

INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

2025

*R*ITUAL

AND

THE ORGANIZATION OF SEMIOTIC
DIVERSITY IN
SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

20-21 MAY 2025
www.pccrindia.org

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

2025

ON

**“RITUAL
AND
THE ORGANIZATION OF SEMIOTIC
DIVERSITY IN SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA”**

DATE: **20-21** MAY 2025

ORGANISED BY:

PRAGJYOTISH CENTRE FOR CULTURAL RESEARCH (PCCR)
GUWAHATI, ASSAM

&

IIT-GANDHINAGAR, GUJARAT

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY,
DIBRUGARH, ASSAM

SUPPORTED BY

WENNER-GREN FOUNDATION
NEW YORK, USA

VENUE OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025:

DEPT. OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY, DIBRUGARH, ASSAM



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

2025

CALL FOR PAPERS

CONCEPT

Studies such as Rappaport's treatise on ritual meaning and ecology (1979) as well E. Valentine Daniel's description of ritual relationships in southern India (1987) applied the analytic of Peircean semiotics to the study of ritual. Subsequent research combined the semiotic approach with the study of ideology and performance to provide a nuanced account of processes of "ritualization" in which rituals were both seen as a unique feature of society that at the same time mediated claims to truth, agency, and authority in more quotidian domains of communicative activity (Kuipers 1990, Robbins 2001, Keane 2007, Stasch 2011). Yet if we take the "speech community" as essentially the "organization of linguistic diversity" (Irvine 2006) then we may also ask how ritual processes intersect with linguistic diversity, and to extend the question further, semiotic diversity more broadly? Much of the ethnographic work done so far has focused on specific speech communities without attending to the organization of these communities' internal diversity. However, in highly multilingual societies, such as those of South and Southeast Asia, speakers in a complex linguistic ecology are constantly interacting, mutually influencing not only everyday communication but also ritual practice. As shown by Jackson (2003), interethnic contact can play a central role in the exchange of cultural material in ritual life, while McDowell (1983) demonstrates how ritual language may be constituted as a cross-lingual semiotic framing.

Our workshop and conference then aims to ask the following questions:

- 1) What are the processes by which everyday linguistic diversity is re-organized to articulate with spiritual ontologies to constitute a "ritual event?"
- 2) How may we move beyond functionalist or structuralist framings of the ritual event to be able to theorize the interaction between language, ritual, visual construction and ecology through semiotics?
- 3) How do the relations between material objects and words that are constitutive of ritual performance endow languages, landscapes, and non-human entities with new meanings that dialectically then serve as reference points in non-ritual communicative practice?
- 4) Semiotic ideologies and their influence on ritual practices
- 5) Symbolism and indexicality in ritual performances
- 6) The encoding and decoding of meaning in rituals
- 7) The role of ritual in maintaining or contesting power structures
- 8) Ritual and the negotiation of cultural identity
- 9) Objects, artifacts, and their semiotic roles in rituals
- 10) The spatial organization of ritual environments
- 11) Ritual as a performative act
- 12) Embodiment and sensory engagement in ritual
- 13) The impact of globalization on ritual semiotics
- 14) Indigenous rituals and their semiotic complexity

We seek to address these questions with specific case studies from South and Southeast Asia specifically. The format of the workshop and conference will be an introduction to the topic, keynote addresses, and panel discussions with international guests from Laos, Japan and India participants over 2 days.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

2025

Important Dates:

- 29 April 2025 - Registration and Abstract submission deadline
- 5 May 2025 - Paper submission deadline
- 12 May 2025 - ID-card & book of abstract issued
- 20-21 May 2025 - Conference date

Submission Link:

www.pccrindia.org

More Information:

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Conveners:

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

2025



Call For Papers

Submission Deadline

29
April
2025

International Conference 2025

Theme

Ritual and the Organization of Semiotic Diversity in South and Southeast Asia

Topics may include :

- Ritual and Symbolism
- Ritual as a performative act
- The impact of globalization on ritual semiotics
- Indigenous rituals and their semiotic complexity
- Objects, artifacts, and their semiotic roles in rituals

Registration Fee

Early Bird by 19th April 2025

- Academic presenter - 2900 INR
- Professional Presenter - 2500 INR
- Student Presenter - 2000 INR

Venue of International Conference 2025:

Dept. of Anthropology,
Dibrugarh University,
Dibrugarh, Assam

- Embodiment and sensory engagement in ritual
- Ritual and the negotiation of cultural identity

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Welcome to PCCR