

# VU Research Portal

## The Power of Rituals

van den Ende, A.L.

2015

### **document version**

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

### **citation for published version (APA)**

van den Ende, A. L. (2015). *The Power of Rituals: A Study of Transition Rituals in the Life Cycle of Complex Construction Projects*. CPI – KONINKLIJKE WÖHRMANN.

### **General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

### **Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

### **E-mail address:**

[vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl](mailto:vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl)

# THE POWER OF RITUALS

A Study of Transition Rituals in the Life Cycle of  
Complex Construction Projects

This dissertation provides an in-depth understanding of the practice and meaning of transition rituals in the context of complex construction projects. Construction projects are characterized by their high cost and duration, immense scope, inherent complexity and uncertainty, high environmental and societal impact, and the difficult collaboration between public and private partners.

The ever-changing, non-linear, and often unpredictable process that typifies the life cycle of such projects is a main concern in organization and project management studies. Within this complex context, this research takes the ritualization of transitions in the project life cycle as the main research focus.

Specifically, it addresses rituals that mark important transitions and milestones in the project life cycle, such as signing contracts, (sub) project kick-offs, project phase launches, celebrating milestones, and (sub)project completions or deliveries.

Using an ethnographic, qualitative-interpretive approach, it was found that transition rituals are performed to attribute special significance to the construction process. Within their demarcated space and time, rituals tell stories and sketch visions about construction projects and their environment through aesthetic and poetic performance.

Rather than being purely symbolic and ceremonial, rituals are performed strategically for various purposes, such as enacting transitions in the project life cycle, embedding a project in its environment, rebalancing the disturbance caused by the construction process, and gaining public support, especially in urban settings.

THE POWER OF RITUALS - A Study of Transition Rituals in the Life Cycle of Complex Construction Projects Leonore van den Ende



Leonore van den Ende