

「苦與樂」研討會

「苦與樂」專題討論第八節

Heaven and Hell: on Absolutization of Happiness and Suffering

Prof. Cheung Chan Fai (Department of Philosophy, CUHK)

張燦輝教授（香港中文大學哲學系）

Heaven and hell are the two most vivid dramatic representations of joy and fear of human beings in most cultures regarding life after death. Heaven is the place where human beings attain perfect happiness; whereas hell is where extreme suffering falls on condemned sinners. This paper examines the representations of heaven and hell in both Western and Chinese culture. Through a hermeneutic interpretation of the theories of heaven and hell, it is suggested that such representations are the results of the absolutization of the ideas of happiness and suffering. As such they are based on a theory of retribution. Whether heaven and hell do exist or not, is not the main concern for the believers. They are only moral ideas.