

Uncertainty in the Anthropocene: Possibilities for a New Humanism

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This panel seeks to address the question of (post)humanism in contemporary anthropology. Increasingly, anthropologists have sought to capture an emerging body of new theoretical approaches under a 'post-humanist' rubric. These recent theoretical developments are but the latest in a decades-long anthropological critique of modernist dualisms, particularly the nature/culture distinction. Yet, there remains much unease with this notion. Humanism was never merely a conceptual or technical project. It was also always a political exercise that sought to protect the commonality of all human lives – a common humanity. The proposition here is that we should not reject humanism's central political imperative. Rather, the real challenge is to reconceptualise a new kind of humanism around this core in a way that moves beyond modernity's conceits and certainties, and embraces new understandings of our emergent, relational, open-ended, uncertain and necessarily incomplete becoming *in* and *with* the world; as a central tenet of what it is to be human.