

# Reassembling Democracy? Ritual as Resource

Oslo Conference 22-25 February 2017, University of Oslo/Soria Moria Hotel



## *Keynote speakers*

**Ronald L. Grimes, Siobhán Garrigan, Catherine Keller, Martin G. Reynolds, Adrian Ivakhiv**

“Reassembling Democracy: Ritual as Cultural Resource” (REDO) is an NFR funded research collaboration among 18 international scholars who in the years 2013-2016 studied a variety of collective activities such as memorial gatherings, festivals, protest marches, pilgrimages and other events or modes of public assembly and mobility as *ritualized* practices. New forms of democracy, of mourning and responses to violence and uncertainty, and of environmental concerns have been given pride of place. Various case studies show how forms, meanings and concerns are improvised or articulated, circulated and contested. In this final REDO conference, papers will explore the systematic linkages between three specific dimensions of cases investigated: ritual, democracy and the ‘other-than-human’.

- In what ways do novel modes of public assembly and mobility provide the grounds for a distinctive ethos in which ritual, democracy aspirations and radical environmental awareness (or responses to climate change) converge?
- What are the factors that encourage or hinder the translation or embodiment of this ethos into daily practice and its application in the political area?
- What other effective forms of collective celebration or intervention might be envisaged, notably within the context of rising political extremism?

**Registration by 21 February 2017:**

<http://www.tf.uio.no/english/research/projects/redo/>

## **Program**

**Wednesday 22 February, “Professorboligen,” University of Oslo (UiO) - (Karl Johans gate 47)**

15:00 -17:00 Conference opening & welcome, by **Dean Aud Tønnessen**, Faculty of Theology, UiO

**Keynote address: Ronald L. Grimes, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada**

***Improvising Ritual***

Respondent: Sivert Angel, Faculty of Theology, UiO

This is a public, academic lecture that also includes a 15 min doc film on the topic.  
Free and open to all.

17:15- Bus transport of conference participants from Karl Johans gate 47 to Soria Moria Hotel and Conference Center

19:30- Dinner at **Soria Moria Hotel & Conference Center (Voksenkollveien 60, 0790 Oslo)**

**Thursday 23 February, Soria Moria Hotel & Conference Center (Voksenkollveien 60, 0790 Oslo)**

**All day facilitator, Thursday: Sarah Pike REDO/California State University, Chico**

8:30-9:00 Registration

9:00-10:45 **Call to gather.** Jazz/folk clarinetist Carl Petter Opsahl

Jone Salomonsen, REDO/Faculty of Theology, UiO

Welcome & short opening

***Between Breivik and Trump: Can ritual save democracy?***

Roundtable analytics: **The limits of ritual efficacy.**

Michael Houseman, Jens Kreinath, Gregory Delaplace. Discussion.

10:45-11:00 Tea/coffee & fruit break

11:00-13:00 Parallel thematic sessions (session abstracts on website)

**1. Performing hybrid indigenous identities**

- Graham Harvey, *Indigenous festivals and the increase of sovereignty*
- Ken Derry, *Hybrid Rituals of Resistance and Community in Recent Indigenous Films*
- Gregory Delaplace, *What shamanic rituals may conjure up. Spirits, nationhood and the invisible in Mongolia*
- Jens Kreinath, *The Antakya Choir of Civilizations and the Contested Nature of Democracy in Turkey: Representations of Religious Pluralism, Public Unrest, and the Politics of Ritual Identity*  
Discussant: Paul-François Tremlett, REDO/Open University  
Presider: Alexa Døving, REDO/Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities

**2. Ritualizing feeling in human and other-than-human landscapes**

- Sarah Pike, *Mourning Nature: Environmental Protests as Rites of Grief*
- Marika Moisseeff, *Dealing with Death in Contemporary Western Culture: A View from Afar*
- Devin Zuber, *The Ruins of the Future: Cultural Memory in the Anthropocene*
- Michael Houseman, *Distanced intimacy in collective dances of self-discovery*  
Discussant: Marion Grau, REDO/Norwegian School of Theology  
Presider: Ida Marie Høeg, REDO/University of Agder

13:00-14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00 **Keynote address: Siobhán Garrigan, University of Dublin, Ireland**  
***Queueing in the Streets for Shelter: How Western Democracies Rely on Homelessness***

Respondent: Carl Petter Opsahl, Faculty of Theology, UiO & Ole Bull Academy

16:00-16:15 Tea/coffee, fruit & cake break

16:15-18:30 Parallel thematic sessions (session abstracts on website)

### **3. Collective mourning, ritual creativity and the significance of voice**

- Alexa Døving, *Homeland Ritualized: An Analysis of Written Messages Placed at Temporal Memorials after the Terrorist Attacks on 22 July 2011 in Norway*
- Ida Marie Høeg, *Flowers at funerals. The case of Muslim victims of 22 July*
- Birte Nordahl, *Songs of Democracy? Responses to 22 July 2011*
- Ingvild Folkvord, *Voices in Court. Shaping the Law at the trial of Anders Behring Breivik*

Discussant: Sarah Pike, REDO/California State University, Chico

Presider: Paul-François Tremlett, REDO/Open University

### **4. Theological and philosophical responses to social violence and environmental crisis**

- Morny Joy, *Back to Religious Basics and Beyond? Bruno Latour's Quest*
- Elisabeth Tveito Johnsen & Sivert Angel, *Modes of public preaching as response to violence and uncertainty*
- Kjetil Hafstad, *Contesting Evil*
- Tony Balcomb, *The War of the Trees – analyzing the rise and fall of an indigenous mass greening movement amongst the Shona in Southern Zimbabwe using Actor Network Theory (ANT)*

Discussant: Stine Holte, Faculty of Theology, UiO

Presider: Graham Harvey, REDO/Open University

19:00- Dinner

21:00- **Drinks & Film screening of 3 short documentaries referred to in the Friday sessions:**  
"The Day the Clock stopped" (2015), Ronald L. Grimes  
"July 22 Examined" (2015), Audun S. Bratlie/director and Jone Salomonsen/producer  
"The clash of festive performances – Polish Woodstock festival" (2017), Grzegorz Brzozowski

**Friday 24 February, Soria Moria Conference Center (Voksenkollveien 60, 0790 Oslo)**

**All day facilitator, Friday: Nina Hoel, Faculty of Theology, UiO**

8:30-10:00 **Keynote address: Catherine Keller, Drew University, USA**

***Political Theology of the Earth***

Respondent: Sturla Stålsett, Norwegian School of Theology

10:00-10:15 Tea/coffee & fruit break

10:15-12:15 Single thematic session: ***July 22 Examined*** (session abstract on website)

***Are certain ritual forms generative of certain experiences and modes of (democratic) sensibilities? Facts, analysis, and critique of the Post-22 July Charette experiments at DogA and Skiringssal***

Presentations by Jone Salomonsen, Ida Marie Høeg and Cora Alexa Døving

Discussant: Thorgeir Kolshus, Department of Social Anthropology, UiO

Presider: Michael Houseman, REDO/Ecole pratique des Hautes Études (Paris)

12:15-13:00 Round table analytics: **The limits of democratic reassemblies.**  
Paul-François Tremlett, Morny Joy, Grzegorz Brzozowski. Discussion.

13:00-14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00 **Call to gather.** Jazz/folk clarinetist Carl Petter Opsahl

**Keynote address:**

**Martin G. Reynolds, Robert C. Maynard Inst. for Journalism Education, USA**

***Democracy on Trial? Erosion of Truth and Trust in the Fourth Estate***

Respondent: Kjetil Wiedswang, journalist/political analyst *Dagens Næringsliv*

16:00-16:15 Tea/coffee, fruit & cake break

16:15-18:30 Parallel thematic sessions (session abstracts on website)

**5. Pilgrimage, festivals and (gender)politics**

- Marion Grau, *Reforming the St. Olav's Ways: On the Revival of Pilgrimage and the Reconstruction of Identity in Contemporary Norway*

- Anna Fedele & David Soares, *Pilgrimages to Fatima as Ways to Reassert Forms of Democracy and Solidarity*

- Samuel Etikpah, *Ritual Critique of Power and Behavior: Kundum Avudwene Ceremony in Ghana*

- Grzegorz Brzozowski, *Pluralisation or polarization? The clash of festive performances within the public sphere of the Polish Woodstock festival*

Discussant: Jens Kreinath, REDO/Wichita State University

Presider: Kjetil Hafstad, REDO/Faculty of Theology, UiO

**6. Democracy, protest, memory, ritual**

- Paul-François Tremlett, *Materializing politics: savage thoughts and objects*

- Agnes Czajka, *Rituals of resistance and the struggle over democracy in Turkey*

- Zaki Nahaboo, *Effigies, democracy and iconoclastic citizens*

- Jone Salomonsen, *A Clearing in the Forest of Democracy? July 22 ritual Commemoration and the quest for a pre-political social bond*

Discussant: Einar Braathen, International Studies and Migration, NIBR/HIOA

Presider: Graham Harvey, REDO/Open University

19:00- Dinner

21:00- **Call to gather.** Jazz/folk clarinetist Carl Petter Opsahl

**Drinks & Dice game á la Charette: What remains unspoken and unsung among us?**

**Saturday 25 February, Soria Moria Hotel & Conference Center (Voksenkollveien 60, 0790 Oslo)**

***All day facilitator, Saturday: Michael Houseman, REDO/Ecole pratique des hautes études (Paris)***

- 9:00-10:30     **Keynote address: Adrian Ivakhiv, University of Vermont, USA**  
***Reassembling a Broken World. Toward Practices of Anthropogenic Mindfulness***  
Respondent: Devin Zuber, Graduate Theological Union/UC Berkeley
- 10:30-11:00     Tea/coffee & fruit break
- 11:00-13:00     Roundtable analytics: **The limits of inter-religious and inter-species assemblies.**  
Graham Harvey, Sarah Pike, Jone Salomonsen. Discussion.
- 13:00-14:30     Lunch
- 14:30-15:00     **Call to gather.** Jazz/folk clarinetist Carl Petter Opsahl  
**Fishbowl: key findings, key misfits, key issues.**
- 15:00-16:00     **Where do we go from here? Critical discussion, pointing to future work**
- 16:30             Bus transport from Soria Moria to Oslo city centre