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*The anthropology of Günther Anders and the ambivalence of images*

Günther Anders (1902-1992) sketched his «negative anthropology» in the 1920's, according to which «man's nature» consists in having no determinate nature: human specificity is its lack of specific «instincts», «reactions», «orientations». Compared with other animals, humans lack a world on their own, so that – in different historical and geographical situations – they have to form one. «*Mensch ohne Welt*» («Human being without world») is the formula with which Anders summarizes our predicament. Yet this formula acquires more specific meanings over time: political, sociological, ontological. Against the background of a renewed «philosophical anthropology in the age of technocracy», Anders elaborates a theory of human faculties, according to which we produce more than we are able to imagine, feel, and understand: we are «smaller than ourselves». The status of images vary accordingly: some kinds of images reveal hidden aspects of reality; some others, like «phantoms», pretend to be reality itself, while in fact they impoverish and cover it; still others are our inadequate attempts to comprehend facts and events that are «too big» to be imagined. This chapter analyses some of these tensions in Anders' work, suggesting that his contributions in understanding our present predicament – even when they lack

