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**The Philosophy of Ressentiment
from the Angle of Max Scheler's Polemics with Friedrich Nietzsche**

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Abstract. Purpose. *This article examines the correlation that exists between ideas of two prominent thinkers of modernity, namely, between Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Scheler regarding ressentiment as a most controversial concept in philosophy.*

Methodology. *The main methodological strategy of the given study is a comparative analysis of the works of Nietzsche and Scheler, as well as those studies that reveal specifics of their scientific heritage. But along with that, this examination involves criticism, which is well known to be inherent in philosophical reflection per se. The criticism here is to do with revealing the extent of validity and credibility of Scheler's arguments against devaluating Christianity.*

Novelty *of the paper lies in elucidating the correlation between Nietzsche's and Scheler's views on ressentiment, with reference to Scheler's main arguments in favor of the spiritual nature of human being.*

Results. *When examining the given issue, it was revealed that the criticism inherent in Nietzsche concerning Christian ethics is mostly predicated on his anthropological views, which only partially coincide with the views of Scheler, since in contrast to Nietzsche, Scheler's anthropology is not so unambiguous. The development of Scheler's thinking around the nature of resentment indicates its dependence on a specific synthesis between phenomenological and metaphysical approaches. Furthermore, Scheler resorts to descriptive analysis of a whole range of destructive experiences, which create an affective background of resentment.*

As for the very resentment, Scheler sees it completely opposite to Christian mercy, which testifies to the spiritual basis of human nature. It is clear, for Nietzsche, this is not an argument, since he believed neither in mercy nor in goodwill. According to his deep conviction, humans are primarily animals who can only hate and enjoy violence, whereas for Scheler, human creatures are multifaceted beings, which manifest themselves equally in hatred as well as in love. The brilliant phenomenological analysis of human emotional experience enabled Scheler to prove his 'belief', as well as that resentment itself is secondary, stemming from a range of other feelings; therefore, it is a more complex phenomenon than it might seem at first glance.

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that Scheler essentially was only one of the few modern philosophers who tried to substantiate humanness in humans, irrespective of recognition by him for the extreme fragility and vulnerability of this humanness. However, despite the metaphysical context of Scheler's anthropology, he clearly realized man's dependence on the power of so-called infernal nature, which manifests itself particularly vividly in resentment.

Keywords: *anthropology, Christian ethics, emotional experience, metaphysics, mercy, resentment, phenomenology.*

Філософія ресентименту
під кутом полеміки Макса Шелера з Фрідріхом Ніцше.

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Анотація. Мета. У цій статті розглядається співвідношення між ідеями двох видатних мислителів модерну, а саме Фрідріха Ніцше та Макса Шелера стосовно ресентименту як одного із дискусійних понять філософського дискурсу.

Методологія. Основною методологічною стратегією даного дослідження є порівняльний аналіз праць Ніцше та Шелера, а також тих наукових розвідок, що розкривають специфіку їхньої наукової спадщини. Поряд із тим, це дослідження передбачає критику, яка, як відомо, притаманна філософській рефлексії як такій. В означеному контексті критика пов'язана з виявленням ступеня обґрунтованості та переконливості аргументів Шелера проти девальвації християнства.

Новизна цієї статті полягає в уточненні взаємозв'язку між поглядами Ніцше та Шелера стосовно ресентименту, із врахуванням основних аргументів Шелера на захист духовного єства людини.

Висновки. Під час розгляду даного питання було з'ясовано, що критика, яка властива Ніцше щодо християнської етики, здебільшого ґрунтується на його антропологічних поглядах, що лише частково збігаються з поглядами Шелера, оскільки, на відміну від Ніцше, антропологія Шелера не така однозначна. Розгортання мислення Шелера докола природи ресентименту вказує на його залежність від специфічного синтезу між феноменологічним

та метафізичним підходами. Поряд із тим, Шелер вдається до описового аналізу цілого спектру деструктивних переживань, які створюють афективний бекграунд ресентименту.

Що стосується самого ресентименту, Шелер розглядає його як абсолютну протилежність християнському милосердю, яке свідчить про духовну основу людської природи. Зрозуміло, що для Ніцше це не є аргументом, оскільки він не вірив ні в милосердя, ні в добру волю. За його глибоким переконанням, люди – це передусім тварини, які можуть лише ненавидіти та насолоджуватися насиллям, тоді як для Шелера людські створіння є багатограним буттям, яке однаковою мірою виявляє себе як у ненависті, так і в любові. Блискучий феноменологічний аналіз людського емоційного досвіду дозволив Шелеру довести свою ‘інтуїцію’, а також те, що ресентимент є вторинним, похідним від цілої низки інших почуттів; отже, це набагато складніше явище, ніж може здатися на перший погляд.

Більше того, варто зауважити, що Шелер, по суті, був лише одним із небагатьох сучасних філософів, які намагалися обґрунтувати людяність у людях, незалежно від визнання ним надзвичайної крихкості та вразливості цієї людяності. Однак, незважаючи на метафізичний контекст власної антропології, він чітко розумів залежність людини від влади так званої інфернальної природи, яка особливо яскраво проявляє себе в ресентименті.

Ключові слова: антропологія, християнська етика, емоційний досвід, метафізика, милосердя, ресентимент, феноменологія.

1. Introduction. The issue of people's propensity for *destructiveness* is almost central to anthropology and is of particular interest on the part of contemporary humanities, including philosophical studies. Even the superficial approach to their contents allows us to see an obvious dominance of psychoanalytical heritage,

associated, primarily, with such collocations as ‘superfluous violence’ and ‘death instinct’.

There is, primarily, talking about the discovery by Freud of *libidinal aggression* and *death instinct*, irrespective of long before this philosophical event it is Søren Kierkegaard who was to be the first to describe this instinct in terms of destructive ‘*sickness unto death*’. To put it another word, only after Kierkegaard’s depressing reflections on this matter, the issue of destructive passions turned out to be fundamental for philosophical theory.

But the evolution of philosophical ideas concerning destructive passions or impulses requires us to take account equally for both the psychoanalytical vision of the problem and other, not less critical views on these phenomena. This is particularly true for the ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Scheler, which are known to have had a significant influence on the entire modern philosophical anthropology, especially their theories of *ressentiment*.

Yet, we would like to focus on Scheler, since, as we believe, it is his criticism of Nietzsche’s theory of Christianity that is the most founded. It is quite clear that for phenomenological ways of thinking the issue of origins of the above destructiveness ‘is in bracketed’.

If we take an example of Kierkegaard, when analyzing ‘the sickness unto death’ he refers to both an existential *disgust for life*, inherent in humans and despair as a possible cause of desire for death. Scheler sees origins of this *disgust* in extreme asceticism as a direct consequence of human spirituality. For, according to his deep conviction, man is first and foremost a ‘spirit’, and the ‘spirit’ (as Hegel convincingly argued) is the most powerful *negation* of the value of real life.

But closer to the end of the 20th century, calls are all the louder about the necessity to understand this *negation* in a social context. In other words, in the context of *negating* the value of life ‘the Other’ or ‘the Others’ from the angle of specific practices of social interaction, rather than in the abstract-metaphysical sense

of Hegel's philosophy and Kierkegaard's existentialism. Especially, when it comes to a specific human inclination for excessive aggression, which will lead to questionable definitions like: 'man – is a killer!' (Erich Fromm).

However, long before Fromm, it was Nietzsche who emphasized the above inclination, and who more expressively demonstrated the one-sidedness of classical anthropology. Nietzsche essentially completed this definition by the fact that a person is not just a killer, is a 'sophisticated killer', since there is always an 'eye', which can extract pleasure from 'bloody' festivities.

Additionally, it was Nietzsche who developed the theory of *ressentiment* that predetermined the development of philosophical discourse in the direction of disparaging criticism of humanity and transcendental values. And only Scheler was able to openly challenge Nietzsche regarding the essence and true content of Christian anthropology and ethics. But is there a difference between their views on the nature of *ressentiment* itself, that is, between Nietzsche's philosophy and Scheler's insight on this matter? Thus, *the direct purpose of this paper* is to determine whether such a difference exists and to what extent it is significant. It is obvious, this will require an analysis of Scheler's main arguments regarding Nietzsche's theory of *ressentiment* in terms of their convincingness.

2. Literature Review. As far as contemporary studies are concerned, there are significant divergences in the approaches to understanding *ressentiment*, which only partly concerns the question of Scheler's criticism of Nietzsche's theory of Christianity.

For instance, in a publication, titled 'Cynthia Fleury: Here Lies Bitterness. Healing From Resentment' the author starts with analyzing the very term of *ressentiment*, emphasizing that there is in fact 'a terminological complication', consisting in frequent confusion between French word of '*ressentiment*' and its usual employment in English as 'resentment'. The latter is not as complex as its French equivalent. As rightly noted, this may cause confusion for readers, at least within

Anglophone philosophy, where both terms are established but carry different connotations and features in distinct discourses; they are considered not being interchangeable but pointing to distinctly different things [2]. We would only like to add to the above-mentioned fact that this ‘causes confusion’ until the present time, especially for those who are unfamiliar with philosophical, i.e., conceptual distinctions.

Meanwhile, in the same paper we again encounter a discussion of the relationship between the phenomenon and certain destructive, pernicious qualities, which Scheler so vividly described in his brilliant work. In other words, *ressentiment* is still directly ‘tied to envy and feelings of inferiority, mediated by ‘reactionary political attitudes as well as extremism and misogyny’ [2]. But along with that, in most scientific studies we have been still dealing with the apparent dichotomy about grasping the true meaning of this concept, especially within frameworks Anglophone philosophy, where *ressentiment* is more associated with ‘ordinary moral resentment’.

In the context of the given issue, one would like to draw attention to works of Sjoerd van Tuinen, who quite rightly emphasizes the systematical approach of Scheler to Nietzsche’s theory of *ressentiment*. But at the same time, he talks about ‘a sociological and theological correction’ of the Nietzsche’s genealogy of morality by Scheler, which may not seem quite correct, because of Nietzsche offered such a theory of ‘designing Moral Subject’ that is hardly related to Scheler’s understanding.

After all, the author himself further acknowledges: Christian *mercy* cannot ‘turn *ressentiment* into a formative power but precisely prevent it from becoming so. After all, in Christ we are all equal, or rather we find in him *a nobility* we can all equally aspire to’ [10, p.4].

But the problem is that for Nietzsche, Christian *mercy* as well as Christian *nobility* is an artificial concept – a kind of transcendental illusion, as Kant might put it. That is the reason why his entire scientific activity is focused on a sharp criticism

of Christian virtues and human morality as such, since, in his deep conviction, they are possible solely due to fear of punishment and hypocritical pity.

In the whole, Tuinen tends to consider political aspects of *ressentiment*, and like Scheler, he emphasizes its ‘Western’ origins, which is closely related to egalitarian ideals. Presumably, it is these ideals ‘that constantly confront us with a discrepancy between principle and fact and thus encourage rancor as a universal human right’ [10, p.6].

Another paper titled ‘*Many Shades of Ressentiment*’ focuses on the analysis of resentment in its relation to academic integrity. Regarding the very resentment, it is mostly here reduced to ‘the temptation of devaluation of some object or value, because they are reminders of our incapacity to confront these things correctly’ [11, p. 34].

As for current Ukrainian philosophy, one should pay attention to the study, belonging to Vakhtang Kebuladze, namely, his work ‘Concept of resentment by Max Scheler and its contemporary relevance’. As we believe, its content is directly related to the analysis of Scheler’s philosophy of Resentiment’ in the context of Nietzsche’s grasping of this phenomenon.

At first glance, Kebuladze rightly notes that ‘Scheler’s descriptive method organically grows out of the phenomenological philosophy of Edmund Husserl’, and that Scheler ‘does not explain *ressentiment* and does not give a clear definition of this concept but instead reproduces its formation in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and describes the phenomenon of *ressentiment*...’ [13, p.116]. But along with that, we would like to remark that *Scheler’s methodology, i.e., his ‘descriptive method’* taken in the above context deals with a quite complex phenomenon.

When considering Scheler’s reasonings in general (it refers to his no less prominent works, namely to his brilliant ‘*Ordo amoris*’) it became obvious his inclination to couple phenomenology with various other approaches in philosophy, including his metaphysical belief in spiritual human nature. Furthermore, according

to Scheler, human love is primary in relation to human hatred, stemming above all, from *ressentiment* (as his descriptive analysis convincingly showed). To put it another way, Scheler, obviously, had not willingly reduced humans exclusively to their dependence on social surroundings, which can affect them substantially.

Scheler's unwillingness to simplify humans complicated his methodology, but this methodology may, in fact, seem to be quite questionable. Presumably, that is the reason why Kebuladze, finally, had to admit: Scheler's descriptions are excessively caustic, aggressive, and pessimistic. Nowadays they are perceived as non-tolerant and even dismissed' [13, p.116]. But presumably, descriptions like the above are due to Scheler's bitter realization of the dissemblance or discrepancy between real human experiences and transcendental Christian ideals.

Another Ukrainian researcher, namely, Sinelnikova M. considers the practice of *ressentiment* in the current network space; particularly, she proposes a quite interesting view on the total presence of *ressentiment* in the contemporary world in the context of so-called virtual reality.

In relation to the above-stated, she quite relevant applies such a term as 'indices of *ressentiment*' with reference to these destructive power 'in almost every one: schemes, scripts, connotations of anger, enmity, the desire to humiliate the interlocutor for the sake of one's own aggrandizement, which characterizes the mass and standardization reproduced in the network' [14, p.107]. In addition, Sinelnikova M. draws attention to the need for a deeper examination of envy as 'one of the key reasons for the formation of *ressentiment*' [15, p 142].

But, like all the above-mentioned studies, Sinelnikova's examination is predicated on consideration of various contexts of *ressentiment*, related mostly to sociocultural determinants. Whereas the transcendental resource of human personality as a 'tool' to prevent the proliferation of *ressentiment*, hence preventing its power over humans remains beyond philosophical studies.

Results and discussion. In contrast to the above visions, we approach this phenomenon from the same point of view as Scheler, i.e., from the very concept of *ressentiment* in its correlation with Christianity, the analysis of which differs from Nietzsche's theory.

It is no coincidence that Scheler's *Ressentiment* starts with the words, which testifies to the main purpose of his study, as well as to the specific condemnation of the relevant epoch: 'We believe that the Christian values can very easily be perverted into *ressentiment* values and have often been thus conceived. But *the core of Christian ethics has not grown on the soil of ressentiment*. On the other hand, we believe that the *core of bourgeois morality*, which gradually replaced Christian morality ever since the 13th century and culminated in the French Revolution, *is rooted in ressentiment*. In the modern social movement, *ressentiment* has become an important determinant and has increasingly modified established morality' [8, p.2].

In other words, this passage reflects Scheler's main disagreement with Nietzsche's interpretation of Christian ethics or with such an understanding of Christianity, which Nietzsche considered to be true. Nietzsche focuses more on the social origins of *ressentiment*, rather than simply on hatred, which he frequently identifies with the very *ressentiment*, despite his awareness of complexity of the above phenomenon.

But when we look at *ressentiment* from an existential point of view, we can clarify it in the terms of something else, then just only hatred. There is talking about permanent psychological pain, especially a continual mental 'dissatisfaction' that is frequently fertile ground for the accumulation of negative (destructive) emotions. To put it differently, regarding *ressentiment*, we often have in mind continuous moral suffering, mediated by the experience of numerous grievances and dissatisfaction with life altogether.

Nietzsche, for example, believed that human propensity for *ressentiment* is determined by belonging to certain social groups, as a rule, to the so-called social

‘bottom’, which have always been suppressed. It is these social strata, or layers, that are the main referent of *ressentiment in terms of bitter indignation due to having been treated unfairly*, related to the constant sense of anxiety and inhibited desires. In other words, *ressentiment*, mostly, inherent in oppressed people who are, as a rule, at a low rung of the social ‘pecking order’.

Scheler considers *ressentiment* as the most common mental experience in human relationships, the undisputed initial background – the emotional ‘matter’ for human *hostility* as such. However, this *hostility* can contain the most diverse combinations of human passions, and *ressentiment* is the most striking example.

To put it another way, *ressentiment* is not only a simple feeling. Scheler writes about that in the sense of ‘predilection’ – the reliving of a particular emotional response or reaction against someone. It is primarily the continual reliving, state of human mind, a movement of hostility, and exactly a word of ‘*rancor*, which comes closest to its essential meaning’. Or it is ‘repeated reliving of intentionalities of hatred or other hostile intentions in form of various destructive feelings, which are the basis for resentment’ [8, p.4].

One can even say that *ressentiment* is the effect of these feelings, their various combinations. *Ressentiment*, in his view, is a whole range of feelings like *resentment (insult)*, *envy*, *desire for revenge*, *spite*, *etc.* So, it is not a coincidence that this term is associated with many shades of meaning, but it is often considered to be identical to only resentment.

Nevertheless, in Scheler’s view, all these components mostly refer to *rancor*, which mean, simultaneously, and suppressed wrath, malice, and a ‘thirst’ for revenge, combined with a desire for ‘detract’. *When all these feelings are coupled with impotence, they turn into resentment.* For this reason, Scheler declares that all negative impulses, described in his study are not *ressentiment* yet, but the inevitable preconditions, these are only stages in the development of its sources.

At first glance, he does not pay due attention to the correlations, which exist between certain emotional states, for example, the uncompensated hurt (damaged feeling of personal value) almost always leads to a desire for revenge, whereas envy evokes a continual feeling of hatred, related to the urges of detracting and disparaging the one who is hated.

Yet he starts his investigation with analyzing the feeling of *revenge* in terms of the strongest impulse for formation of *ressentiment*, and only after that he considers another equally important 'source' of this 'venom', called 'envy'. But it is obvious that resentment (insult) as an effect of moral violence in relationships' experiences is initially more 'existential' and more prevalent than anything else.

The experience of *ressentiment* and various practices of depreciation starts with childhood, when human individuals are the most defenseless. It is an experience of impotence, which 'always primarily a matter of those who are 'weak' in some respect', and which 'always contains the consciousness of *tit-for-tat*, so that it is never a mere emotional reaction', '*ressentiment* can never emerge without the mediation of a particular form of impotence' [8, p. 5].

The question about what exactly mostly impacts the formation of suppressed persons is hardly relevant in phenomenology. Both resentment (insult) and envy are dominant and the most significant in the emergence of the given phenomenon. In any case, they are undisputed emotional premises for *ressentiment* as such.

It is noteworthy that Scheler avoids any value judgments in analyzing human destructiveness. He does not call them infernal or pathological, or anything else. He only notes that most of emotional structures, causing or producing *ressentiment*, '*are normal components of human nature*' like very *ressentiment*, which should be comprehended as '*a self-poisoning of mind...a lasting mental attitude caused by the systematic repression of certain emotions and affects...*' [8, p.4]

It is conventional that Nietzsche considered *ressentiment*, primarily, in the context of the Christian value system. According to him, it is *ressentiment* that is the

source of Christian love, which in its core is nothing more than suppressed or sublimated hatred towards successful people. To put it differently, the Christian imperatives of love and sacrifice in his view are but the manifestation of the highest hypocrisy. Such a religion is mostly the religion of the offended, weak and poor people.

In other words, it is the morality of a ‘crowd man’ who lives in a constant lack of vital resources and values: ‘Weakness, fear, anxiety, and a slavish disposition prevent him from obtaining them. Therefore, they come to feel that “all this is vain anyway” and that salvation lies in the opposite phenomena: poverty, suffering, illness, and death. *This “sublime revenge” of ressentiment* (in Nietzsche’s words) has indeed played a creative role in the history of value systems.

Scheler acknowledges too that in most texts of the Gospel we can find many such passages or sentences that can force us to think like Nietzsche, for example: ‘Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake...’; And further: ‘But woe unto you that are rich: for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full: for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now: for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you: for so did their fathers to the false Prophets.’ Another example is the blunt assertion (in Luke 18:25) that *‘it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God’* [8, p.39].

But at the same time Scheler insists that the core of Christian ethics does not grow on the ground of *ressentiment*! In his opinion, Nietzsche’s understanding of the nature of Christian morality is fundamentally incorrect. In addition, according to Scheler as well as the Christian doctrine itself, humans have every right to *ressentiment*. In the end, there is always an opportunity to atone for their sins. This

is the thought we can find, for example, in the Gospels, especially when there are talks about Christ's attitude towards sinners.

Being of the core of Christian ethos, '*mercy*' has nothing to do with hatred, weakness, or despair; rather, conversely, it is a gift of a completely dispassionate nature, stemming from the *human nobility*, and also from mysterious empathy that unite all living beings: 'Every living being has a natural instinct of sympathy for other living beings, which increases with their proximity, and similarity to himself' [3, p.33].

It is hardly doubtful that human hatred and impotence can evoke *ressentiment*, but they are unlikely to be an affective basis for religious feelings or human morality. In other words, hatred, envy, the desire for revenge, etc. can give rise to a destructive personality with the constant need for violence, but not to a 'knight of faith' who experiences fear of the Lord and helplessness before Him (Kierkegaard).

Scheler reminds us that *ressentiment* can dress in Christian *nobility* and compassion or *mercy*. But this capability is not a convincing argument against the belief in love as the highest moral purpose of man: 'The more I reflected on this question, the more clearly I realized that the root of Christian love is entirely free of *ressentiment*, but the *ressentiment* can very easily use it for its own purposes by simulating an emotion, which corresponds to this idea' [8, p.32].

In addition, it is obvious that real life for a believer – even in its highest form is never the 'greatest good': 'I insist that *love for one's neighbor*, in the Christian sense, is not originally meant to be a biological, political, or social principle. It is directed – at least primarily – at *man's spiritual core*, his individual personality, *through which alone he participates directly in the kingdom of God*. Therefore, Jesus is far removed from founding a new political order or a new economic distribution of property. He accepts the emperor's rule, the social distinction between master and slave, and all those natural instincts which cause hostility between men in public and private life...' [8, p.46].

Scheler is confident of the need to remind Nietzsche about the true meanings of Christianity with stress on its sacral purpose; Christianity, its ethics and religious creeds like any other religion spring up from closely related to existential needs of the so-called magical worldview, which hardly are reflected on the surface of ordinary life. Otherwise, religion completely loses its true sense and significance: 'There can be no doubt that the Christian ethos is inseparable from the Christian's religious conception of God and the world. *It is meaningless without this foundation.* There have been well-meaning attempts to invest it with a secular meaning which is separable from its religious significance, to discover in it the principles of a "humanistic" morality without religious premises... The *precept of love* is addressed to man as a member of the kingdom of God, where all are solidary. Even the feeling of unity and community, insofar as it does exist in the Christian world, refers to the kingdom of God or is at least founded in it. However love, and the communion based on it, may work out in the secular forms of community, however much it may further our material welfare, free us from pain and create pleasure – all this is of value only if these communities, and the forces of love which cement them, have their living roots in the "kingdom of God" and refer back to it' [8, p.44].

Thus, taking Scheler theory as an example, we have got a very interesting methodological combination. Humanistic background of Scheler's philosophy is related to his firm belief in the spiritual purpose of love, that is, the *human heart is primarily aimed at love, rather than hatred*; therefore, love impulse is primary or prime relation to being. It's amazing but Jean-Paul Sartre, for instance, expressed the same view.

Conclusions. When analyzing Scheler's anthropology, we can find at least two views on human nature: man is first and foremost the ascetic of life, but simultaneously human nature manifests itself in *ressentiment*, managed by destructive impulses. As we believe, *ressentiment* as well as both hatred and envy

can be completely interpreted in a post-modernist sense, i.e. in the sense of 'lack', efficiency of which Scheler had to admit in his notorious '*Ressentiment*'.

With respect to the main sources of *ressentiment* Scheler draws the least attention to the impulse of *fear*, which is known to be a more profound cause for the inability to avenge, that is, for the helplessness before aggression. He talks more about hatred, caused by awareness of full 'impotence' or 'weakness'. This is not surprising, since for Scheler, 'the most important source of *ressentiment*' is the thirst for revenge and the feeling of envy, generating and intensifying hatred. But here the hatred is suppressed due to the awareness of one's own helplessness.

It can appear that examination of hatred is a simpler task than philosophical 'dissection' of love. But it is only a false appearance. Similar to love, human hatred tends to have a 'certain logic' of development, but in contrast to love feeling, it is a more complex and multi-layered phenomenon, and Scheler quite convincingly substantiated this fact in his theory of *ressentiment*.

Scheler's philosophy may seem to be a striking example of humanity's theoretical apology, especially in the context of his brilliant criticism in relation to Nietzsche's conception of Christianity, correlated directly with his theory of *ressentiment*. But it is obviously only a superficial impression.

Scheler almost everywhere emphasizes that by 'abolishing' Christian ideals Nietzsche persistently ignored the fact that love in the Christian sense is primarily directed at man's ideal spiritual Self, at man as a member of the kingdom of God. Thus, Nietzsche, in fact, tried to expose an ideology whose true meaning was unclear for him and which, moreover, always existed beyond ordinary life and ordinary people. It is this argument that is central to Scheler's dispute with Nietzsche, but it only confirms the weakness of Christianity in the face of inevitable *ressentiment*.

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