

## FS 2013: Theory and Method Workshop

The Institute of Advanced Study in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (IASH), University of Bern, facilitates various types of courses for doctoral and postdoctoral students that are conceptualised and organised by members of its Graduate School, alone or in collaboration with other institutes in Bern or doctoral programmes at other Swiss universities. (Further information can be found on the IASH website: [www.iash.unibe.ch](http://www.iash.unibe.ch).)

### Understanding Beyond the Linguistic Dogma – Cognitive Metaphors and Embodiment as Non-Propositional Knowledge?

*Chair:* Prof. Dr. Markus Wild (Philosophy), University of Fribourg (CH)

*Organisers:* Andreas Heise, University of Lucerne, and Tanja Klankert, University of Bern

*Dates:* 31 May and 1 June 2013, Evening Lecture by Dr Neil Gascoigne on 30 May

*Location:* University of Bern, UniS, Schanzeneckstrasse 1, Room A 301

#### DESCRIPTION

The notion of understanding is pivotal in the humanities and the social sciences. But what does it mean to understand something? The logical grammar of “understanding” seems to suggest that we understand something as something, i.e. as falling under a certain concept. We understand a sentence like “this is red” if we are able to assign it a place in our conceptual framework. This amounts to acknowledging certain consequences that follow from this sentence being true such as “this is coloured”, “this has the same colour as blood” and “this is not green”. In other words, it looks like a necessary condition of understanding that we can make explicit pertinent bits of knowledge.

Knowledge, in turn, is usually held to be about propositions. These are commonly conceived as structured, abstract and truth-apt theoretical entities which form the content of what we believe and, given they are true, know. If asked, e.g., which university is Switzerland’s oldest, we would respond (in case we know the answer and are willing to provide it): “The University of Basel is Switzerland’s oldest university.” That *the University of Basel is Switzerland’s oldest university* is the content of what we know and hence the proposition. Now, insofar as propositions are patterned on sentences as they occur in language, one may call this wide-spread view of understanding and knowledge the “linguistic dogma”.

Are there other forms of understanding that follow a different logic? Michael Polanyi, e.g., held the view that “we know more than we can tell”. What he terms tacit knowing is allegedly at work in somatic processes and technical skills as well as in artistic and academic abilities. This seems to match with current research on embodiment according to which we convey abstract ideas via gestures and so-called conceptual metaphors that reflect basic bodily experiences. While these modes of expression are essential to cognition and communication, as well as to aesthetic appreciation, they purportedly resist reduction to linguistic meaning.

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In a two-day interdisciplinary workshop, we will explore some of these forms of assumed non- or pre-propositional knowledge. Apart from Polanyi, our focus will be on such programmatic approaches as Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory as well as Shusterman's somaesthetics. Thereby, we will be pursuing the following questions:

- Are there such forms of pre-propositional knowledge and, if so, what role do they play in cognition, communication, abstraction or aesthetic experience?
- What potential do the approaches mentioned above bear, e.g., for studies in aesthetics?
- To what extent do these phenomena challenge traditional views in epistemology and the philosophy of language, i.e. the linguistic dogma?

While the first part of the workshop concerns foundational theoretical questions, we will turn to specific examples and case studies in the second part.

### Recommended Literature

- Johnson, Mark (2007): "Meaning is more than words and deeper than concepts." In: *Ibid.*: The meaning of the body. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1-16.
- Johnson, Mark; Tim Rohrer (2007): "We are lived creatures: Embodiment, American Pragmatism and the cognitive organism." In: Tom Ziemke; Jordan Zlatev; Roslyn M. Frank (eds.): *Body, language and mind. Vol. 1: Embodiment.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 17-54.
- Polanyi, Michael (2009 [1966]): "Tacit knowing." In: *Ibid.*: The tacit dimension. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1-26.
- Shusterman, Richard (2006): "Thinking through the body, educating for the humanities: A plea for somaesthetics." In: *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 40(1), 1-21.

### Short biography of Markus Wild

Markus Wild is Professor for Philosophy at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. He specializes in early modern philosophy and contemporary philosophy of mind. Currently, he is editing a volume on embodied cognition for Suhrkamp (with Rebekka Hufendiek and Joerg Fingerhut).

## PROGRAMME

Thursday, May 30, 18.15–19.45 (UniS / Schanzeneckstrasse 1 / A 301)

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**Opening-Talk by Neil Gascoigne (London):** “Tacit Knowledge; or: Do we Know more than we can Tell?”  
Response by Claus Beisbart (Bern)

Friday, May 31, 9.15–17.45 (UniS / Schanzeneckstrasse 1 / A 301)

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### 9.15 – 11.15 Tacit Knowing

- Markus Wild, Andreas Heise, Tanja Klankert: Welcome! (15 min)
- Everybody: Round of introductions (15 min)
- Markus Wild: Comment on Gascoigne & Thornton (20 min)
- Response (Neil Gascoigne) & Open Discussion (70 min)

#### Texts

- Michael Polanyi: “Tacit Knowing” (In: Ibid.: The tacit dimension. Chicago 2009)
- Neil Gascoigne & Tim Thornton: Introduction & Chapter 1 (at least up to p. 25). (In: Ibid. (eds.): Tacit Knowledge. London 2013)

11.15 – 11.45 BREAK

### 11.45 – 12.45 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (40 min)

- Thomas Jacobi (Fribourg/Philosophy): “Self and the Doxopath”

12.45 – 14.15 LUNCH (Casa d’Italia)

### 14.15 – 16.15 Metaphor, Understanding, Embodiment

- Markus Wild: Basic terminology and varieties of meaning (25 min)
- Open discussion (80)
- Pulling some strings together (15 min)

#### Texts

- Mark Johnson: “Meaning is more than words” (2007)
- Mark Johnson & Tim Rohrer: “We are live creatures” (2007)
- John Searle: “Metaphor” (1979)
- Elisabeth Camp: “Metaphor in the mind” (2006)

16.15 – 16.45 BREAK

### 16.45 – 17.45 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (40 min)

- Thomas Kobel (Bern/Linguistics): Conceptual metaphor and cognitive grammar

**Text:** Caspar de Groot: “The Absentive” In: Östen Dahl (ed.): Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe. Berlin/New York 2000.

DINNER

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**09.10 – 10.00 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- Lisa Muszynski (Helsinki/History): “Why Embodiment is Confusing to Historiographers: Two Intertwined Biases”

**Text:** Kalle Pihlainen: “Escaping the confines of History: Keith Jenkins” In: Rethinking History 17/1 (2013).

**10.00 – 10.50 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- Bosco Bae (Durham/Theology and Religions): “Exploring Cognitive Dissonance between Embodiment and Tacit Knowledge; expectation and experience in religion, sexuality and death”

**Text:** Jon P. Mitchell, Hildi J. Mitchell: “For Belief: Embodiment and Immanence in Catholicism and Mormonism” In: Social Analysis 52 (2008).

10.50 – 11.20 BREAK

**11.20 – 12.10 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- Eva Sabine Wagner (Osnabrück/Romance studies): “The Tacit Dimension of Narrativity”

**Text:** H. Porter Abbott: “Narrativity” In: Peter Hühn et al. (eds.): The Living Handbook of Narratology. Hamburg [Created 13 Aug. 2011, revised 5 May 2013] <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narrativity>

**12.10 – 13.00 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- 15.15 Sarah King (Bern/Linguistics): “Die Akkommodation von Metaphern im psychotherapeutischen Gespräch”

**Text:** Rudolf Schmitt: “Systematische Metaphernanalyse als qualitative sozialwissenschaftliche Forschungsmethode” In: Metaphorik 21 (2011).

13.00 – 14.30 LUNCH

**14.30 – 15.20 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- Kristina Soldati (Bern/Theater studies), “Semiotics without Denotation. An Illustration on the Dance Trio A of Yvonne Rainer”

**Text:** Nelson Goodman: *Languages of Art*. Indianapolis 1976 [extracts].

**15.20 – 16.10 Presentation (20 min) & discussion (30 min)**

- Soyoung Park (London/Visual Cultures): “Suspended Subjectivity: non-intentionality in artistic creation”

**Text:** Zhu, Rui: “Lao-zi, Zhuang-zi and the aesthetic judgement” In: Asian Philosophy, 12 (2002).

16.10 – 16.30 BREAK

**16.30 – 17.30 Final discussion**