

## **Anthropology meets Psychiatry: The Cultural Epidemiology of Ritual Healing**

**Prof. William S. Sax,  
Heidelberg University**

Anthropologists have provided a great deal of evidence that ritual healing can be effective in the treatment of mental disorders. Epidemiological studies of the topic are much more rare, but they, too, suggest that ritual healing can be effective. Anthropological evidence for the effectiveness of ritual healing tends to be anecdotal and contextual, to emphasize immeasurable factors like "practice" and "embodiment," and to focus on supra-individual units like family or village. Epidemiology, by contrast, thinks of itself as purely quantitative, and constructs its evidence almost exclusively from individual sufferers' linguistic reports. Can these two approaches to the study of ritual healing be combined, and if so, how? More importantly, why would one want to combine them?

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**Venue:** South Asia Institute, Room E11

**Time:** 15.15 – 16.45