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"Multispecies, More-Than-Human, Nonhuman, Other-Than-Human"

Price, Catherine, and Sophie Chao

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Life on Earth is sustained by interconnected more-than-human entanglements. In the era of the Anthropocene, many of these webs are unravelling due to climate change, biodiversity loss, toxicity and pollution, natural resource extraction, and water and soil depletion. In order to help address these challenges, The Anthropocene and More-Than-Human Writing Workshop Series, funded by the British Academy, brought together early career researchers from different disciplines to share ideas and knowledges. As part of The Anthropocene and More-Than-Human World Writing Workshop Series, Sophie Chao, presented her collaborative research project, The Promise of Multispecies Justice. Following this presentation, Catherine Price and Sophie Chao took the opportunity to discuss the terms multispecies, non-human, and more-than-human, amongst others. These terms are increasingly appearing in interdisciplinary scholarship in the space of multispecies studies, posthumanism, the environmental humanities and others. The epistemological assumptions and ethical stakes involved in using these terms are also considered. The conversation illustrates that in trying to define terms such as multispecies or the more-than-human, complexities are not explained away. Instead, these terms reveal how incredibly—and generatively—messy beyond-human worlds really are. The terms discussed are also fundamental to understanding and addressing the Anthropocene as an epoch of planetary unmaking. (Abstract)

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