



Here
Lies

Bitterness

Healing from Resentment

Cynthia Fleury

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Here Lies Bitterness

Healing from Resentment

Cynthia Fleury

Translated by Cory Stockwell

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Originally published in French as *Ci-gît l'amer. Guérir du ressentiment*

© Editions Gallimard, Paris, 2020

This English edition © Polity Press, 2023

This book is supported by the Institut français (Royaume-Uni) as part of the Burgess programme.



Polity Press

65 Bridge Street

Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press

111 River Street

Hoboken, NJ 07030, USA

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ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-5103-3

ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-5104-0 (paperback)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022935679

by Fakenham Prepress Solutions, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 8NL

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Quote

This book is based on a decision, a commitment, an axiom: its intangible principle or regulating idea is that man, the subject, the patient, has the power to act.¹ It is not a question of wishful thinking, or of taking a falsely optimistic view of people. It is a question of a moral and intellectual choice—a wager that we are capable of acting. It is above all a way of insisting on the respect due to those who are in treatment, for the patient is an agent—the agent par excellence. Thinking about patients responsibly means accepting their capacity to leave denial behind in order to confront reality. Life, even in its banal routines, affirms this capacity even as it sometimes contradicts it. As for my own life, I ceased long ago to entrust it to facts alone. Battling resentment teaches us that a certain tolerance for uncertainty and injustice is necessary.² What we find on the other side of this confrontation is the possibility of expanding ourselves.

Notes

1 [Trans. note: With few exceptions, I translate *l'homme* as “man” throughout the book, for two reasons. First, Fleury insists on this term, both in her use of *l'homme*, and in the distance she takes from “inclusive writing” (see her comments on this in Part III, Chapter 2). Second, one of Fleury’s arguments is that resentment has traditionally been too closely associated with women; from this standpoint, her constant use of “man” may serve to emphasize that resentment is far more universal than it is often assumed to be, and indeed that certain forms of it are much more masculine than feminine.]

2 [Trans. note: “Resentment” in this sentence and throughout the book translates the French *ressentiment*. There is a long history of using this French term in English, especially within philosophy; this follows in part from the fact that Nietzsche (an important reference for Fleury) employs the French term throughout his work, which has led English translators of Nietzsche simply to leave the term as is. I have chosen to translate it as “resentment” (except when citing works that specifically opt for the French term) in part because Fleury’s aims are not solely philosophical: they are also (to name just a few) literary, clinical, and political. Using the French term *ressentiment* would make little sense within Anglophone clinical contexts. In contemporary politics, meanwhile, it has become more and more common to speak about the “politics of resentment,” and Fleury herself comments on this.]

— I —

BITTERNESS

**What the Man of Resentment
Experiences**

__ 1 __

UNIVERSAL BITTERNESS

Where does bitterness come from? From suffering and from a lost childhood, one might say from the outset. Starting from childhood, something is played out between bitterness [*l'amer*] and this Real that shatters our serene world. Here lies mother, here lies the sea [*Ci-gît la mère, ci-gît la mer*].³ We all take different paths, yet we are all familiar with this link between potential sublimation (the sea), parental separation (the mother), and pain (bitterness)—this melancholy that does not come about all on its own. I don't believe in essentialism (without a doubt, many have died from or by way of its illusions); instead, I support a dialectical approach. Bitterness, the mother, the sea, it's all tied together: the mother is also the father, the parent, that which precedes separation, that from which we don't want to separate, that which takes on meaning only in the light of separation, that which we have to become on our own, parents for others, whether or not they are our own children, parents in the sense that we take on something of the need for transmission.

Bitterness must be buried; above it, something else will grow and come to fruition. No earth is ever damned for eternity: a bitter fertility founds the understanding that is to come. The distinction between confronting bitterness and burying it is not very important: in treatment with patients, we do both, one after the other, one in spite of the other; here as well, there is always a remainder, as though something incurable persisted, but it is still possible to locate "stances": places where the health of the soul finds its footing.⁴ The task of the patient is to multiply these stances.

It is with the following words that Ishmael, at the beginning of Melville's book dedicated to the tireless quest for the white whale, describes a sort of unease that constrains him, and at the same time—above all—an existential resource to which he aspires:

Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can.⁵

Getting to the sea . . . Melville also writes of the need to “see the watery part of the world,”⁶ and we understand that what is at stake in the motif of the sea is not navigation, but an existential open expanse, a sublimation of the finitude and lassitude that fall upon subjects without them knowing how to respond, because there is no response. All they can do is navigate, cross, go toward the horizon, find a place where they are able to live once more in the here and now. They have to distance themselves to avoid “knocking people's hats off,” to avoid the roar of their mounting resentment. “If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me.”⁷ Ishmael thus knows very well that none of this is personal, that the need for the ocean alleviates the feeling of abandonment that is there in all of us from the beginning, a feeling that punctuates our lives, like a sad refrain reminding us that the countdown to death is always there, and that there is no meaning in the origin or in the future—only, perhaps, in this desire for immensity and weightlessness that water,

the sea, and the ocean represent.⁸ “What do you see?— Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries.”⁹ So long as these reveries predominate, they constitute a kind of barrier against a more intimate and dangerous darkness—in other words, bitterness, and its crystallization that inevitably opens out onto resentment.

Notes

3 [Trans. note: The French title of this book is *Ci-gît l’amer*, and my decision regarding the translation of the title’s final term requires a word of explanation. The direct translation of *l’amer* is “the bitter”; for stylistic reasons, I have translated it throughout as “bitterness.” What is important here is that *l’amer* in spoken French is indistinguishable from *la mère*, which means “the mother,” and *la mer*, which means “the sea.” Fleury plays on this homophony here and throughout the text. This is impossible to reproduce in English, but the reader should remain aware of it, given its importance for several of Fleury’s arguments.]

4 The *Littré* dictionary gives the following etymology for stance: “Ital. *stanza*, stance, (properly speaking) stay, sojourn, stop, from the Latin *stare*, to stay, to stop; one speaks thus of a stance because it is a kind of stop.”

5 Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (1851; New York: Penguin, 2009), p. 3.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 The oceanic feeling was defined in 1927 by Romain Rolland in his correspondence with Freud to describe

this *universal* desire to be one with the universe. In his work, Rolland turns this into a foreshadowing of religious feeling: the oceanic bears witness to a spontaneous spirituality of man that is independent of this feeling. The oceanic enters into a dialectical relationship with an originary sense of abandonment, permitting the subject not to feel a sense of "lack," to confront separation and finitude (here lies mother) without giving in to melancholy. It arises from a feeling of eternity, of a quick flash and then of rest. Freud, without naming him, addresses Rolland at the beginning of *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929), in which he deals at length with the oceanic feeling of the Ego.

[9](#) Melville, *Moby-Dick*, p. 4.

___ 2 ___

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY IN THE FACE OF RESENTMENT Rumbling and Ruminations

At this point, you might say: “So what? Everyone is familiar with resentment. Nothing this common, no matter how bad it is, can be a serious problem for the individual or for society.” In response, I join Cornelius Castoriadis, philosopher and psychoanalyst by trade, in espousing the idea that people are radically different from one another when it comes to their ability to keep their own resentment at a distance. It may seem that an awareness of resentment would allow us to avoid falling prey to the petrification that ensues from it. But in fact, this is not true of all people, or of all societies. “What can I aim for when psychoanalyzing an individual? Certainly not the suppression of this obscure depth, my unconscious or his unconscious—an undertaking that would be murderous if it were not impossible. What I can aim for is to establish another relationship between the unconscious and consciousness.”¹⁰ The individuation of a being, his subjectivization, and what Wilhelm Reich will later call his “capacity for freedom” all arise from the creative and serene relationship between consciousness and the unconscious.¹¹ Castoriadis reminds us of the decisive truth of analysis, not only for a subject, but for the society in which this subject lives:

The entire question is whether the individual has been able, by a happy accident or by the type of society in which he has lived, to establish such a relationship, or whether he had been able to modify this relationship in such a way as not to take his fantasies for reality, to be as lucid as possible about his own desire, to accept himself as mortal, to seek the truth even if it should cost him, et cetera. Contrary to today's prevailing imposture, I have affirmed for a long time that there is a *qualitative difference*, and not only a difference of degree, between an individual thus defined and a psychotic individual or one so heavily neurotic that he can be described as alienated, not in the general sociological sense, but in the quite precise sense that he finds himself expropriated "by" himself "from" himself. Either psychoanalysis is a swindle, or else it intends precisely this end, a modification of this relationship such as we have described it.¹²

What is at stake here is the advent of a man who is qualitatively different from his peers, and who would hold a key to humanism and to the society in question.

Inversely, people who are alienated cannot participate in the building of any common world except for one that embodies a process of reification. The aim of psychoanalysis is just as political as it is therapeutic.

For current power, other people are things, and all that I want goes against this. The person for whom others are things is himself a thing, and I do not want to be a thing either for myself or for others. I do not want others to be things, I would have no use for this. If I may exist for others, be recognized by them, I do not want this to be in terms of the possessions of something external to me—power; nor to exist for them only in an imaginary realm.¹³

Castoriadis here paints the wretched but well-known picture of the dynamics of objectification—indeed, “thingification”—as an organizing principle of society as a whole and also of intimate relations, because these relations are indissociable from the drive-related conflicts that reign within individuals. The stakes are both individual and social: one must not consider others or oneself as things because doing so will consolidate the collective mechanism of resentment, leading men and societies to sunder their prospects through these resentmentist means—making it almost impossible to overcome psychic and social alienation.¹⁴

Notes

¹⁰ Cornelius Castoriadis, “The Revolutionary Exigency,” in *Political and Social Writings, Volume 3, 1961–1979: Recommencing the Revolution: From Socialism to the Autonomous Society*, trans. David Ames Curtis (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 243 [translation modified].

¹¹ [Trans. note: On Reich’s “capacity for freedom,” see Part II, Chapter 7.]

¹² Castoriadis, “The Revolutionary Exigency,” p. 243.

¹³ Cornelius Castoriadis, “The Subjective Roots of the Revolutionary Project,” in *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge: Polity, 1975), pp. 90–5, here p. 94.

¹⁴ [Trans. note: “Resentmentist” in this sentence and in what follows translates *ressentimiste*, a neologism employed by Fleury; per the *OED*’s definition of the suffix “-ist,” one might think of a “resentmentist” person

as someone who actively practices resentment, or who adheres to it as though it were a creed.]

THE DEFINITION AND THE MANIFESTATIONS OF RESENTMENT

Max Scheler defined resentment with great clarity in the book he devoted to it in 1912, just before the First World War (a terrible time of lethal drives): “the repeated experiencing and rumination of a particular emotional response reaction against someone else, which leads this emotion to sink more deeply and little by little to penetrate the very heart of the personality, while concomitantly abandoning the zone of action and expression.”¹⁵

The key term for understanding the dynamics of resentment is “rumination”: something that is chewed and re-chewed, and that furthermore possesses the characteristic bitterness of food that has been worn down by chewing. Rumination is itself that of another rumination, in the sense that what is at stake in it from the outset is reliving an emotional “re-action” that in the beginning could have been addressed to someone in particular. But as resentment goes on, its addressee becomes increasingly indeterminate. Loathing becomes less personal and more global: it can come to strike individuals whom the emotional reaction did not originally concern, but who at some point were caught up in the extension of the phenomenon. From this point a double movement is at work that is reminiscent of the one described by Karl Polanyi:¹⁶ the more resentment gains in depth, and the more the person is impacted in his core and in his heart, the less he is able to maintain his capacity for action; as such, his ability to express himself creatively weakens. It eats away at him, digs into him. And with every rekindling

of this resentment, compensation becomes more and more impossible: the need for reparations, at this point, is unquenchable. Resentment leads us down this path—no doubt illusory, but no less cruel for being so—of impossible reparations, and indeed of their rejection. Obtaining these impossible reparations—which do in fact exist—would require invention, creation, sublimation. But dealing with resentment means penetrating a zone that stings painfully, and which therefore resists any attempts to project light onto it—or rather, by way of a reversal (like a sort of inverse stigmatization), affirms a certain enjoyment of its darkness.¹⁷ “This rumination, this constant rekindling of the emotion, is thus very different from a mere intellectual recollection of the emotion and of the events that gave rise to it: it is a reexperiencing of the emotion itself, a renewal of the original feeling—a re-sentiment.”¹⁸

How, then, to resist the continuous pressure of this painful reliving? We see here that there is a possible link to the phenomenon of trauma, which produces a “breach” in the psyche.¹⁹ The breach thus plays upon what was initially a wound, a blow, or an inability to heal over, and turns it into a yawning gap, one that is active, at times intense, at times chronic. In the face of the jolts brought on by this gap, which are fed by rumination, the work of the intellect and of rational thinking remain helpless.

Undoubtedly we should not give up so quickly on the performativity of this work of reason, but let us be realistic about the limitations of rational argument: let us accept that it is difficult to resist the jolts of a sadness that seeks to confine within itself envy, jealousy, contempt for others and eventually for oneself, the sentiment of injustice, the desire for revenge. It ends up gnawing at you, as Scheler writes:

Perhaps the most suitable German word would be *Groll*, which indicates an obscure, suppressed, gnawing rancor that is independent of the ego's activity, and which little by little engenders a long rumination of hatred and animosity that does not contain a specific hostile intention, but nourishes any number of such intentions.²⁰

Groll is rancor, the fact of *holding a grudge* against someone, and we can see how this holding of grudges takes the place of the *will*, how bad energy is substituted for vital and joyous energy: how this falsification of the will, or rather this prevention of *good will* (this privation of the *will for . . .*), how this bad object deprives the will of a good direction—how it deprives the subject. It requires him to stop focusing on it. But as resentment goes on, indecision becomes all the greater, and the ability to turn away from it all the more difficult. It contaminates everything. The gaze gets caught up in its immediate surroundings rather than crossing into new territory, resulting in a boomerang effect that rekindles resentment. Everything becomes a bad sign, one that is not there to be dodged but rather so that one can remain captive to reexperiencing. The subject becomes “fat”: he loses his mental and physical agility, so necessary to the possibility of movement. Too full, closed in, the subject is on the border of nausea and its continuous heaving; he can cry out all he wants, but these cries will only appease the nausea for a very short time. Nietzsche spoke of intoxication,²¹ while Scheler evokes “self-poisoning” to describe the “malice”²² of resentment. The latter gives rise to a “more or less permanent deformation of the meaning of values as well as the ability to make judgments.”²³ The impact of resentment thus attacks the sense of judgment, which is tainted, eaten away from within—already beginning to rot. From this point, producing informed judgments—which could lead to a redemption from resentment—becomes difficult. What is

needed is to identify resentment's echo or even its aura, though this term is too noble to be used to designate what is rather a spreading, a servile contamination that, with the passage of time, will find justifications that are worthy of the name. The faculty of judgment henceforth puts itself in the service of maintaining resentment rather than deconstructing it. Such is the sullyng aspect of the phenomenon, which employs the instrument that could be used for liberation (the faculty of judgment) to maintain servitude and alienation—for there is indeed servitude in the face of the lethal drive. “Slave” morality is already at play here, in the fact of submitting oneself to rumination.

Notes

[15](#) Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*, trans. William W. Holdheim (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), p. 39 [translation modified].

[16](#) In his book *The Great Transformation*, first published in 1944.

[17](#) [Trans. note: I use “enjoyment” here to translate *jouissance*, which has a much stronger sexual connotation.]

[18](#) Scheler, *Ressentiment*, p. 9 [translation modified].

[19](#) According to the Freudian definition of breach:

We describe as “traumatic” any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to breach the protective shield. . . . Such an event as an external trauma is bound to provoke a disturbance on a large scale in the functioning of the organism’s energy and to set in motion every possible defensive measure. At the same time, the pleasure principle is for the moment put out of action. There is no longer any possibility of preventing the mental apparatus from being flooded with large amounts of stimulus, and another problem arises instead—the problem of mastering the amounts of stimulus which have breached the surface and of binding them, in the psychical sense, so that they can then be disposed of.

Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1961), pp. 23–4 [translation modified].

[20](#) Scheler, *Ressentiment*, pp. 39–40 [translation modified].

[21](#) Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 19 and 94; see also *Ecce Homo*, in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, trans. Judith Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. The affect of resentment, born from an intoxication that cannot be separated from Judeo-Christianity, allows one to distinguish between the morality of slaves and that of masters.

[22](#) Scheler, *Ressentiment*, pp. 45, 47.

[23](#) Scheler, *Ressentiment*, pp. 45–6 [translation modified].

THE INERTIA OF RESENTMENT AND THE RESENTMENT FETISH

One can and one must refuse rotting food and nourish oneself otherwise, but in this state of mind, the subject prefers carrion. The preference for rotting elements is essential to the workings of resentment, for the latter cannot be thought of as retaliation, as a legitimate defense, as a simple reaction. Indeed, it often arises from a non-reaction, from a renunciation of action. It consists in having kept things within oneself. I'm not saying that one should never keep anything inside oneself, but the resentful subject has "suspended" time, as though to hate better and for a longer period. Attempts to combat this must penetrate vengeance, which is a very peculiar type of hope—a decaying hope, but one whose energetic force can be very intense. "Revenge is distinguished by two essential characteristics. First of all, the immediate reactive impulse, with the accompanying emotions of anger and rage, is temporarily or at least momentarily checked and restrained, and the response is consequently postponed to a later and to a more suitable occasion."²⁴

Quick retaliations are not enough to make resentment disappear, for in truth, resentment is not simply a question of re-action (or its absence): it also falls within the purview of rumination—the decision to ruminate or the impossibility of not ruminating. It is no simple matter to choose between a definition of resentment as *impotence* (to do something), and another definition that ends up conceding that there is a choice in favor of this impotence. This is undoubtedly a matter of degree and of the disability brought on by

resentment, which is more or less accepted. One can be caught in the trap of resentment while at the same time trying to extricate oneself from it, refusing to settle for its viscous grasp. One is here on a knife's edge: vengeance and rumination, but also refusing to succumb to it completely, not wanting to succumb completely.

Moreover, vengeance is not resentment: vengeance is terrible, and it contaminates like resentment, but it remains directed, determined, in the sense that it is possible for it to be assuaged. Scheler believes that the desire for vengeance falls away once revenge has been exacted, but I am not so certain: vengeance knows how to move about and locate a new object. Leaving in one's wake this lethal dynamic, this energy of decay, is anything but simple. But with resentment, none of this is true. Its very aim seems to be the prevention of all moral overcoming; its goal is to ensconce itself in failure—to ensconce you in failure, you who try to create a solution.

We see this at work very clearly in certain tenacious forms of psychosis: in the way the patient puts all his energy into trying to prevent a solution, to cause doctors and medicine as a whole to fail, to produce only blockages. No overcoming is accepted: undoubtedly, accepting overcoming would produce a new collapse that the patient does not want to take on, and hence, dysfunction as a mode of functioning is preferred. Resentment's only talent—and in this it excels—is to embitter: to embitter personalities, to embitter situations, to embitter outlooks.²⁵ Resentment prevents opening, it closes, it *forecloses*: no escape is possible. The subject is perhaps outside of himself, but in himself, eating away at the self, and as such eating away at the only mediation possible with the world.

Even if resentment with regard to having (envy) and resentment with regard to being (jealousy) must be

differentiated, it is possible to consider them together. This is precisely the accomplishment of resentment: eating away at the interiority of the person and not only at his desire for acquisition; shaking his ability to maintain his identity.

“Envy does not strengthen the acquisitive urge, it weakens it,”²⁶ writes Scheler, and the more envy grows, the more it renders the subject impotent, and the more it changes his discontent with regard to his possessions into an ontological discontent, which is much more devastating: “‘I can forgive everything, but not that you *are*—that you are *what* you are—that I am not what you are—indeed that I am not *you*.’ This form of envy goes to the other’s very existence, an existence that, as such, smothers us, and is felt to be an unbearable reproach.”²⁷ Here, the trap closes in around the subject. For while it is possible to believe that recuperating the ability to possess (goods) will end up appeasing him, no one believes that appeasement is possible for a subject consumed by a hatred for the other, a hatred nourished by overflowing fantasies.

When the subject oscillates within this breakdown—which tends toward a breakdown of his own self—healing or any form of removal from this grasp becomes extremely complicated. Here we must posit a regulating idea: healing is possible, but clinical work is undoubtedly insufficient for the required care, and for the continued transmission of this care. The therapist is human, and we have to grapple with this inherent insufficiency of the cure. It is impossible to get beyond resentment without the will of the subject taking action. It is precisely this will that is missing, buried each day by the subject himself, so as to avoid facing up to his responsibility, his spiritual task, his moral obligation to overcome.

Only the destruction of the other can possibly bring some form of enjoyment, some “pleasure principle” allowing one to face up to a reality that is unbearable because it is

judged to be unjust, unequal, humiliating, not worthy of the value one attributes to oneself. Resentment is a delirium of victimization: delirium not in the sense that the individual is not a victim—he is, at least potentially—but because he is in no way the only victim of an unjust order. The injustice is global, undifferentiated; of course, it concerns the individual in question, but the complexity of the world means that it has no precise destination or recipient. Victim compared to what? To whom? Within which framework of values and expectations? It is one thing to temporarily define oneself as a victim and to recognize oneself as such for a moment; it is quite another to consolidate one's identity exclusively on the basis of this "fact" which is undoubtedly more subjective than objective. What is at stake is a "decision" made by the subject to choose rumination: to choose the enjoyment of what harms, whether this enjoyment is conscious or, as is generally the case, unconscious. The "delirium" arises because of alienation—non-perception of responsibility in the repetition of the complaint—and because the subject does not see that he is actively working within the mechanics of rumination. He refuses to look away, to renounce the idea of reparations, knowing that all reparations are illusory because they will never be at the level of the injustice that he feels. The subject must close the chapter, and this is what he does not want to do. We are undoubtedly dealing here with the definition of "grievance" put forth by François Roustang, which must always be dissociated from suffering. Grievance always means "bringing forth a grievance," which is undoubtedly commendable in the juridical sphere; in the psychological and emotional sphere, however, we must depart from this model so as to avoid being eaten away by our grievances, and shutting ourselves off in an all-consuming rage. Let us also recall the Freudian lesson about the denial of reality, which nicely evokes what is at play in resentment. The subject who is enamoured

with resentment does not go so far as to deny reality (since he suffers from it), but his resentment functions like a sort of fetish.²⁸ What is a fetish used for? Precisely to replace a reality that is unbearable for the subject. In other words, if it is so difficult for the subject to relinquish a grievance, it is because the grievance functions as a fetish: it procures for him the same pleasure; it screens off what must be avoided; it allows him to bear reality, to mediate it, to make it seem less real. The grievance becomes the only inhabitable reality through the pleasure principle that it provides, and the resentment fetish comes to act as an obsession. Resentment not only serves to maintain the memory of that which was experienced as a wound, but also allows for the enjoyment of this memory, as though it were keeping alive the idea of a punishment.

Notes

²⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

²⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 52.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 52-3 [translation modified].

²⁸ As Freud conceives of it in his 1927 book *Fetishism*.

RESENTMENT AND EGALITARIANISM

The End of Discernment

Scheler describes it perfectly: resentment employs the faculty of judgment to denigrate everything that could encourage it to reform itself and hence to disappear. Resentment has an extremely strong capacity for self-preservation:

The common man is only satisfied if he feels that he possesses a value that is at least equal to others; he acquires this feeling either by negating (by falsifying) the qualities of those to whom he compares himself, in other words by a specific “blindness” to these qualities; or—and here lies the basis of *ressentiment*—he falsifies the *values themselves* which could bestow excellence on any possible objects of comparison.²⁹

It would thus be healthy for him to be able to recognize his equality with others without the need to negate the qualities of these others. One possibility for elaborating an antidote to resentment lies in the notion of perceived equality. The structure of resentment is egalitarian: resentment arises the moment the subject senses that, while he may be unequal, he is only wronged because he is equal. Simply feeling oneself to be unequal is not enough to bring about this sense. The frustration develops on the terrain of the *right to*. I feel frustrated because I believe something to be my due or my right. The belief in a right is necessary to experience resentment. At least, this is the theory of Scheler and his Tocquevillian heirs, who believed that democracy was essentially a regime that brought