

## **SOFIA Lunch Talk**

**Date:** February 4, 2008

**Speaker:** Joerg Wagner (Univ of Stuttgart)

**Title:** "The Origin of the Modern Gyroscope: Bohnenberger's Machine and the Scientific Work of its Inventor"

### **Abstract:**

J.G.F. Bohnenberger (1765-1831) was a professor for mathematics, physics, and astronomy at the University of Tuebingen, Germany, as well as the scientific head of the Wuerttemberg land surveying project. Apart from his work on the fundamental principles of geodesy, he also occupied himself with the design of physical instruments.

"Bohnenberger's Machine" is regarded as the origin of modern gyroscopes: A rotating sphere with a cardanic suspension. However, there are hardly any sources on the engineering and historical background of that apparatus. It is the aim of the lecture to give some new information about this instrument and to give a survey of the life and of the scientific work of J.G.F. Bohnenberger