Senseless Distributions

Posthumanist Antidotes to the Mass Hermit

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ABSTRACT

This essay aims at showing how the "mass hermit", as defined by Günther Anders, is the logical point of arrival of that philosophical process which has interpreted human subjectivity as a closed system, intended as the sum of two mechanically overlapped parts: a biological-natural one and a psychological-intellectual one. This figure is counterposed with a subject who is "always already somewhere else, trapped in a senseless distribution", as defined by Jean Baudrillard. A subject who is intended as a "living circuit" (cf. Schelling), a multi-identity that – like with dissipative structures – is regulated by the dialectical relationship between order and chaos. This essay aims at comparing these two human figures, showing how the philosophical fruitfulness of the second figure can be ascribed to its ontological hybridization with what is not human, beyond any unproductive anthropocentric conception of humanity.

Keywords: anthropocentrism, mass hermit, senseless distribution, living circuit, dissipative structure, rhizome, surpass-rebuild, technology, dualism, hybridizations.

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1. SURPASS-REBUILD. FOUNDATIONS OF POSTHUMANIST THOUGHT

Whenever we try to determine a clear genesis of the concept of "posthuman" – with or without a hyphen – we cannot help but consider as a starting point two basic ideas: the surpassing of humanism and the corresponding rebuilding of the self (Hassan 1977). *Surpass* and *rebuild*: the acts of overstepping and going beyond, recalled by the first of the two verbs, imply the necessity of revising some conceptual parameters, those of modern humanism, that were given for granted throughout the development of western culture, and commonly – and uncritically – considered as belonging to our tradition, therefore intangible and unquestionable. In other words, there seems to be no reason to question the typical dualistic and rationalistic way of reading reality as it has developed throughout the centuries according to

humanistic precepts, regardless of all different philosophical schools that have emerged one after another. The foundation of this way of reading is the idea according to which explaining reality implies the simultaneous presence of two distinct principles or elements, the oppositional character of which hides any possible pretension of complementarity, from which follows a praise of separation, isolation and distinction from an arbitrary perspective that ultimately aims at favouring the human privilege over all that is not human.

As Hans Jonas points out, those very unilateral philosophical schools – materialism and idealism –, as they try to resolve dualism inside a particular form of monism, namely the one that stems from the distinction between substance and function in materialism and between consciousness and appearance in idealism, cannot in themselves elude the dualistic shadow. The error of both is *distinguishing* a first level form a second level of reality: to concentrate all their attention on substance or on consciousness is indeed a strategy that results in a sort of reductionism which, as it does not understand the complex and hybridizing character of reality, remains stuck on the separation that is typical to all kind of dualism and on which humanism has built its empire (Jonas 1966).

Founding the act of "surpassing" on this awareness means that we cannot avoid the simultaneous act of "rebuilding". Indeed, trying to surpass a current of thought implies the lucid ability to rebuild it immediately, in an unprecedented form, from the ruins of what has been surpassed. And this is exactly the first aim of any posthumanist perspective, the inherent value of which depends on the ability to even out the *pars destruens* with a particularly convincing *pars costruens*.

This essay wants to follow two parallel theoretical paths, which keep into focus the double act of surpassing-rebuilding that connotes every genuine perspective internal to a philosophy of posthumanism. Along the first path we will try to highlight how the deepest degeneration of a dualistic interpretation of the man-world relationship must be the *mass hermit* as described by Günther Anders and related to the development – through the XX century – of mass media. Along the second path, parallel to the first, we will show a possible alternative to the mass hermit, and develop an image of man that, identified by the features of a "living circuit" (Schelling 1810), of a "dissipative structure" (Prigogine and Stengers 1978) and of a "rhizome" (Deleuze and Guattari 1980), lives with the awareness that his relationship with the non-human is permanently unstable, constantly redefined by hybridizations, contaminations and exchanges that attest how the individual, intended as pure and strong identity, does not exist but in the shifting form of someone "trapped in a senseless distribution" (Baudrillard 1993).

2. MAN AS MASS HERMIT: TECHNOLOGICAL DEGENERATIONS
   OF ANTHROPOCENTRISM

In 1956, when the first volume of *The Outdatedness of Human Beings* is published, Günther Anders describes – with his typically disenchanted and sarcastic style – the harmful consequences on the relationships between man and world of the widespread diffusion of radio and television in the homes of Western people. These considerations develop in a historical period when the man-world relationship is strongly marked by a process of mechanization of human activities, which harbours the hope of ultimately bringing to a solid perfection our biological flaws through means offered by the machines. These are the years when studies on cybernetics multiply, so studies on the idea according to which there is a similarity between the behaviour of living beings and that of communication machines, as showed above all in Norbert Wiener's book *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1950).

In this book Wiener engages to show, on the one hand, the possibilities offered by machines in fields considered exclusive domain of human activities and, on the other hand, how the deciphering of messages and means of communication between man and machine can result in an improvement for our existence. Wiener aims at optimising the resources, and at doing so by hybrid assemblies of technological and biological elements. Particularly, he dwells on the – apparently commonplace – distinction between the figurine dancing in a carillon and animals *tout court*. As we all know, a carillon is nothing but a model arranged for automatically causing the figurines in it to move. It does imply a message, but such message is translated into a repetitive and unidirectional command, that causes just the movement going from the carillon to the figurines. There is no influence from past to future actions; each movement and communication is limited to the univocal and repeated relationship between the machinery of the carillon and the figurines, completely ignoring the presence of a world external to such relationship. In other words, the dancing figurines in the carillon are *closed systems* – isolated, catatonic and alienated – totally dependent on the founding mechanical laws of the carillon, which are subjected to no other influence and produce, in their turn, no effects external to themselves. By contrast, animals find themselves inside a complex web of messages and communications, through which they articulate their relationship with the world, so that the constant interaction between internal and external determines significant and mutual influences and changes. I draw a cat's attention and he stares at me: this means I have sent a message to the cat, and he receives it with its specific sensory organs, assimilates it and then

reacts, in his turn, by a given act which will cause unpredictable effects on me. The cat is hungry and meows: the cat shows a specific need, so sends me a message that I receive with my own sensory organs, I elaborate, and then I react, in turn, with a specific act. From these obvious observations, Wiener derives that modern machines, far from taking the carillon as a model, must be built keeping in mind the relationship between man and cat: namely they must be provided with sensory organs like with animals, organs that can receive external messages so as to generate a relationship between input and output as with animals. For Wiener, building modern machines with sensory organs similar to those of animals is an effect of being aware of how degrading it is to segregate man in a factory and force him to carry out merely mechanical activities, which employ less than one millionth of his cerebral faculties. Consequently, having at our disposal machines with features comparable to ours would allow to free man from his robotised working condition, leaving mechanical work to the machines, and to exploit the wide abilities of the human brain, that have been so far hindered by societies unable of taking full advantage. In other words, in *The Human Use of Human Beings* we find the intention of having the endless potential of the mind and brain interact with physical and bodily pleasures inside the human beings, an interaction that is usually prevented by working activities where the mechanical repetitiveness of actions clouds any possible spark of creativity (Wiener 1950).

In Wiener's intentions we can trace the roots of the way in which we intend technology nowadays, that Nikolas Rose effectively sums up with these words:

> Technology, here, refers to any assembly structured by a practical rationality governed by a more or less conscious goal. Human technologies are hybrid assemblages of knowledges, instruments, persons, systems of judgment, buildings and spaces, underpinned at the programmatic level by certain presuppositions and objectives about human beings. (1998, 26)

In opposition to Wiener's considerations, integrated with Rose's definition of technology, Günther Anders maintains that, behind the intention of generally improving the human condition, the most important developments in the mechanical and technological field – such as the universal diffusion of mass media – secretly aim at reducing man to a dancing figurine inside a carillon, exploiting the idea of technology as "any assembly structured by a practical rationality governed by a more or less conscious goal". Both Wiener and Anders build their theories from the role robots start to play in the life of XX century human beings: yet, while Wiener refers to the first definition of robot, indicating a "machine that emulates

the movements of animated bodies" so as to provide a valuable help to human activities, Anders focuses on the second definition of robot, indicating a "person devoid of a will and performing gestures and actions automatically". In other words, the theoretical difference between the two thinkers is based on the semantic opposition in the term "robot", that can refer both to a machine that rises to the level of man, so man retains a qualitative superiority on the machine (Wiener 1950), and to man lowering himself to the level of a machine devoid of consciousness, so that the machine becomes superior to man (Anders 1956). We must now see why Anders, from his point of view concerning mass media, cannot accept Wiener's perspective and consequently the first definition given to the word "robot".

First of all, according to Anders, the new media have changed the established meaning of "mass": this concept, as it retains the idea of a product of a process through which the individual is depersonalized in a uniform collectivity, with the spread of television no longer indicates a group of undifferentiated individuals gathering in a single place where they can develop emotional drives in compliance with the arbitrary demands of an external subject. It now indicates that people have been divided in the highest possible number of buyers: not the possibility that everyone consumes the same thing, but that everyone, driven by the same need, buys the same thing (Anders 1956, 100).

According to Anders, from this division created by means of communication a particular model of man is born, the "mass hermit" (Anders 1956, 102). With this expression he wants to define the millions of human specimens who, separated from each other yet all alike, sit like hermits inside their homes, not because they want to renounce the world, but rather because they don't want to miss a second of a world totally encapsulated in its own audiovisual reproduction (Anders 1956, 101-2).

Indeed, the mass hermit is nothing but the final, technological outcome of that philosophical process that gives a dualist and anthropocentric interpretation to the man-world relationship, namely starting:

• from a complete identification of *man* with the structures of his consciousness, intended inside an antithetical bond with what has no consciousness in itself: namely, and broadly speaking, corporeality. In this way, man – considering himself as the only living being endowed with consciousness – can convince himself to be an exception in the universe;

• from a radical reduction of the *world* to a representation that is subjectively produced by consciousness itself, so that it is impossible to conceive an objective reality independent from the gnoseological and epistemological instruments of the human individual.

Indeed, according to Anders, mass media determine the whole transposition of the world from the outside to the inside, so that it finds its more congenial seat in the individual's own room, in the form of an image to be consumed, of mere *eidos*, thus achieving on a practical level that conversion of the cosmos into a possessive, to which every form of philosophical idealism has aspired. The difference that is thus created between outside and inside, together with the attribution of a greater social relevance to the reproduced form over the original, causes the world, in the form of an image or a *ghost* as it is half-present and half-absent, to become *my own* representation or the outcome of *my* act of posing it, as it is the world itself that splits in two and, in its new imaginary and virtual form, meets me and my needs.

The world that is represented in images and sounds from TV and radio, as it becomes *my* world, *meets me and my needs*: this sentence allows us to understand with precision the hermeneutical gap from the frame of interpretation inside which the gnoseological theories of philosophical idealism have developed. The concept of world that Anders describes in relation to the rise of mass media is no longer – for example – that object of rational cosmology, an unconditioned unity of all external phenomena, of which Kant said it could be thought but not known, according to an idea of knowledge that was completely unbalanced in favour of the conscious phenomenal individual. It is still a representation, unrelated to any form of objectivity that can transcend my peculiar way of interpreting it, but a representation that is *built* first and foremost *outside of me* and *for me*, according to that "practical rationality governed by a more or less conscious goal" which – according to Rose – organizes the set of technologies (Rose 1998): namely, the world represented through images and sounds by the television and radio comes to meet me and my needs in the sense that it comes with a "home delivery", just like with gas and electricity (Anders 1956, 110).

This is a key moment, as it reveals a change of no small importance: I am no longer the active protagonist in representing the de-objectified world, as an individual provided with consciousness, but the role is taken by the technological device in itself, that turns me into a passive user who *is given*, from the outside, a world already made into representations in order to satisfy the more-or-less conscious aim that rules the practical reason. Namely, "real" events are chosen, chemically purified and prepared for us as "reality" or a substitute of the same. Since I dispose of this, as soon as it's given to me from the outside, in the seclusion of my home, just as in all the homes of the other mass hermits like me, it generates in me the illusion to have a freedom of individual choice that actually hides the dissembled imposition of a unified lifestyle, inside of which actions, opinions and feel-

ings for the whole humankind are centrifuged. Indeed, television and radio turn all citizens into *passive spectators*, and hand them over to programmes that are all alike through the different stations and channels (Horkheimer and Adorno 1969), conveying at will individual experiences and creating a ready-made reading of reality.

This is precisely the "familiarisation of the world" (*Verbiederung der Welt*, Anders 1956, 117), that is to say the process that makes people, things, events and situations feel familiar, even if they have nothing to do with our existence. Three-dimensional cinema, hat was not invented for the sake of technical improvement nor to make the role of spectators more captivating, but rather for the desire to give maximum sensitive and spatial credibility to the suppression of the distance between what is given and those who are given; the familiarity between the spectator and the characters of tv fictions tailored by the screenwriters; the deliberate affectation that female TV presenters have to adopt; and the phantasmagoria of scenes inside of which everyday events are projected: all those are cunning forms of familiarisation that hide the intention to manipulate the lives of the citizens. Ultimately, the alleged freedom of choice that should be guaranteed by mass media is nothing but a way to turn man into an outcome of mass production, where difference is seen as negligence, as an error in the weaving of the single specimen, as a consequence of non-predisposition, vagueness or strains in the manufacture product that is man (Anders 1984). The mass hermit is involved in a world that is reproduced in images and sounds, that "is given" from the outside, so that he is nothing but an "undetermined article", the automatic figurine – though in flesh and blood! – dancing on the carillon that Wiener speaks about, as he finds himself involved in an autistic and alienated relationship with a fictitious world, depending from a mechanism where both the influences from and the effects on the outside are missing. Just when we have closed the door behind us, the "outside" becomes visible; just when we have become windowless monads the universe is reflected for us; just when we have given our soul and body to the ivory tower, so that we sit inside instead of standing on it, just then the world is due to us, and touches us (Anders 1956, 110).

The alienated and solipsistic relationship between the mass hermit and the world reproduced in images and sounds through television and radio brings to the fore a series of aspects that show how his gradual *automation* implies an absolute identification of mechanisation and control (Centini 1999). Firstly, if things are arranged so that the world comes to me and not vice-versa, then I am no longer "in the world", but I am just its passive consumer – the undetermined article or windowless monad mentioned above. Secondly, as the world comes to meet me and my needs, but only

in the form of audiovisual representation, it is a ghost-world and not a real world. Thirdly, if the world communicates with me but I cannot communicate with it, I am condemned to be debarred, and so subjugated. Fourthly, if an event happening in a determined place can be transmitted and caused to appear in any other place in the form of "broadcasting", it is turned into a movable good, even into an ubiquitous good and loses its *principium individuationis* that comes from a clear placement in space. Fiftly, if the world is a movable good, that looks homologated and appears in a virtual way in countless specimens, it becomes a sort of serial product, turned into a merchandise in the moment it is supplied. Finally, if the experience of the world is turned into the experience of a serial product, it means that indeed a world does not exist anymore and all our attempts at relating to it turn into fiction (Anders 1956, 111-2). In order to support this consideration with an example, Anders mentions a tale where an evil fairy heals a blind man. Yet this healing does not consist in taking away the blind man's cataract, but rather in a supplement of blindness: the evil fairy makes him unaware of the existence of his own blindness, makes him forget reality as it is, sending him dreams that endlessly follow one another (Anders 1956, 125).

3. "Trapped in a senseless distribution":
   man as living circuit, dissipative structure and rhizome

Apart from Anders' philosophical and sociological reading of the changes brought by mass media in Western society, certainly provided with an excessive pessimism, we want to highlight how the human figure of the mass hermit, as it is outlined by the German philosopher on the basis of the second meaning of robot, cannot but represent the technological degeneration of that reductionist and anthropocentric process to which, through the centuries, Western culture has subjected the relationship man-world.

The narcissistic belief to be "special" among the living beings, and so to have a particular privilege as the only being presumably endowed with reason and consciousness, gradually encourages the individual to become an undetermined article or a windowless monad, at the mercy of a ghost-world serially reproduced, the representations of which are "virtual", tailored by the inner workings of mass media in order to achieve a rigid social control. This is to say that the mass hermit is for the ghost-world what the dancing figurines on the carillon are for the machinery that governs them. This shows how the gap between man and the world, brought about by

the anthropocentric conception of reality and leading to a depreciation of reality, to a cultural demonisation of all that is not consciousness and subjectivity, and to the sovereign power of representations, can turn against man himself. Indeed, from a dominant subject of a world reduced to a mere object and instrument of his activity, he becomes in turn the object and instrument of a world that has been re-built in his own likeness to the extent that it takes control over him.

If we want to take the relationship between man and world away from the technologically distorted reality where the mass hermit builds his existence, we need to follow the double process of surpassing humanism and rebuilding the self, starting from which the posthumanist theories of our days have developed.

In order to achieve this, particularly useful are the words of Jean Baudrillard, in his book *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, when he connects the typical Western difficulty in considering death as an integral part of life to a strict and erroneous rationalistic concept of subjectivity. Whether the cultural tradition of Western humanism likes it or not, the individual never holds a fixed position inside a world that is simply represented, but he is rather constantly "trapped in a senseless distribution" in the folds of an unobjectifiable world, that endlessly influences and changes him. "In reality – Baudrillard writes – the subject is never there: like the face, the hands and the hair, and even before no doubt, it is always already somewhere else, trapped in a senseless distribution, an endless cycle impelled by death" (Baudrillard [1976] 1993, 159). The subject, that is never fixed and simply counterposed to an external object, and that is "always already somewhere else, trapped in a senseless distribution", represents a way of relating to the world founded on mutual exchange, on hybridization, on contamination of elements that are never alike and fully corresponding.

Man trapped in a senseless distribution is not a closed system or an automatic being, that is to say a self-referring subject, devoted to the cult of the pure and unstained, and obsessed with *cleansing*, that is to say taking a diverging way from what is empirical and applied, a direction projected far from what is telluric and transcends experience, from what is incarnate and perceivable (Marchesini 2002). This cleansing operation, based on *fixism*, namely on the idea that it is possible to give a definition of man that does not change with time, and on *essentialism*, namely on the idea according to which there are some traits in man that are exactly essential, that can identify and set him apart from other entities (Longo 2015), is at the base of the atrophied relationship between man and world that serves as a background to the development of the mass hermit. The senselessly distributed man as defined by Baudrillard is rather one who has the three basic features

of Western anti-anthropocentric and anti-dualistic culture, that are funda-
mental in order to surpass humanism and at the same time rebuild the self,
keeping the distance from a conception of man as an undetermined article.
These features, strictly bound to each other, are:

1. being a *living circuit*, according to the precepts of the romantic-idealistic
   tradition derived from Schelling (Schelling 1810);
2. being a *dissipative structure*, as theorised by the sciences of complexity
   (Prigogine and Stengers 1978);
3. being a *rhizome*, as described by Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze and
   Guattari 1980).

First of all, man trapped in a senseless distribution is a *living circuit*
where every term continually flows into another and where no element can
be separated from the others, as each one needs all the others (Schelling
1810). The conception of man as living circuit is developed by Schell-
ing at the beginning of the XIX century, inside a radically anti-dualistic
philosophical thought. His thought counterposes to the classic Platonic-
Cartesian distinction between *res cogitans* and *res extensa* the image of a
man intended as a *psycho-physical unit*, starting from the assumption that
in every living being – considering the original unity of the natural with the
spiritual – the incorporeal and the corporeal correspond to and harmonize
each other, so that it makes no sense to fix a rigid boundary between what
is corporeal by definition and what is not. This aspect is very important in
order to understand the kind of relationship that is established between
the inside and the outside. Indeed, man as a living circuit is the one who,
by organizing and shaping himself, is open to what is outside of him, so as
to be influenced and determined by it, and therefore placing himself inside
a thick web of relationships that condition his own relationship with the
world.

In other words, the living circuit can organize himself *only if* he does
not elude what influences this self-organizing process from the outside
and changes it according to specific cases. In Schelling this "outside", that
is fundamental for the self-organization of man as living circuit, is *nature*
intended in spiritual, symbolic and mystical terms; a nature inside of which
man is placed and that is both his fruitful starting point, from which he
draws the impulse for constant self-development, and his dark abyss, an
inhibitive force that recalls an ambiguous primordial state. According to
this reading, external nature corresponds to internal nature and deeply
influences the way man is. Now, for a posthumanist reading of subjectivity,
apart from any reference to the symbolic and the spiritual, the main points
of interest of a conception of man as living circuit, according to Schelling's
precepts, are the following:

- *Relationality* as ontological character of man as living circuit; yet, a rela-
tionality that is never harmonious, but rather marked by moments of
unbalance, gaps, disharmonies, disturbances. The disharmony that char-
acterizes this relationality, and that stems from Schelling's contrasting
conception of nature, brings to the fore how unfruitful a merely ration-
alistic reading is, and underlines the influence of chance as well as how
thin is the line that joins or separates logic from chaos.
- *The succession of balance and unbalance* as founding element of the rela-
tionality of man as living circuit: a succession that defines the concept
of life itself. The whole life of man as living circuit is structured on the
boundary between balance and unbalance, a boundary that gives move-
ment to it and drives it towards constant self-reworking.

Therefore: man as living circuit is *undetermined* by his nature, marked
by a kind of order that can never do without chaos, by a kind of certainty
that can never give up chance.

Relationality and the succession of balance and unbalance that charac-
terize man as living circuit are the basic principles of the theory of "dissipa-
tive structure" developed by Ilya Prigogine and the theorists of complexity
more than one century and a half after Schelling (Sisto 2013). Dissipative
structures indicate the tight affinity that can exist between structure and
order on the one hand, and loss and waste on the other, so that conditions
which are far from balanced can become a source of order. In life there
are accidental crossroads where the tiniest fluctuations and moments of
unbalance, happening under favourable circumstances, can generate new
functions and behaviours. An apparently minor change inside or outside of
man can be enough to determine a new discontinuity, from which follows
a new creative event or a new organizing rule, from which again can follow
both success and failure. As famously stated by Napoleon, the outcome of
a battle depends on a single instant that – during a fight – represents what
makes the battle take a specific direction. Dissipative structures must be
thought in this sense: the central role of chance and chaos in human self-
development (Prigogine and Stengers 1978; Gandolfi 2008).

The living circuit and the dissipative structure cannot but find their
balance inside a definition of man that values his non-linear, non-univocal,
non-consistent relationship with life and with reality in a broad sense.
According to Schelling's and Prigogine's theories there is never a strong,
static, self-centred and self-sufficient identity, namely a sovereign subjectiv-
ity independent from a relationship with the other. There are accidental
or chaotic conditions, undetermined circumstances and crossroads that
ontologically influence man; life itself, by definition, avoids order, rational
rules and structures without obstacles. Man thought as living circuit and

dissipative structure, unlike the mass hermit with his automatism, is a *multi-identity* open to contamination, the outcome of a creative process and not of a determined one, that constantly moves his own boundaries through exchanges, relationships, moments of unbalance. Multi-identity implies a conception of the body as a fundamental threshold from which all relationships between the inside and the outside unravel, so that every single encounter with the biological and with the technological determines a significant change in the regulating principles of the vital activity of the single individual, and generates new forms, new identities, new living circuits. Multi-identity, typical of a man inside of whom the Romantic theory of the living circuit and the scientific theory of dissipative structure meet, is the element that best of all shows the bond between the Romantics and Posthumanism, as the following words demonstrate:

> […] multi-identity is an old idea that the Romantics and modern culture have already expressed: inside of us we have many identities, as with Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, or even with the *Avatar*. The image of a multitude belongs to the tales of the XIX century and to popular tradition. There is never anything new, but everything happens again. Multi-identity is the idea that, through communication forms that are no longer unidirectional, vertical and centralized, but are based on relation, interactivity and exchange, strong identities are not what is realized, but rather several identity moments that change according to conditions, to problems, to what is going on. (Abruzzese and De Kerckhove 2010; our translation)

The several identity moment that outline the idea of a man that is alien to strong identities, as shown by the theories of living circuit and dissipative structure, cannot but remind us of the concept of *rhizome* as structured by Deleuze and Guattari, adding to multi-identity the belief that it is possible to create fruitful connections in all directions. Rhizome, in reminding us that that there are never linear and vertical hierarchies we must necessarily comply with, following the rigid binary or dualistic categories of modern philosophical tradition, connects any point with any other, and each of its traits does not necessarily recall other traits of the same nature; it puts into play series of much different signs and also states of non-signs. The rhizome cannot be brought back to the One nor to the multitude. It is not made of units, but of dimensions or rather of moving directions (Deleuze and Guattari 1980).

The heterogeneous connection recalled by the concept of rhizome, that derives from the moving directions on which it was shaped together with the characters of Schelling's living circuit and Prigogine's dissipative structure, allows us to understand the way followed by posthumanism in order to free itself from the mass hermit, the anthropocentric legacy of a reading that sees the counterposition between man and world.

If the mass hermit is a windowless monad that develops a purely external bond with a totally subjectivized world, man trapped in a senseless distribution, as he holds all the features of the living circuit, of the dissipative structure and of the rhizome, is a multi-identity subject marked by an active relationality with the organic, the natural and the corporeal. This relationality is alien to any autistic vision of the world typical of a strong and unidirectional identity, so that the multi-identity individual cannot but be influenced in a fruitful way by the effects of chance and chaos on his choices, which are never completely linear. He is a sort of *open program* who, placed inside a life that is hybrid and undetermined in itself, is structured so as to be penetrated from external reality, thus developing a dialogue with what is not human that aims at a mutual contamination and not at dominion or control. In other words, he cannot but radically reject the home delivery of a prefabricated world, because his own nature of a hybrid, contaminated and impure being causes him to place himself outside an anthropocentric reading of reality, which trivializes all that is not human treating it as a mere instrument of human fulfilment, and consequently ending up with the paradox of placing man in the condition to be abused.

In conclusion, Anders' considerations on man as a mass hermit are useful, inside a posthuman perspective, to show one of the possible degenerations that stem from the idea according to which man is at the centre of the world, and the world is, consequently, made for man to use and abuse, characterized only by the interpretations that it is given by man himself starting from his specific features. *Surpassing* such a way of interpreting the relationship between man and the world needs a process of *rebuilding* of subjectivity that, considering the positive characters of concepts like living circuit, dissipative structure and rhizome, never forgets that the only ways man has to relate himself to what is not human are constantly moving and strongly influenced by the teachings coming from the non-human. In fact, admitting to be trapped in a senseless distribution exactly means giving value to our own human features through the exchange and the hybridization with the other, starting from the fundamental premise according to which life itself has its own norms based on a constitutive indetermination, and culture, far from being an instrument to obviate to natural lacks, is nothing but a "creative non-balance", a constant movement of thresholds that favours the hybridization processes with alterity (Pireddu 2006). In spite of the mass hermit.

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