

Bio-Cultural Diversity and Hegemonic Power: The Role of the Humanities in Navigating Knowledge



A day of encounters, co-organized by the
Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture
and Counterpoint: Navigating Knowledge

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Discussions about sustainability often focus on questions of health, technology, and economic value. Ecological diversity plays an important role in these discussions as well. However, questions of bio-cultural diversity are still underrepresented in political and public debates. This event, co-organized by the Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG) and Counterpoint: Navigating Knowledge, provides a platform for reflection on what “bio-cultural diversity” means in the context of the humanities. More specifically, the event will explore the diversity of languages as representations of cultural interaction, and implications of the rapid loss of languages around the globe. Losing access to a diversity of languages means losing entire worlds. Here, “language” not only refers to spoken human languages, but also to languages and signs communicated through the arts. It also includes interspecies communication, as addressed in biosemiotics and other approaches that explore the languages of the more-than-human world. By critically engaging the hegemonic power of dominant language cultures, and by strengthening the crucial role of the humanities in these discussions, we want to find new ways of protecting bio-cultural diversity for future generations.

This event is envisioned as a true encounter of perspectives and knowledge systems. It opens with a presentation of Dorine van Meel’s (Amsterdam/Berlin) video work *Beyond the Nation State I want to Dream* (see image above), followed by a conversation with the artist. Subsequently, the viewpoints of artists, activists, translators of various kinds, politicians, and academics will come together in an attempt to create new ideas and understandings of bio-cultural diversity. What is more, pupils and students will participate in the conversation with their own ideas and experiences. In addition to presentations and input from various perspectives, the event will comprise of workshops organized around themes chosen by the participants in a bottom-up procedure.

For more information and program details please consult the following websites:
ICOG: www.rug.nl/research/icog | Counterpoint: www.counterpointknowledge.org



Groningen Research Institute
for the Study of Culture