亦曾见于