

A response on the REDO project:
*Is how we remember July 22 significant for how we do democracy? Multiworkshop as
method and pedagogy,*

by Michael Noah Weiss

I would like to start my response to Jone Salomonson's presentation and the presented movie by making a short reference to a holocaust survivor, who's name is Viktor Frankl. Viktor Frankl was a well-known psychiatrist and psychologist and the founder of so-called Logotherapy. At the center of his approach, which he developed due to his experiences in Auschwitz, there is a formula: $D = S - M$, which means despair is suffering without meaning. In other words, the human being is a being, which is destined to search for meaning.

With Frankl's focus on meaning in mind, I would like to formulate a question by which I will try to interpret both the presentation of Jone Salomonsen as well as the movie. This question reads: How to learn to deal with what has happened on the 22nd of July in a meaningful way, both as a citizen as well as a whole society?

In regards to this question there were mainly two points in previous presentation and in the movie that caught my attention as a philosophical practitioner:

First, the methodology of a multi-workshop seems to be a new form of a dialogue approach. And here I have to add that a dialogue is different from a debate or a discussion. The reason why, I will explain later on but before that I would like to go into the second point that caught my attention.

In the presentation Jone Salomonsen mentioned that – based on research published in 2015 – Norwegian secondary schools did not offer sufficient spaces and arenas in order to reflect the attacks and events of July 22nd. In other words, the traditional education system was apparently incapable to offer and organize sufficient 'rituals of reflection' – and here I understand a dialogue as such a ritual of reflection, in the sense of an organized setting in which different perspectives and experiences on a topic or an event are systematically brought together, reflected and investigated, and also valued. The result of such a dialogical ritual can be a deeper insight into the matter at stake, in can be a way to find and investigate meaning in a common process, and it can also raise awareness on a topic.

And raising awareness on issues, which concern its citizens seems to be an indispensable task for a democracy in order to sustain.

At this point I am wondering what would be the outcome, the result, if multi-workshops would be offered on a larger scale, i.e. in the education system. Would this be significant for how we do democracy?