



Dean Thomas Pallesen

### **Nomination letter regarding the PhD thesis by Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen.**

On behalf of the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences I hereby nominate Post-doctoral Fellow Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen for AUFF's Ph.D. award 2017. During her Ph.D Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen published three articles in international peer-reviewed journals and presented her research at seven conferences currently obtaining an h-index of 2 and 19 citations.

Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen holds a master's degree in psychology from Aarhus University, achieved in 2012 (GPA 9.0). Before studying psychology Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen worked for nine years organizing and designing public campaigns (e.g., anti-smoking). Her experience of gender-differentiated challenges in work-life balance sparked an interest in psychology.

While studying psychology Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen and her family moved to Qatar as expatriates for 2 years. With contacts in to both Scandinavia and Middle East Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen saw a unique opportunity to investigate potential differences in the interaction between culture and gender.

At Qatar University she was offered a position as research assistant under the head of Social Sciences, working on gender studies within the field of anthropology. She left Qatar with a recommendation for a Ph.D. stipend. From 2012 to 2015 Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen held a Ph.D. fellowship at the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Aarhus University.

During her Ph.D. fellowship Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen was a member of CON AMORE's conference committee planning an international conference. She was chair of the PhD candidates at the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences and represented them at the department forum. In 2013 she returned to Qatar University for data collection and in 2014 she was invited by a top researcher within the field of Neurobiology of Learning and Memory to spend 3 months as a visiting researcher at University of California Irvine.

After her defence Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen was hired as a Postdoctoral Fellow, at the work and organisational unit, Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences. Facilitated by Aarhus University's mentor scheme "Empower Talent" she entered an interdisciplinary collaboration with Dr. Helle Neergaard, Department of Management at AU. With a focus on gender, Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen seeks to use her knowledge of cognition across cultures as a foundation for new studies that will advance our understanding of diversity in management.

### **The PhD thesis**

Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen's PhD dissertation examines differences in autobiographical memory, goal conceptions, and life scripts between a Scandinavian and a Middle Eastern cul-

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ture and how these differences interact with gender. This research focus is original and timely. The dissertation consists of three articles (all published, or in press, in respected international, peer reviewed journals). One common thread in this series of articles is that gender differences are especially pronounced in the Middle Eastern sample, and that Middle Eastern men differ from both Middle Eastern women and Scandinavian men and women by being more reliant on cultural norms and religious values. This has implications for their perception of goals and goal values, their tolerance of personal unhappiness in the pursuit of culturally sanctioned goals and their internationalized “life script” – that is, their representation of significant life events and their timing. These findings have important theoretical implications in relation to understanding cultural differences and their effects on basic psychological phenomena, such as goal perceptions and planning. The findings also have important societal implications, by informing some of the challenges associated with immigration and migration.

Overall, the dissertation holds several novel contributions to the literature.

First, it has produced unique data on a rarely studied population, that is, a Middle Eastern population. Most studies on cultural differences in autobiographical memory focus on Western versus Asian populations, probably due to difficulties with accessing other Non-Western cultures. Through her contacts and collaboration with researchers at Qatar University, Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen was able to conduct independent data collections within Qatar with participation of both male and female students. This accomplishment bears witness to her open-minded attitude as a researcher, her excellent organizational skills and her deep respect for diversity, all important talents and attitudes in a rapidly changing world. As a result, her thesis provides the first study of cultural life scripts, and goal perceptions in a traditional Middle Eastern Muslim population.

Second, through the skilled data-analyses and thoughtful theoretical interpretations of the findings, Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen extended the study on autobiographical memory and related concepts to the area of cultural differences. She showed how some of the methodological developments she accomplished as part of her thesis can be used to attain a deeper understanding of profound cultural differences in our way of conceiving the past and future.

There is no doubt that Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen through these contributions and their timeliness has left an important mark on the field. In addition to her published articles, she has given several speeches at international conferences, in more occasions in the form of an invited symposia talk. She is an excellent speaker and teacher in addition to being a talented, creative and courageous young researcher. For these reasons, I warmly recommend Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen as a recipient of the AUFF's Ph.D. award 2017

Yours sincerely  
Peter Krøjgaard  
Professor, PhD,  
Head of the PhD program of Psychology

# Curriculum Vitae

## Christina Lundsgaard Ottsen

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Married, 2 children (ages 11 and 14)

## Research interests

During the years I lived in the Middle East and the US I encountered different cultural perspectives, especially on gender. It motivated me to explore cultural norms and gender beliefs, which became the foundation of my research interests. The purpose of my Ph.D. dissertation was to advance our understanding of cultural effects on cognition; specifically, how culture affects our memories of the past and our expectations for the future in societies with different views on gender roles. I recently narrowed my focus to diversity in management. My research aim is to facilitate sound decision-making and sustainable development in organisations through increased cultural awareness and collaboration across gender.

## Professional experience, employments and education

- 11.2015- Postdoctoral fellow, Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences
- 01.2016-12.2016 Diploma "Teachers Training Program" (Adjunktpædagogikum)
- 09.2012-02.2016 Ph.D. in psychology at the research unit CON AMORE, AU  
"Cultural diversity in mental time travel, Middle East versus Scandinavia"
- 09.2015-12.2015 Informations Media Communication Course, Ph.d. Cup
- 04.2012-09.2012 Research assistant – at CON AMORE, Aarhus University
- 09.2009-03.2012 Master in Psychology - Aarhus University, Denmark
- 09.2009-12.2012 Internship at the Human Resource Department of Mærsk Oil Qatar
- 09.2008-12.2009 Research assistant - Qatar University  
Project: Working women in the Middle East
- 09.2008-12.2009 Study of Anthropology - Qatar University
- 09.2005-06.2009 Bachelor in Psychology - Aarhus University, Denmark
- 02.1999-10.2004 AD assistant at OCC innovation - Aalborg, Denmark
- 02.1996-01.1999 Graphic Designer, Rimmer & Jensen Marketing

## Administration experience and membership of professional bodies

- 2013-2014 Chair of the PhD candidates at the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences
- 2013-2014 PhD Representative in the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences' "Institute Forum"
- 2012-2013 Member of CON AMOREs conference comity arranging  
"Social Perspectives on AM - memory & imagination" - Aarhus, Denmark

**Publications, h-index 2 and 19 citations (Harzing's Publish or Perish, 30.01.2017)**

Ottsen, C. L., Koppel, J., Johannessen, K.B. & Berntsen, D. (2016). The influence of Culture on Goal Perception: Qatar Versus Denmark. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 30, 1030–1041. doi:10.1002/acp.3297

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2015). Prescribed Journeys through Life: Cultural differences in Mental Time Travel between Middle Easterners and Scandinavians. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 37, 180-193. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2015.09.007

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2014). The cultural life script of Qatar and across cultures: Effects of gender and religion. *Memory*, 22(4), 390-407. doi:10.1080/09658211.2013.795598

Ottsen, C. L. (2014) Kollektive forventninger i Qatar: Det kulturelle livsscript. *Psykolog Nyt*, 68(6), 22

**Conference-presentations**

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2016). Perception of future goals. Poster session presented at CON AMORE Conference: Travelling in time , Aarhus, Danmark.

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2015). Mental Time Travel in Societies with Differential Gender Norms. Paper session presented at SARMA XI - the Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition. Conference, Victoria, BC, Canada

Ottsen, C. L., Johannessen K.B. & Berntsen, D. (2014). Culture, Gender and Locus of Control... What is your goal? Poster session presented at APS Annual Convention, San Francisco, USA

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2013). Cultural Life Script of Qatar: Effects of Gender and Religion. Paper session presented at CON AMORE conference Social Perspectives on Autobiographical Memory, Aarhus, Denmark

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2013). Cultural Life Script of Qatar and across cultures: Effects of Gender and Religion. Poster session presented at SARMA X - the Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition Conference, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2011). Cultural Life Script of Qatar - a study of the social roles in a Muslim society. Paper session presented at Icom5, International Conference on Memory, York, England

Ottsen, C. L., & Berntsen, D. (2011). Social Roles in a Muslim Society: visible in the Qatari cultural life script. Poster session presented at MINDLab AU Symposium in the Lake Auditoriums, Aarhus, Denmark

### International experience and interdisciplinary collaboration

- 05.2016- Project regarding female entrepreneurs with Dr. Helle Neergaard, Department of Management, AU & Dr. Sally Jones, University of Leeds, UK
- 05.2014-08.2014 Visiting researcher at University of California Irvine. Invited by Dr. Larry Cahill, Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory
- 04.2013-05.2013 Visiting researcher at Qatar University.  
Invited by Dr. Fadwa El Guindi, Head of Social Sciences
- 03.2008-07.2010 Expatriate in Qatar
- 08.1991-07.1992 High school in Pennsylvania, US

### Grants

- Augustinus fonden (15.000)
- Familien Hede Nielsens Fond (10.000)
- Oticon Fonden (10.500)
- Knud Højgaards Fond (8.500 DKK)
- Psykologisk Institut, Aarhus Univesitet (35.000 DKK)

### Teaching and dissemination

Type	Function	Participants
<b>Large scale lectures</b>	I conduct 3-4 solo lecturers pr. semester at bachelor and master level. Previously I have held lectures at Folkeuniversitetet. This spring I will teach CEOs and other leaders public management as part of the team on SDUs master FMOL	Approx. 200 students
<b>Small seminars</b>	Course responsible on an international seminar and a seminar in research method	Approx. 20 students each course
<b>TA</b>	I have been a teachers assistant in statistics and research methods	Approx. 35 students each course
<b>Supervision</b>	I have supervised four master theses and I am currently supervising four more. In addition I have supervised seminar reports	4 master theses 40 reports master level
<b>Qatar University</b>	TA (teachers assistant) at a seminar	approx. 20 students