

**Research Question:** In what ways do the rituals and ceremonies of South Africa's parliament impact upon the inclusivity of the institution as a public sphere?

### Aims & Objectives

- To explore the role of ritual and ceremony in terms of 'participation'.
- To reflect on Habermas's procedural theory.

To assess the openness of the South African parliament.

### Method & Methodology

- Inductive
- Participant Observation
- Interviews: members of parliament, parliamentary staff, parliamentary officials, parliamentary observers, civil society groups.
- Archival Research

### Fieldwork

#### The Parliament of South Africa



State of the Nation Address preparations

#### Public Submissions as a Ritual



Water Affairs & Forestry committee

### Quotes from the field:

#### *Member of Parliament:*

"Parliament has to be an organ of people's power. We believe in theory that parliament is an organ of the people"

#### *Member of Parliament:*

"In South Africa (SONA) is very important. Even if it's just symbolism, and even if it's just for that hour it's important. That's why I think it's important that parliament is opened with a bit of a hoo-ha"

#### *Member of Staff:*

"SONA is really an incredible experience. We as ordinary citizens have just never been part of parliament, or understood what parliament is about. And all of a sudden you have this open celebration, the whole country is part of it and you can see what they're doing. You can see it and listen to it because it impacts your life"



