

Divining towards Purity through the
Sūtra on the Divination of the Effect of Good and Evil Actions
—The Biography of a Ritual

由《占察善惡業報經》之清淨求問，看佛教儀式的流變

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The *Sūtra on the Divination of the Effect of Good and Evil Actions* (*Zhancha shan'e yebao jing* 占察善惡業報經, T. 839) describes a ritual considered indigenous since the time of its emergence in sixth century China. Consisting of two chapters, it opens with a unique ritual oscillating between karma divination by throwing dice and purificatory repentance in the context of Kṣitigarbha worship; its second part outlines a Chinese Buddhist philosophy close to the *Awakening of Faith* (*Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論).

This lecture will start by introducing the text and its structure, and reflect on it as an individually performed ritual. Then, the “biography” (Appadurai) of the ritual will be traced. How much do we know about actual performances? Practiced individually, sources on the subsequent practice after its emergence are sporadic. While the ritual was quickly banned once it surfaced in China, it flourished in Korea in the following centuries. In the late Ming dynasty, the scholar monk Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599–1655) became a serious

practitioner and wrote about it extensively. The ritual revived in 20th century China and up to today there are groups of practitioners who enact the *sūtra* for their own spiritual benefit. How do practitioners relate to and experience the ritual described? What are the challenges of its practice and how do practitioners cope with them? The lecture will conclude with a reflection on the ritual dynamic of this text.

主講人介紹

谷乃曦 (Esther-Maria Guggenmos), 德國籍, 現為德國埃爾蘭根—紐倫堡大學國際人文研究中心研究員。谷教授係比利時根特大學 (Universiteit Gent) 東方語言及文化學博士, 曾在臺灣、日本、中國大陸等地擔任訪問學人, 近年主要研究中國佛教與預言的交織, 印度佛教中國化和宗教美學。此次獲漢學中心「外籍學人來臺研究漢學獎助」, 研究主題為「佛教與預言—論《占察善惡業報經》及其文化傳承」。