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Nota di contenuto	Foreword / Allan Young -- Introduction. Sovereignty of the Self or the Return of Nervousness -- Pt. 1. Sick Self -- 1. Birth of the Psychic Self -- 2. Electroconvulsive Therapy: Technique, Mood, and Depression -- 3. Socialization of an Indefinable Pathology -- Pt. 2. Twilight of Neurosis -- 4. Psychological Front: Guilt without an Instruction Manual -- 5. Medical Front: New Avenues for the Depressive Mood -- Pt. 3. Inadequate Individual -- 6. Depressive Breakdown -- 7. Uncertain Subject of Depression, or End-of-the-Century Individuality -- Conclusion: The Weight of the Possible.
Sommario/riassunto	Depression, once a subfield of neurosis, has become the most diagnosed mental disorder in the world. Why and how has depression become such a topical illness and what does it tell us about changing ideas of the individual and society? Alain Ehrenberg investigates the history of depression and depressive symptoms across twentieth-century psychiatry, showing that identifying depression is far more difficult than a simple diagnostic distinction between normal and pathological sadness - the one constant in the history of depression is

its changing definition. Drawing on the accumulated knowledge of a lifetime devoted to the study of the individual in modern democratic society, Ehrenberg shows that the phenomenon of modern depression is not a construction of the pharmaceutical industry but a pathology arising from inadequacy in a social context where success is attributed to, and expected of, the autonomous individual. In so doing, he provides both a novel and convincing description of the illness that clarifies the intertwining relationship between its diagnostic history and changes in social norms and values. The first book to offer both a global sociological view of contemporary depression and a detailed description of psychiatric reasoning and its transformation - from the invention of electroshock therapy to mass consumption of Prozac - *The Weariness of the Self* offers a compelling exploration of depression as social fact.

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