

Reassembling Democracy /Ritual as Resource

Conference 23-25 February 2017, University of Oslo / Soria Moria Conference Center, Oslo



Keynote speakers: Ronald L. Grimes, Catherine Keller, Adrian Ivakhiv, Siobhan Garrigan

The NFR funded research project “Reassembling Democracy: Ritual as Cultural Resource” (REDO) approaches increasingly widespread collective activities. These include memorial gatherings, festivals, protest marches, pilgrimages and other modes of public assembly and mobility. In these ritualized practices expanded meanings of democracy, renewed environmental concerns and responses to violence and uncertainty are given pride of place. Project members have undertaken various case studies to show how such meanings and concerns are expressed, circulated and contested. A number of commonalities have emerged. Singular embodied experiences, distinctive emotional expressions and special relationships with others (including other-than-human beings) are recurrent features of these practices. Many of the ritual practices also entail an active exploration of alternative models of sociality in which gender issues and radical inclusiveness play an essential role. Finally, many practitioners are acutely sensitive to issues pertaining to the global impact of human activities on Earth’s ecosystem (the Anthropocene). In this final REDO conference, we wish to explore more fully the systematic linkages between these three dimensions: ritual, democracy and the other-than-human.

Some of the questions we will address include:

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

This final REDO workshop style conference will explore the questions above by drawing on empirical material relating to the case studies included within the project and to other, as of yet unconsidered types of activities that involve linkages between ritual, democracy and the other-than-human. The goal of the conference is thus not only to substantiate the outcomes of the REDO project, but also to build a broader base of people, practices and ideas for future collaboration and research. The conference is open and free of charge, but places are limited and must be booked in advance.

Conference invitation: OPEN CALL FOR PAPERS

We invite papers for parallel sessions with a clear relevance to the conference themes, and from all academic fields. Abstract of max 300 words and a short CV of max 500 words should be sent by **1 Nov 2016** to both Jone Salomonsen and Michael Houseman: jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no, jmichaelhouseman@gmail.com. Notification by **20 Nov 2016**.

REGISTRATION and FULL PROGRAM from **30 Nov 2016** on REDO’s webpage, University of Oslo (TBA). Day to day conference participation is free (no meals, registration/booking demanded). Day conference with lunch NOK 500. Full conference participation with paper NOK 2800, including single room (3 nights) and all meals. Full conference participation without paper NOK 5800, including single room (3 nights) and all meals. 1-2 night stays are possible. Travel not included.

On behalf of the REDO project: **Jone Salomonsen (University of Oslo), Michael Houseman (École Pratique de Hautes Études, Paris), Sara Pike (California State University Chico), Graham Harvey (Open University, London)**

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

