



Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
Institut für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft
Prof. Dr. Thomas Bauer

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Münster, 04.01.07

Curriculum Vitae

Prof. Dr. Thomas Jürgen Bauer,
Born September 27, 1961 in Nürnberg

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Fellow, Institute for Advanced Study, Berlin, 2006-2007

- Research project "The Culture of Ambiguity": The tolerance of ambiguity that can be found in all areas of pre-modern Islamic culture spared Islam many of the crises of the Western world. Its gradual disappearance in the course of modernization is the cause of current conflicts between Islam and Western modernity.

Professor of Islamic and Arabic Studies, Münster University, 2000-present

- C4 Professor (full professor).
- Research on the history of mentalities and everyday life in the Mamluk period (13th to 16th century). My work calls into question the dogmatic view that Islamic culture declined from the 11th century onward, revealing this belief to be a construct of the colonial enterprise. I have reconstructed the burgeoning of Arabic literature in the Mamluk period and examined the intentions of Arabic authors of the late Ottoman period (19th century), juxtaposing these with reactions and interventions by representatives of the West.

- Researched the Arabic rhetorical tradition, one of the Arabs' greatest achievements in the field of linguistics and still of great relevance today.

Director of the Center of Religious Studies at the University of Muenster, 2002-2005

- Contributed to the inter-religious dialogue; worked to improve the integration of Muslims living in Germany; studied the perception and portrayal of the Orient in 19th-century German literature ("ghazal" seminar; Rückert, Platen, Daumer).

Associate Professor (Oberassistent), Erlangen University, 1997-2000

- Conducted research on the history of mentalities and culture with a special focus on both the relationship between the religious and secular spheres in Islam (which continues to be a hotly debated topic today) and themes such as death, foreignness, love and sexuality in Islamic society.

Research Associate (Wissenschaftlicher Assistent), Erlangen University, 1991-1997

- Completed postdoctoral thesis (habilitation): "Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der Abbasidenzeit: Eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ǧazal im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert" (Love and Love Poetry in the Abbasid Period: A Study of the Arabic Ghazal in the 9th and 10th Century with an Emphasis on Literary History and the Evolution of Mentalities). Delivered a habilitation lecture entitled "How Dogmatic is Islamic Law?" Was awarded the title "Dr. phil. habil" on February 24, 1997.
- Cultural studies were the primary focus of research. Examined the love poetry of the 9th/10th century guided by an interest in the history of mentalities. This poetry is highly unusual to modern readers not only because of the underlying aesthetics, but also because of its different conception of love, one that changed in the course of the 9th century. Uncovered parallels to European developments (e.g. the European "discovery of love" in the Late Middle Ages and the associated rise in individualism in the ensuing period) and showed that a different conception of gender roles clashed with both modern European thought patterns and codified Islamic norms. Employed approaches from sociology and gender studies.
- Engaged in a study of Islamic law, particularly legal theory (usūl al-fiqh).

Research Associate (Wissenschaftlicher Angestellter), Heidelberg University, 1990-1991

- Articles on forms of intertextuality in older Arabic literature and the social function of poetry.

EDUCATION

Doctoral studies, Erlangen University, 1987-1990

- Dissertation: "Altarabische Dichtkunst: Eine Untersuchung ihrer Struktur und Entwicklung am Beispiel der Onagerepisode" (Ancient Arabic Poetry: A Study of Its Structure and Development on the Basis of the Onager Episode). Defended dissertation on December 22, 1989 (summa cum laude).
- Research on ancient Arabic (pre- and early Islamic) poetry using the methodologies of philology and literary criticism.

Master's program, Erlangen University, 1980-1987

- Majored in Islamic studies, Semitic philology and German linguistics. Master's thesis: "Das Pflanzenbuch des Abū Ḥanīfa ad-Dīnawarī" (The Book of Plants by Abū Ḥanīfa ad-Dīnawarī).
- Researched the history of Arabic philology and the natural sciences; examined the transition from pre-Islamic culture, influenced by the Bedouins, to the more finely differentiated culture of Islamic scholars.

University Entrance Qualification (Abitur), Gymnasium Oberasbach, July 1980.