

PHILOSOPHY MEETS COGNITIVE SCIENCE



Stiftung
Mercator



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Research Group

Organization and contact: Prof. Dr. Markus Werning.

Website: www.rub.de/phil-lang.

Venue: Thursday, 08 July 2010, 16-18h, in room HMA 40.

All interested students, scientists, and scholars are cordially invited to the following talk of the research colloquium:

PD Dr. Andrea Bender

(U Freiburg & MPI Nijmegen)

The Semantic Field of Emotion Concepts in Tonga

In Tonga, a Polynesian kingdom in the Pacific, much emphasis is laid on proper conduct in the public and on maintaining social harmony. These values mark out a polarized field for emotions and thereby affect the way in which feelings are elicited, displayed, and controlled. The positive pole is marked by *'ofa*, both a core value and a highly valued emotion that can be glossed as "love, concern, or generosity". Emotions that stir conflicts mark the opposite pole. While the majority of emotions are regarded either as socially integrative and hence positive (like gratefulness) or as disruptive and hence negative (like anger or envy), a small, yet interesting set of emotions holds ambiguous positions. This talk will focus on the cognitive and social dimensions for their cultural evaluation, and on some implications for daily life.

Andrea Bender received her doctorate in cultural anthropology from the University of Freiburg and completed her habilitation in psychology, with a fellowship in the Margarete-von-Wrangell-Habilitationsprogramm, Baden-Württemberg (2003-2008). Currently, she holds a Heisenberg fellowship of the DFG. Her research interests focus on how culture and language interact with cognition, including cognitive concepts of causality, space and time, ethnomathematics and numerical cognition, grammatical categories, theory of mind, social cognition, self concepts and emotion. Since 1997, she has carried out repeated field work in the Pacific, particularly in Tonga, and has participated in cross-cultural research in five other countries.