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Civilization and Its Discontents

文明及其不满

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上海外语教育出版社

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2000年1月

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Chapter One

It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement — that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and that they underestimate what is of true value in life. And yet, in making any general judgement of this sort, we are in danger of forgetting how variegated[1] the human world and its mental life are. There are a few men from whom their contemporaries do not withhold admiration, although their greatness rests on attributes and achievements which are completely foreign to the aims and ideals of the multitude[2]. One might easily be inclined to suppose that it is after all only a minority which appreciates these great men, while the large majority cares nothing for them. But things are probably not as simple as that, thanks to the discrepancies[3] between people's thoughts and their actions, and to the diversity of their wishful impulses.

One of these exceptional few calls himself my friend in his letters to me. I had sent him my small book that treats religion as an illusion, and he answered that he entirely agreed with my judgement upon religion, but that he was sorry I had not properly appreciated the true source of religious sentiments[4]. This, he says, consists in a peculiar feeling, which he himself is never without, which he finds confirmed by many others, and which he may suppose is present in millions of people. It is a feeling which he would like to call a

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〔1〕 variegated *a*. **多样化的**。
〔2〕 the multitude **大众,芸芸众生**。
〔3〕 discrepancy *n*. **差异,区别**。
〔4〕 religious sentiments **宗教情感**。

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sensation of 'eternity', a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded — as it were, 'oceanic'[1]. This feeling, he adds, is a purely subjective fact, not an article of faith; it brings with it no assurance of personal immortality[2], but it is the source of the religious energy which is seized upon by the various Churches and religious systems, directed by them into particular channels, and doubtless also exhausted by them. One may, he thinks, rightly call oneself religious on the ground of[3] this oceanic feeling alone, even if one rejects every belief and every illusion.

The views expressed by the friend whom I so much honour, and who himself once praised the magic of illusion in a poem, caused me no small difficulty. I cannot discover this 'oceanic' feeling in myself. It is not easy to deal scientifically with feelings. One can attempt to describe their physiological[4] signs. Where this is not possible — and I am afraid that the oceanic feeling too will defy this kind of characterization[5] — nothing remains but to fall back on the ideational[6] content which is most readily associated with the feeling. If I have understood my friend rightly, he means the same thing by it as the consolation offered by an original and somewhat eccentric[7] dramatist to his hero who is facing a self-inflicted death. 'We cannot fall out of this world.' That is to say, it is a feeling of an indissoluble[8] bond, of being one with the external world as a whole. I may remark that to me this seems something rather in the nature of an intellectual perception, which is not, it is true,

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〔1〕 oceanic *a*. **像海洋般广阔无边的**。
〔2〕 immortality *n*. **永生,不朽**。
〔3〕 on the ground of **以……为理由,就因为……**
〔4〕 physiological *a*. **生理的,身体的**。
〔5〕 characterization *n*. **特征描述,性格刻画**。
〔6〕 ideational *a*. **概念的,观念的**。
〔7〕 eccentric *a*. **行为古怪的**。
〔8〕 indissoluble *a*. **不可分解的**。

without an accompanying feeling-tone, but only such as would be present with any other act of thought of equal range. From my own experience I could not convince myself of the primary nature of such a feeling. But this gives me no right to deny that it does in fact occur in other people. The only question is whether it is being correctly interpreted and whether it ought to be regarded as the *fons et origo*[1] of the whole need for religion.

I have nothing to suggest which could have a decisive influence on the solution of this problem. The idea of men's receiving an intimation[2] of their connection with the world around them through an immediate feeling which is from the outset directed to that purpose sounds so strange and fits in so badly with the fabric of our psychology that one is justified in attempting to discover a psycho-analytic — that is, a genetic — explanation of such a feeling. The following line of thought suggests itself. Normally, there is nothing of which we are more certain than the feeling of our self, of our own ego[3]. This ego appears to us as something autonomous and unitary, marked off distinctly from everything else. That such an appearance is deceptive, and that on the contrary the ego is continued inwards, without any sharp delimitation[4], into an unconscious mental entity which we designate as the id[5] and for which it serves as a kind of façade[6] — this was a discovery first made by psycho-analytic research, which should still have much more to tell us about the relation of the ego to the id. But towards the outside, at any rate, the ego seems to maintain clear and sharp lines of demarcation[7]. There is only one state — admittedly an unusual state, but not one that can

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〔1〕 fons et origo (**拉丁语**)**根源,起源**。
〔2〕 intimation *n*. **暗示,告知**。
〔3〕 ego *n*. **自我**。
〔4〕 delimitation *n*. **设定界线**。
〔5〕 id *n*. **伊德,本我**。
〔6〕 façade *n*. **表面,掩饰真相的表面**。
〔7〕 demarcation *n*. **界线,分界**。

be stigmatized as[1] pathological — in which it does not do this. At the height of being in love the boundary between ego and object threatens to melt away. Against all the evidence of his senses, a man who is in love declares that 'I' and 'you' are one, and is prepared to behave as if it were a fact. What can be temporarily done away with by a physiological function must also, of course, be liable to be disturbed by pathological processes. Pathology has made us acquainted with a great number of states in which the boundary lines between the ego and the external world become uncertain or in which they are actually drawn incorrectly. There are cases in which parts of a person's own body, even portions of his own mental life — his perceptions, thoughts and feelings —, appear alien[2] to him and as not belonging to his ego; there are other cases in which he ascribes to[3] the external world things that clearly originate in his own ego and that ought to be acknowledged by it. Thus even the feeling of our own ego is subject to disturbances and the boundaries of the ego are not constant.

Further reflection tells us that the adult's ego-feeling cannot have been the same from the beginning. It must have gone through a process of development, which cannot, of course, be demonstrated but which admits of being constructed with a fair degree of probability. An infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from the external world as the source of the sensations flowing in upon him. He gradually learns to do so, in response to various promptings[4]. He must be very strongly impressed by the fact that some sources of excitation[5], which he will later recognize as his own bodily organs, can provide him

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〔1〕 be stigmatized as **被诬蔑为**。
〔2〕 alien *a*. **陌生的**。
〔3〕 ascribe to **归咎于……**
〔4〕 prompting *n*. **敦促,激励**。
〔5〕 excitation *n*. **兴奋,刺激**。

with sensations at any moment, whereas other sources evade[1] him from time to time — among them what he desires most of all, his mother's breast — and only reappear as a result of his screaming for help. In this way there is for the first time set over against the ego an 'object', in the form of something which exists 'outside' and which is only forced to appear by a special action. A further incentive to a disengagement[2] of the ego from the general mass of sensations — that is, to the recognition of an 'outside', an external world — is provided by the frequent, manifold and unavoidable sensations of pain and unpleasure the removal and avoidance of which is enjoined[3] by the pleasure principle[4], in the exercise of its unrestricted domination. A tendency arises to separate from the ego everything that can become a source of such unpleasure, to throw it outside and to create a pure pleasure-ego which is confronted by a strange and threatening 'outside'. The boundaries of this primitive pleasure-ego cannot escape rectification[5] through experience. Some of the things that one is unwilling to give up, because they give pleasure, are nevertheless not ego but object; and some sufferings that one seeks to expel turn out to be inseparable from the ego in virture of[6] their internal origin. One comes to learn a procedure by which, through a deliberate direction of one's sensory activities and through suitable muscular action, one can differentiate between what is internal — what belongs to the ego — and what is external — what emanates from the outer world.

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〔1〕 evade *v*. **逃避,躲避**。

〔2〕 disengagement *n*. **脱离,分离**。

〔3〕 enjoin *v*. **责成,命令**。

〔4〕 the pleasure principle **快乐原则,指弗洛伊德心理学中自我追求本能欲望满足的原则**。

〔5〕 rectification *n*. **纠正,矫正**。

〔6〕 in virtue of **由于,因为**。

In this way one makes the first step towards the introduction of the reality principle[1] which is to dominate future development. This differentiation, of course, serves the practical purpose of enabling one to defend oneself against sensations of unpleasure which one actually feels or with which one is threatened. In order to fend off[2] certain unpleasurable excitations arising from within, the ego can use no other methods than those which it uses against unpleasure coming from without[3], and this is the starting-point of important pathological disturbances.

In this way, then, the ego detaches itself from the external world. Or, to put it more correctly, originally the ego includes everything, later it separates off an external world from itself. Our present ego-feeling is, therefore, only a shrunken residue[4] of a much more inclusive — indeed, an all-embracing — feeling which corresponded to a more intimate bond between the ego and the world about it. If we may assume that there are many people in whose mental life this primary ego-feeling has persisted to a greater or less degree, it would exist in them side by side with the narrower and more sharply demarcated ego-feeling of maturity, like a kind of counterpart[5] to it. In that case, the ideational contents appropriate to it would be precisely those of limitlessness and of a bond with the universe — the same ideas with which my friend elucidated[6] the 'oceanic' feeling.

But have we a right to assume the survival of something that was originally there, alongside of what was later derived from it? Undoubtedly. There is nothing strange in such a phenomenon,

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〔1〕 the reality principle **现实原则,指弗洛伊德心理学中超我根据现实世界调节、引导和限制自我发展的原则**。

〔2〕 fend off **拒之于外,排除**。

〔3〕 from without **来自于身体之外**。

〔4〕 residue *n*. **残余,剩余物**。

〔5〕 counterpart *n*. **身份相当的人或性质相近的事物**。

〔6〕 elucidate *v*. **解释,阐明**。

whether in the mental field or elsewhere. In the animal kingdom we hold to the view that the most highly developed species have proceeded from the lowest; and yet we find all the simple forms still in existence to-day. The race of the great saurians[1] is extinct and has made way for the mammals; but a true representative of it, the crocodile, still lives among us. This analogy may be too remote, and it is also weakened by the circumstance that the lower species which survive are for the most part not the true ancestors of the present-day more highly developed species. As a rule the intermediate[2] links have died out and are known to us only through reconstruction. In the realm of the mind, on the other hand, what is primitive is so commonly preserved alongside of the transformed version which has arisen from it that it is unnecessary to give instances as evidence. When this happens it is usually in consequence of[3] a divergence[4] in development: one portion (in the quantitative sense) of an attitude or instinctual impluse has remained unaltered, while another portion has undergone further development.

This brings us to the more general problem of preservation in the sphere of the mind. The subject has hardly been studied as yet; but it is so attractive and important that we may be allowed to turn our attention to it for a little, even though our excuse is insufficient. Since we overcame the error of supposing that the forgetting we are familiar with signified a destruction of the memory-trace — that is, its annihilation[5] — we have been inclined to take the opposite view, that in mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish — that everything is somehow preserved and that in suitable circumstances (when, for

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〔1〕 saurian *n*. **蜥蜴类动物**。
〔2〕 intermediate *a*. **中间的**。
〔3〕 in consequence of **由于**。
〔4〕 divergence *n*. **差异**。
〔5〕 annihilation *n*. **消灭,歼灭**。

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instance, regression goes back far enough) it can once more be brought to light. Let us try to grasp what this assumption involves by taking an analogy from another field. We will choose as an example the history of the Eternal City[1]. Historians tell us that the oldest Rome was the *Roma Quadrata*[2], a fenced settlement on the Palatine[3]. Then followed the phase of the *Septimontium*[4], a federation of the settlements on the different hills; after that came the city bounded by the Servian wall[5]; and later still, after all the transformations during the periods of the republic and the early Caesars[6], the city which the Emperor Aurelian[7] surrounded with his walls. We will not follow the changes which the city went through any further, but we will ask ourselves how much a visitor, whom we will suppose to be equipped with the most complete historical and topographical[8] knowledge, may still find left of these early stages in the Rome of to-day. Except for a few gaps, he will see the wall of Aurelian almost unchanged. In some places he will be able to find sections of the Servian wall where they have been excavated and brought to light. If he knows enough — more than present-day archaeology[9] does — he may perhaps be able to trace out in the plan of the city the whole course of that wall and the outline of the *Roma Quadrata*. Of the buildings which once occupied this ancient area he will find nothing, or only scanty remains, for they exist no

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〔1〕 the Eternal City **永恒之城,罗马的别称**。

〔2〕 the Roma Quadrata **罗马方城**。

〔3〕 Palatine **巴勒登丘,古罗马七丘之一**。

〔4〕 Septimontium **七部牌楼,罗马皇帝塞维鲁建造,位于巴勒登山丘下,于公元** 203 **年完成**。

〔5〕 Servian wall **塞维鲁墙,环绕古罗马城的城墙,据说为公元前** 6 **世纪罗马皇帝塞维鲁·图里乌斯所建,故而得名**。

〔6〕 Caesar **泛指罗马皇帝**。

〔7〕 Emperor Aurelian **罗马皇帝奥雷连**。

〔8〕 topographical *a*. **地形学的**。

〔9〕 archaeology *n*. **考古学**。

longer. The best information about Rome in the republican era would only enable him at the most to point out the sites where the temples and public buildings of that period stood. Their place is now taken by ruins, but not by ruins of themselves but of later restorations made after fires or destruction. It is hardly necessary to remark that all these remains of ancient Rome are found dovetailed[1] into the jumble of a great metropolis which has grown up in the last few centuries since the Renaissance[2]. There is certainly not a little that is ancient still buried in the soil of the city or beneath its modern buildings. This is the manner in which the past is preserved in historical sites like Rome.

Now let us, by a flight of imagination, suppose that Rome is not a human habitation but a psychical entity with a similarly long and copious past — an entity, that is to say, in which nothing that has once come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Caesars and the Septizonium of Septimius Severus[3] would still be rising to their old height on the Palatine and that the castle of S. Angelo[4] would still be carrying on its battlements the beautiful statues which graced it until the siege by the Goths[5], and so on. But more than this. In the place occupied by the Palazzo Caffarelli[6] would once more stand — without the Palazzo having to be removed — the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus[7]; and this not only in its latest shape, as the Romans of the Empire saw it, but also in its earliest one, when it still

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〔1〕 dovetail *v*. **使吻合**。

〔2〕 the Renaissance *n*. **文艺复兴,14 至 17 世纪席卷欧洲的人文运动**。

〔3〕 the Septizonium of Septimius Severus **塞普第米·塞维鲁的七部牌楼**。

〔4〕 the castle of S. Angelo **圣·安吉洛要塞,原为罗马皇帝哈德良的陵墓,后被改建为教皇的要塞**。

〔5〕 the Goths **哥特族(日耳曼人的一支)**。

〔6〕 the Palazzo Caffarelli **卡法雷利宫**。

〔7〕 the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus **卡比托山的朱庇特神殿**。

showed Etruscan〔1〕 forms and was ornamented with terra-cotta antefixes. Where the Coliseum〔2〕 now stands we could at the same time admire Nero's vanished Golden House〔3〕. On the Piazza of the Pantheon we should find not only the Pantheon of to-day, as it was bequeathed to us by Hadrian〔4〕, but, on the same site, the original edifice erected by Agrippa〔5〕; indeed, the same piece of ground would be supporting the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva〔6〕 and the ancient temple over which it was built. And the observer would perhaps only have to change the direction of his glance or his position in order to call up the one view or the other.

There is clearly no point in spinning our phantasy any further, for it leads to things that are unimaginable and even absurd. If we want to represent historical sequence in spatial terms we can only do it by juxtaposition〔7〕 in space: the same space cannot have two different contents. Our attempt seems to be an idle game. It has only one justification. It shows us how far we are from mastering the characteristics of mental life by representing them in pictorial terms.

There is one further objection which has to be considered. The question may be raised why we chose precisely the past of a *city* to compare with the past of the mind. The assumption that everything past is preserved holds good even in mental life only on condition that the organ of the mind has remained intact and

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〔1〕 Etruscan **伊特鲁里亚人的,伊特鲁里亚是意大利西部的古国,其文明于公元前500年左右达到顶峰。**

〔2〕 the Coliseum **罗马椭圆形竞技场。**

〔3〕 Nero's vanished Golden House **尼禄那消失的金屋。尼禄是古罗马暴君。在位期间,罗马发生大火,烧掉了半个罗马城。**

〔4〕 Hadrian **罗马皇帝。**

〔5〕 Agrippa **罗马将军,是罗马帝国第一代皇帝奥古斯都的密友、顾问及女婿。**

〔6〕 Santa Maria sopra Minerva **米涅瓦神殿旁的圣玛利亚教堂。**

〔7〕 juxtaposition *n*. **并列,并置。**

that its tissues have not been damaged by trauma or inflammation[1]. But destructive influences which can be compared to causes of illness like these are never lacking in the history of a city, even if it has had a less chequered[2] past than Rome, and even if, like London, it has hardly ever suffered from the visitations[3] of an enemy. Demolitions and replacement of buildings occur in the course of the most peaceful development of a city. A city is thus *a priori*[4] unsuited for a comparison of this sort with a mental organism.

We bow to this objection; and, abandoning our attempt to draw a striking contrast, we will turn instead to what is after all a more closely related object of comparison — the body of an animal or a human being. But here, too, we find the same thing. The earlier phases of development are in no sense still preserved; they have been absorbed into the later phases for which they have supplied the material. The embryo[5] cannot be discovered in the adult. The thymus gland[6] of childhood is replaced after puberty by connective tissue, but is no longer present itself; in the marrow-bones of the grown man I can, it is true, trace the outline of the child's bone, but it itself has disappeared, having lengthened and thickened until it has attained its definitive form. The fact remains that only in the mind is such a preservation of all the earlier stages alongside of the final form possible, and that we are not in a position to[7] represent this phenomenon in pictorial terms.

Perhaps we are going too far in this. Perhaps we ought to content ourselves with asserting that what is past in mental life *may*

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〔1〕 inflammation *n*. **炎症**。
〔2〕 chequered *a*. **多波折的**。
〔3〕 visitation *n*. **天灾,灾祸**。
〔4〕 a priori *ad*. **先验地**。
〔5〕 embryo *n*. **胚胎**。
〔6〕 thymus gland **胸腺**。
〔7〕 in a position to **能够(做某事)**。

be preserved and is not *necessarily* destroyed. It is always possible that even in the mind some of what is old is effaced[1] or absorbed — whether in the normal course of things or as an exception — to such an extent that it cannot be restored or revivified[2] by any means; or that preservation in general is dependent on certain favourable conditions. It is possible, but we know nothing about it. We can only hold fast to[3] the fact that it is rather the rule than the exception for the past to be preserved in mental life.

Thus we are perfectly willing to acknowledge that the 'oceanic' feeling exists in many people, and we are inclined to trace it back to an early phase of ego-feeling. The further question then arises, what claim this feeling has to be regarded as the source of religious needs.

To me the claim does not seem compelling. After all, a feeling can only be a source of energy if it is itself the expression of a strong need. The derivation of religious needs from the infant's helplessness and the longing for the father aroused by it seems to me incontrovertible[4], especially since the feeling is not simply prolonged from childhood days, but is permanently sustained by fear of the superior power of Fate. I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection. Thus the part played by the oceanic feeling, which might seek something like the restoration of limitless narcissism[5], is ousted[6] from a place in the foreground. The origin of the religious attitude can be traced back in clear outlines as far as the feeling of infantile helplessness[7]. There may be

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〔1〕 efface *v*. **抹去**。
〔2〕 revivify *v*. **使复活,使再生**。
〔3〕 hold fast to **坚持**。
〔4〕 incontrovertible *a*. **无可辩驳的**。
〔5〕 narcissism *n*. **自恋,自我陶醉**。
〔6〕 oust *v*. **驱走,取代**。
〔7〕 infantile helplessness **婴幼儿的无助**。

something further behind that, but for the present it is wrapped in obscurity.

I can imagine that the oceanic feeling became connected with religion later on. The 'oneness with the universe'[1] which constitutes its ideational content sounds like a first attempt at a religious consolation, as though it were another way of disclaiming[2] the danger which the ego recognizes as threatening it from the external world. Let me admit once more that it is very difficult for me to work with these almost intangible quantities. Another friend of mine, whose insatiable craving for knowledge has led him to make the most unusual experiments and has ended by giving him encyclopaedic[3] knowledge, has assured me that through the practices of Yoga[4], by withdrawing from the world, by fixing the attention on bodily functions and by peculiar methods of breathing, one can in fact evoke new sensations and coenaesthesias[5] in oneself, which he regards as regressions to primordial[6] states of mind which have long ago been overlaid. He sees in them a physiological basis, as it were, of much of the wisdom of mysticism. It would not be hard to find connections here with a number of obscure modifications of mental life, such as trances and ecstasies[7]. But I am moved to exclaim in the words of Schiller's diver: —

'... Es freue sich,
Wer da atmet im rosigten Licht.'*

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〔1〕 oneness with the universe **与宇宙同一体;天人合一**。
〔2〕 disclaim *v*. **否认**。
〔3〕 encyclopaedic *a*. **百科全书般的,广博的**。
〔4〕 Yoga *n*. **瑜伽,古印度哲学派别,带有神秘主义色彩**。
〔5〕 coenaesthesias *n*. **共觉**。
〔6〕 primordial *a*. **原始的,初生的**。
〔7〕 trances and ecstasies **发呆与狂喜**。

* ['Let him rejoice who breathes up here in the roseate light!' Schiller, 'Der Taucher.']

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