
陰間？地獄？——從新舊約文獻看死後世界概念的演變

黃根春、周東妮、麥志立

摘要

聖經文本中關於「死後世界」的主題一直都在演變中。從《希伯來聖經》、猶太天啟文學，到符類福音的敘述，死後世界的景象和涵義一直都在演變中。本文嘗試分析這演變的過程並不是單一的線性發展，更不是單純的從陰間演變到地獄，而是可能包含著民族身份的延續和歷史的重構。透過對比不同學者與不同文獻的同異，我們推論因著時代的遷移，民族之間的文化交流越見頻繁，致使聖經文本的死後世界自然地受到週邊地區的影響。這些影響包括國族意識、政治形勢、社會習俗、文學作品等。因此死後世界所呈現的景象也會含有某程度的文化混雜。

Abstract

The biblical meaning of ‘life after death’ is continuously evolving. Its image and implications is shift from the “Hebrew Bible” to the “Jewish Apocalyptic Literature” and later the “Synoptic Gospels.” This shift is a dynamic development instead of a linear transformation from sheol to hell. It may even contain valuable information regarding the evolution of racial identity and hidden historical facts.

By comparing literatures from scholars of different backgrounds, we infer that increased inter-cultural exchange over time was the reason behind the above mentioned shift (in the meaning of ‘life after death’). This shift, as a result, can be seen as the biblical meaning evolving under the cultural influence of neighboring regions. These cultural influences include, but are not limited to, racial consciousness, political environment, social customs, and literatures. It is therefore reasonable to consider the concept of ‘life after death’ a cultural hybrid.