

Contemporary Humanism

International PhD Program & Research Network

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(Philosophy and Religion, 2021-2024)

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Dissertation

Habitable Truths and Deep Games. The link between religious truth, language and community in the Postliberal thought of George Lindbeck

ABSTRACT: The thesis aims to analyze the epistemological path that leads the American theologian George Lindbeck (1923-2018) to a reconstruction of religious truth in the form of a habitable truth. Therefore, the research is mainly focused on the fundamental relationship between religious truth, language and community. The theologian refuses the viewpoint of liberal theology that reduces religion to a series of historical facts and moral teachings. The proposal of Lindbeck is instead, that of a Postliberal cultural-linguistic approach to religion that recovers the narrative dimension of the sacred text. The thesis presents this approach starting from the essential influence exerted on it by Ludwig Wittgenstein's notions of grammar and language game and Clifford Geertz's thick description of the concept of culture. The findings allow a new reading of religious truth as a fruit of the relationship between the believing community and the narrative of the scripture. In Lindbeck's terms, religious truth is a form of language structured on two levels: the grammar contained in the sacred text, on the one side, where the rules for the correct doctrine are established and the lexicon spoken by the believing community, on the other side, where the rules of the sacred text are applied to life. In this way, religious truth supplies the believer a key for the interpretation of the world, starting from the scripture, and a tool for the shaping of his life in this world. As a consequence, the believing community becomes a witness of truth in contemporary society.

Research interests / Fields of expertise

Religious truth
Narrative
Language
Community

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