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Rituals in International Relations

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Rituals are common in international politics: they shape, structure, co-constitute, reinforce or hollow out a wide range of international practices, ranging from diplomacy to deterrence. They are also gaining increasing traction in International Relations. Understanding the role rituals play in processes of meaning-making at the time of shifting international orders is more important than ever. Our panel aims to explore not only a range of different sites in which international rituals unfold but also interrogate whose rituals these are and for whom they are enacted. This panel brings together a wide range of approaches on rituals in international relations, ranging from a conceptual exploration of ritualistic enchantment to peacekeeping, martial rituals, nuclear deterrence and diplomatic practices. We aim to bring these approaches in conversation with each other to enhance our conceptual, theoretical and empirical understanding of rituals and their political work in international relations.

Track Classification: Interpretivism in International Relations Working Group