



INVITATION FOR PHD DEFENSE

Aarhus, September 2012

Pain and Coping in the Religious Mind (Smerte, coping og bøn)

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The aim of the current thesis is to investigate a possible pain modulation from religious beliefs and practises and to quantify potential psychological and physiological mechanisms that might mediate the experience. The studies in this thesis are the first to explore the possible analgesic effect of prayer in an experimental setting and to use standardized psychological testing in the wild to study pain during a religious ritual. The project thus integrates methods from standardized psychological testing, clinical psychophysiology, advanced neuroimaging, neuropharmacology, and classic ethnography.

From a non-ideological and naturalistic perspective, the thesis presents empirical investigations of pain modulation due to prayer in the laboratory and during the Thaiphoosam ritual in Mauritius. The introduction serves as a guide to the three papers where the results of the four studies in this thesis are presented and interpreted in terms of evidence from cognitive pain modulation research. Moreover, the thesis assesses past research on pain modulation due to religious beliefs and practices and discusses relevant methodological perspectives.

The defense will take place:

Friday 14 September 2012

13.15-16.15

Aud. 2, Building 1441, Aarhus University, Taasingegade 3

The defense is public, will be in English and lasts approximately 3 hours.

ALL ARE WELCOME.

Opponents:

- **Ulrike Bingel**, Dept. of Neurology and Systems Neuroscience, University of Hamburg
- **Cristine Legare**, Dept. of Psychology, University of Texas at Austin
- **Jeppe Sinding Jensen**, Dept. of Culture and Society, AU (Chair)

Supervisors:

- **Armin W. Geertz**, Dept. of Culture and Society, AU (main supervisor)
- **Andreas Roepstorff**, CFIN / Dept. of Culture and Society, AU
- **Troels Staehelin Jensen**, Dept. of Clinical Medicine, Danish Pain Research Center, AUH

For more information about the defense or the PhD thesis, please contact:

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