

ECO-LITERATURE CONFERENCE ADDRESSES THE IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTERS

The 3rd Tamkang International Conference on Ecological Discourse, organized by the English Department was held on May 27th and 28 on Tamsui campus. It was attended by over 50 scholars and researchers from more than 10 countries, such as the UK, US, Japan, Germany and Australia.

The organizer, the English Department, is proud of this event as Tamkang is the pioneer in promoting conferences that specifically address ecology and literature in Taiwan. This year was the third one, which focused on “natural disasters”, and men’s role in them. Participants of the conference discussed this particular connection and urged the world to take on the responsibility of fixing our environment.

If we are not held accountable to what we do to nature, Professor Lin Yao-fu, the former Dean of the College of Foreign Languages and Literatures, who is also one of the organizing committee members, pointed out that we would suffer from cultural crises as well. In fact, he does not see the distinction between natural crises and cultural ones as a lot of the former problems are the consequences of the latter. He believes that if we want to change our environment, such as reducing landslide and flooding, we need to change our culture, that is, our attitude in relating to nature. In this definition of culture, apart from humanity, policy-making and economic behaviors are also important constituents, which require careful scrutiny. Hence, this conference, according to him, provides an ideal venue for these issues to be examined together so that their interconnectiveness can be transpired, and workable solutions will be able to emerge from such a broad, interdisciplinary discussion. (~ Ying-hsueh Hu)

