

Comparatist Mind for a Sustainable World

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Summary of keynote speech

By examining the concept “cultural diversity” from a new perspective, this presentation intends to encourage each researcher to deepen his or her understanding of an indigenous culture that the researcher shares with other community members. Because such an understanding is promoted against the backdrop of other cultures, the concept “cultural diversity” will stimulate a comparative study of relationships between his or her culture and others.

This concept should be understood in a way similar to how the concept “biodiversity” is understood in ecology. In ecology, the relationships between plants, animals, people and their environment, and the balances between these relationships, are focused on. It is implicitly supposed that extinction of any species of plant or animal will be to the detriment of human life eventually. In the same way, the concept “cultural diversity” signifies that extinction of any culture will be to the detriment of human life.

“Cultural diversity” is just like a candle flickering in the wind. This is illustrated by the following conversation between two researchers from different cultures: “What is your major?” “My major is *.” It is possible to say any kind of learning at the asterisk, for example, English literature, Ancient Greek thought, anthropology, sociology of science, plasma spectroscopy or molecular biology. It should be noticed that in principle every kind of learning stems from Greco-Roman civilization.

The presentation will propose the way the comparatist mind can reconcile “what all researchers regard as learning” with so called indigenous cultures, breeding grounds where learning is respectively fostered.