

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

A CRITICAL STUDY OF
FOUNDATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS
AFFECTING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION
IN WESTERN ACADEMIA

BY

SHARYN S. CLOUGH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "A Critical Study of Foundational Assumptions Affecting the Psychology of Religion in Western Academia" submitted by Sharyn S. Clough in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

H. G. Coward

Supervisor, Dr. Harold G. Coward
Department of
Religious Studies

Hugo A. Meynell

Dr. Hugo A. Meynell
Department of
Religious Studies

R. Weyant

Dr. Robert G. Weyant
Faculty of
General Studies

ABSTRACT

The following thesis argues that the psychology of religion as practised in Western, mainstream academia, operates under a series of assumptions about what it means to do "good" science. These assumptions include the valuing of explanations which reduce the phenomena being studied to the physical level, and the valuing of empirical methodology through "objective", external and repeatable measurements. Both of these assumptions arise from the philosophy of logical empiricism which psychology has adopted to legitimate its claim as a science. Logical empiricism, and its forerunner, logical positivism, developed out of the desire to separate science from religion. With these comments in mind, it is not difficult to see the problems psychology of religion currently faces. Reducing religious experience to "nothing but" neural mechanisms, for example, is a stifling explanation for the subject having the experience and is evidence of "psychologism". Further, religious experience is typically subjective and internal, such that empirical methodology is inadequate to the task of studying such experience. These problems are discussed further in the introduction of the thesis.

The first chapter involves a historical overview of the roots of logical empiricism, with the conclusion that

psychology has not progressed much past the nineteenth century. A survey of more recent works in psychology of religion in particular shows the reiteration of the tenets of logical empiricism which have proved so harmful to the study of religious experience. This becomes especially apparent in the chapters on John Watson and Sigmund Freud.

The final chapters present the works of Jung and the humanists, who have different assumptions about what it means to do "good" science. Consequently, their psychology of religion is not rife with the problems found in the psychology of religion practised in Western, mainstream academia. The concluding chapter reviews the results of the study in general and adds further criticism, even to Jung and the humanists, through a feminist appraisal of science.

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PREFACE

The scientific study of religion exemplifies the process by which a subject of study is manipulated by the assumptions of the science and the scientists involved in the study. This phenomenon is described in Brett's History of Psychology where it is observed that "data can never be collected or observations made without interests and expectations. A person conducting an inquiry has questions to answer rather than a subject matter to examine."¹ In the "hard sciences" such as physics and chemistry one would assume that the effects of these assumptions and expectations would be fairly restricted - the particular worldview of the scientist should only affect the law of gravity in a trivial way, if at all. Of course it should be noted that the "law" of gravity is really a theory of gravity. Tart notes that the theory has worked out for so long that it has become accepted as indisputable truth.² A Kuhnian analysis would probably reveal that since the revolutionary Newtonian theory came to light, "normal" science has worked not to falsify the theory, as Popper would have one believe, but to reify the theory to the point where dissent has become blasphemy and theory has become law.³ Other extra-scientific factors have had significant effects in the science of astronomy, for example. Here the discrepancies in worldview between Ptolemeic and Copernican

astronomers made for vast discrepancies in the way both observed what most would consider an objective, external, empirically verifiable phenomenon - the motion of celestial bodies. How much more, then, do the assumptions and preconceptions of the observer affect the phenomena studied in the so-called "soft sciences", especially the reports of typically subjective, internal and non-empirically verifiable events such as religious experiences?

There are an enormous number of assumptions and preconceptions comprising the worldview of those who have made it their business to scientifically study the religious experience, not the least of which are linguistic constraints and other cultural variables. The present thesis will concentrate on one main set of assumptions only. These are the assumptions underlying the philosophy of science held dear by each of the figures in question. Each of these figures called himself a scientist, though the assumptions underlying this claim varied. As would be expected from the foregoing, the methods and conclusions arising from each figure's scientific study of religion varied as well.

It should be noted that although a number of the figures discussed in the following chapters made an attempt to extend their science of religion to include Eastern religious traditions as well as Western ones (Carl Jung is

one such figure) the present thesis will only analyse the effects of each figure's philosophy of science on the subsequent study of Western religions. As will be explained further in the introduction, each of the figures discussed grew up either in Europe or North America, and worked extensively, in his later life at least, in the United States. This restricts the cultural and linguistic constraints which may have confounded the comparison of these figures. To then analyse the various attempts made by these Western figures to study Eastern religious traditions would only serve to confound issues once again. The discussion, then, is restricted to an evaluation of the effectiveness of Western figures with a Euro-American worldview studying Western religious traditions.

NOTES

1 R.S. Peters (ed.), Brett's History of Psychology (Abridged one vol. ed., revised; New York: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1962), p. 27.

2 C. Tart (ed.), Transpersonal Psychologies (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 173.

3 Kuhn's analysis is presented in his seminal work, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975).

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INTRODUCTION

One aspect of the scientific study of religion has been carried out under the rubric of psychology. The particular target of this thesis is the psychology of religion studied and funded by mainstream academia in the West. An investigation of the role played by a number of key historical figures in the formation of this psychology, will take up the first four chapters of the thesis. The last two chapters will present other psychologies of religion that the mainstream, academic psychology under scrutiny might learn from. It would seem then, that a discussion of mainstream, academic psychology of religion would be appropriate at this time in order to set the remaining chapters in context.

Presently, the discipline is experiencing an identity crisis.¹ Religious experience does not typically lend itself experimental inquiry. Due to the experimental nature of most current western psychology, topics of study like religious experience often become problematic. Such topics are either ignored, or they are trivialized by the operationism encouraged by empirical methodology. In this way religious experience has often been equated with church attendance, for example.²

Given the current upsurge in the psychological

community's interest in religion, it would seem that the first option, that of ignoring the study of religion, is no longer a popular one.³ And so an identity crisis develops in reaction to the second option mentioned. Should the psychology of religion attempt to become more empirical so that it is more amenable to experimentation, and consequently more in danger of trivializing its subject matter? Or should experimental psychology broaden its scope to allow for methodologies which, at the risk of losing scientific rigour, could more adequately address humanistic issues like religion?⁴

This is the question to be answered and perhaps by the end of this thesis some answers will become clear. But for now the focus will be on the more fundamental question "How did mainstream, academic psychology in the West get itself into this quandry in the first place?" In other words, "What are the foundational assumptions of the philosophy of science that underlie our psychology of religion and where did these assumptions come from?" The foundational assumptions of present day study will be discussed first. Where these assumptions might have come from will then form the balance of the thesis project, followed by suggestions for changing these assumptions.

The philosophy of science holding currency with mainstream, academic psychology in the West is logical

empiricism which derives mostly from the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle - a choice of philosophy made apparently for no other reason than to satisfy psychology's "physics envy".⁵

With few exceptions, psychologists modeled their epistemology, not after physical science per se, but after the philosophy of physical science. Primed initially by nineteenth-century materialism, positivism and realism, psychologists eventually turned to the positivism of the Vienna Circle. Enraptured by their new acquisition, psychologists were preeminent among intellectuals in their enduring commitment to a cult of empiricism.⁶

Interestingly enough, physics has moved well beyond the restrictions of the verificationist principles still found in the operationism of mainstream, academic psychology.⁷

Morawski outlines a number of motivations underlying physics envy of Western psychology. Her explanation includes a contextual analysis of the situational factors, over and above the empirical factors:

Whereas in chemistry, the choice of a particular methodological approach would, at worst, lead to incorrect empirical conclusions, in psychology the choice of methodology had implications for whether or not the field was actually a science. These decision points encompass innumerable instances where psychologists' objectives were concealed, blurred, or represented in a somewhat duplicitous fashion.⁸

To limit the discussion to a manageable size the present study will only address those methodological assumptions which impinge directly on the psychological study of religion. These assumptions often arise from the logical empiricist-driven philosophy of science embraced by our psychology and they fall into two major categories. These

categories are separated only for purposes of clarity, as in actuality they are highly interrelated.

The first major assumption deals with assessing the proper place of psychology in the study of religion. Should psychology as the product of a secular society, strive to discover explanations for religious experience which supplant theological truth claims?⁹ Or should it maintain a certain amount of respect for the phenomena and keep its place by offering explanations which could still be interpreted in theological terms? The final option would be to opt out of the study completely with the realization that such subjective, intensely personal aspects of humanity are beyond the ken of empirical science.¹⁰

Present-day psychology vacillates between the first two with the result that the third option is often chosen but not for the reason given above. As an example, consider the text by Spilka, Hood and Gorsuch, The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach, compiled in 1985. All three authors are well-known for their work in the field, and the book is highly representative of the current empirical approach, that is the approach of choice in present-day mainstream, academic psychology. Most of the text is based on attribution theory, a popular explanatory device in the field of social psychology. The authors deny from the start that they are going to make judgements about

various religious truth claims.¹¹ However, they then proceed to assert that the key variable in assessing when a subject will attribute "religious feeling" to a particular experience is whether or not the subject is in a religious setting such as a church.¹² This seems to rule out the view that the key variables in assessing whether the subject will call the experience a "religious" one is whether or not the subject actually encountered the transcendent.

The overall picture then involves a secular psychology in a liberal society, trying to be respectful of religious truth claims while at the same time holding on to the tenets of logical empiricism which, as will be explained in the following chapter, are derived from the belief that metaphysical concerns embodied in religious experiences are largely nonsensical. Those not wishing to engage in this practice of doublethink opt out of the study entirely. Witness, for example, the relative lack of psychological study of religious experience when compared with the study of phenomena which occur far less often, such as depression. The latter is typically reported in twelve percent of the population.¹³ Religious experience has been reported in as high as sixty-eight percent of the population.¹⁴

The second grouping of assumptions involves a more particular aspect of logical empiricism, that of the verificationist principle and the valuing of empiricism and

materialism which underly it. Both of these "isms" are crucial to scientific psychology and consequently to the psychology of religion. If propositions derive their meaning solely from the method by which they can be verified or falsified then only propositions such as those relating to "church attendance" or "denomination of mother" can be meaningful. These variables are fairly objective and easily verified empirically, but they are also shallow and unenlightening. At moments of particular imagination and insight psychology tries to stretch the domain of verifiable propositions by investigating more subjective variables such as prayer and other religious experiences (note that these are also more meaningful and interesting). However, psychology's ideological commitment to logical empiricism necessitates that it legitimize these investigations by couching them in objective, empirical methodology, typically represented by the questionnaire.

Of course, as has been pointed out by a number of people, the verificationist principle itself is not empirically verifiable. Rorer and Widiger note the implications this has for a science trying to rise above religion:

[Given] that empiricism falls by its own criterion that all knowledge is justifiable knowledge, because there is no way to justify empiricism ... empiricism ... ultimately depends on an unjustifiable commitment, a leap of faith. Science does not differ from religion - an ironical result given that the motivation for empiricism was precisely to distinguish science from

mysticism.¹⁵

Mainstream, academic psychology clings to logical empiricism nonetheless and it would seem that through the questionnaire, mainstream, academic psychology of religion has taken the verificationist principle to the height of triviality. The only "objective" act in a questionnaire is the actual checkmark or circle made by the individual concerned and yet this particular act is of very little significance to the study - it is often carried out unobserved by the researcher. Only the mark left on the page becomes important. But how long did the subject take (and why are they called subjects anyway?). Did the subject feel that the choices s/he was given adequately expressed her/his feelings? The mark on the page is the method by which the variable in question is verified one way or the other. True to the verificationist principle, that mark is equated with the opinion of the subject. The subject's reported experience very quickly becomes "nothing but" the pencil scratches left on the page.

Spilka et al, begin their text by admitting that "the overwhelming majority of our conclusions about the nature of religion result from questionnaire approaches".¹⁶ And it is here that a discussion of operational definitions becomes appropriate. It is not scientific enough to ask people if they are are "angry" and then correlate their response with

the dependent variable in question. Rather, the scientist must "objectify" what s/he means by "anger" so that s/he can be sure that each subject is responding to the same stimulus. An operational definition helps avoid circularity. For instance s/he might "operationally define" anger, as a score of 6 or higher on the M.A.D. scale. Now the study will be more scientific, but it will also be bereft of the interesting nuances of "anger" untapped by a questionnaire which requires the subject to answer "true" or "false" to questions such as: "have you ever felt frustrated?"

Measures of mysticism exemplify psychology's attempt to legitimize through method what would otherwise be an illegitimate subject of study for a logical empiricist-driven science. The dubious success of this attempt is illustrated below with the "M" scale.¹⁷ Subjects are required to check the appropriate statements: Have you ever had an experience...

_____ in which all things seemed to be unified into a significant whole?

_____ in which time, place and distance are meaningless?

_____ which could not adequately be put into words?

etc.

It is interesting that the authors of these tests have some conception of the ineffable nature of a mystical experience, as evidenced by the third item, yet they do not see that

checking off alternatives on a questionnaire conflicts with that nature. One can only wonder at the picture of Jesus or Gautama sitting down with their pencils and filling out the "M" scale.

The materialism related to the verificationist principle is really just an extension of the valuing of empiricism. Technology now enables physiological psychologists to empirically verify some aspects of materialism which they have always held dear. Physiological psychologists typically operate as if mind/body dualism has been finally and thankfully laid to rest.¹⁸ The implications of reducing all aspects of conscious experience, including the religious experience, to neuronal transmission are stifling for the believer. This does not necessarily have to be the case however, as physiological explanations, like their psychological counterparts, do not have to rule out theological truth claims in general.¹⁹ This is not to deny that at least some particular theological details are legitimately called into question by these materialistic assumptions.

These two groups of assumptions relating to the place of psychology in the study of religion, and the degree of empiricism and materialism embodied in the methods of psychological research, have had profound effects on mainstream, academic psychology of religion in the West. As

has been alluded to earlier, the source of these assumptions can largely be found in the philosophy of logical empiricism. What follows is a historical overview of some of the figures who have had a significant influence on present day, academic psychology of religion in the West, namely, William James, John Watson, and Sigmund Freud. Discussion will concentrate on those aspects of their philosophy of science which directly affected their study of religion. What assumptions guided their study with regards to their view of psychology's proper place in the study of religion, and what is the degree of empiricism and materialism found in their methodology? Finally, how have these assumptions contributed to the current crisis in present-day, academic psychology of religion?

The last two chapters deal with figures and movements that have not had a great impact on mainstream, academic psychology of religion, but, it will be argued, should have had such an impact. The philosophic assumptions underlying both Carl Jung's analytic theory and the humanist movement with its culmination in transpersonal psychology, will be discussed in terms of positive models for an improved psychology of religion. The concluding section of the thesis will include an overview of the preceeding chapters and a further analysis of the analytic and transpersonal psychologies of religion from a feminist perspective.

NOTES

1 H.G. Coward, "The Methodology and Scope of Psychology of Religion," Holistic Concern For World Welfare, ed. A. Kannar (Adyar, India: The Theosophical Society, 1987), p. 133.

2 This particular approach is taken by M. Argyle in his book, Religious Behaviour (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

3 J.M. Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion. (London: The Macmillan Co., 1970), p. vii.

4 Coward, Methodology, p. 133.

5 J. Morawski, "After Reflection: Psychologists' Uses of History", The Analysis of Psychological Theory: Metapsychological Perspectives, ed. H. Stam, T. Rogers and K. Gergen (Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1987), p. 165.

6 Ibid., p. 159.

7 L. Rorer & T. Widiger ask: "And what of physics today? ... Physicists have no qualms about considering quarks and black holes, things that are not operationally definable, or even, in principle, observable ... " From their article "Personality Structure and Assessment", Annual Review of Psychology, (1983) 34, p. 434.

8 Morawski, Psychologists' Uses of History, p. 160.

9 This particular penchant for "psychologism" is described by H. Vande Kemp, "The Dangers of Psychologism:

The Place of God in Psychology", Journal of Psychology and Theology, (1986) 14, pp.97-108.

10 This option is discussed by a number of influential writers on the subject at the turn of the century including G.A. Coe, The Psychology of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917), pp. 7-8.

11 B. Spilka, R.W. Hood, & R.L. Gorsuch (eds.), The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1985), p. 156.

12 This and other attributions are discussed in Spilka, et al, Psychology pp. 21-29.

13 G. Davidson & J. Neale, Abnormal Psychology (3d ed.; New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1982), p. 229.

14 C.D. Batson and W.L. Ventis, The Religious Experience: A Social-Psychological Perspective (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 3.

15 Rorer & Widiger, Personality, p. 437.

16 Spilka, et al, Psychology, p. 51.

17 These and other items were used by R.W. Hood & R.J. Morris, "Knowledge and Experience Criteria in the Report of Mystical Experiences", Review of Religious Research (1981) 23, pp. 76-84.

18 The introductory remarks of the following physiological/psychology textbook is representative:

What we [modern scientists] call 'mind' is a consequence of the functioning of the body and its interactions with the environment. The mind-body problem thus exists only as an abstraction.

From N. R. Carlson, Physiology of Behavior (3d ed.;
Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1986), p. 4.

19 Vande Kemp, Dangers, pp. 97-108.

CHAPTER ONE

As outlined in the introduction, the first figure in order of chronological prominence would be William James. However, it would be inappropriate to leap into a discussion of the assumptive systems of William James' philosophy of science as they pertain to his psychology of religion, as if that was the beginning. In fact it would seem necessary to give at least a cursory glance at the philosophy of science predating James which can trace its roots backwards in time to the ancient Greeks.

A number of the books on the history of psychology investigated for this thesis addressed the history of James, Watson and Freud, some three quarters of the way into the text.¹ A large portion of each book involved a detailed discussion of the roots of scientific psychology through the philosophy of the Jewish and Christian traditions, the Dark Ages, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, etc. How far back should one go in the history of philosophical thought? Is such a foray even necessary? Brett notes that the history of philosophical thought has been very important in the history of psychology for two reasons. The first is that "enquiries about man [sic] have been influenced by prevailing assumptions, usually derived from practice in other sciences about knowledge and how to obtain it".² The second reason is that:

A great number of apparently psychological discussions are really philosophical questions in disguise. Because of their interest in the tools and methods of knowledge philosophers have always been extremely interested in the mind. But very often the conundrums they have posed about the various faculties of the mind like 'reason', 'will', 'desire', 'conscience', and so on, which may have been treated as questions of introspective psychology to be settled by internal observations, are more properly to be regarded as questions about logical justification ... Over and over again we find epistemological and logical questions about different classes of assumptions disguised as psychological questions about the equipment and workings of the mind.³

The difficulty of separating the roots of psychology from the history of philosophical inquiry becomes painfully apparent. However both Brett and Robinson give hints as to where one might begin to draw the line if one is studying the philosophy of scientific psychology in particular.

Brett writes:

If anyone attempted to write a history of psychology as a theoretical science he would have to begin with the nineteenth century - perhaps later. For conscious attempts to test assumptions about man did not emerge till Darwin had shattered the common belief in our supernatural origin. Psychologists, as it were, are nibbling at the very core of the forbidden fruit. But they should never forget that they inherit the tradition of a long line of philosophers, medical men, and ethico-religious writers who prepared the way for their entry into the garden.⁴

The ability of psychology to nibble anywhere near the core of the forbidden fruit is a point of debate in the present thesis, but Brett's general idea is helpful. There is a roughly identifiable point at which psychological inquiry became "scientific". Robinson adds to this: Psychology is young, but its subject matter "is as old as reflection ...

If psychology is young, it is young as a scientific discipline ...⁵ Robinson's statement reveals that any "starting point" for a study of this sort is going to be arbitrary in some sense. However, both he and Brett provide a rationalization for drawing the line somewhere, that somewhere being approximately the time at which psychology began to become "scientific". In an effort to more thoroughly investigate the legacy of assumptions which William James and his compatriots may have absorbed into their philosophy of science, and from there into their psychology of religion, the present discussion will focus on an even earlier "beginning", to a time when pre-psychology philosophers began to toy with the idea of "scientific method". And so, removing as much of the arbitrary nature of this decision as possible the plunge into pre-Jamesian philosophy of science will begin with Bacon.

Francis Bacon was born in 1605. He figures prominently in the history of psychology as the leading spokesperson for the inductive method. Brett describes the results of this in the following passage:

The view was tacitly accepted that scientists must start from facts or observations, preferably measurements; these are to be collected carefully and cautious generalizations made which do not go beyond the collected data. These generalizations or empirical laws, are then to be related in a similar cautious manner under theories or higher level generalizations.⁶

Of course as Brett points out, and as has been discussed in the preface, Bacon and his followers (most notably Locke and

Hume) got it the wrong way around. "In fact we start with assumptions which are very general. We are never without assumptions, never without knowledge, even if it is of a very primitive and undifferentiated kind."⁷ And further:

Scientific data are always relative to the inquirer's existing knowledge, his interests, the problems which he wants to solve, and the type of solution that he expects. In fact an experiment in science implies the deliberate observation of expected results, not gaping open-mouthed at nature.⁸

By ignoring the effects our preconceptions have on our "objective" fact gathering, Bacon led the way to an unselfconscious method which of course has special implications for the highly reflexive science of psychology. More generally, the dogmatic commitment to this method encouraged by Bacon, resulted in "the view that success in science is the result of following a definite method. It is a particular example of the belief in the magic of technique."⁹ The young psychology, struggling for an identity, was to pick up on both the method and the dogmatism. In fact, both the associationism and sensationism of psychology up until the early twentieth century, developed as a result of Bacon's method and his dogmatism.¹⁰ These schools of thought will be discussed shortly.

Descartes (1596) and Hobbes (1588) were both contemporaries of Bacon. However, their deductive methodology set them apart from Bacon. Boring writes that Rene Descartes "believed in the existence of innate ideas,

ideas which are not derivable from experience but which come to the mind with such certainty and inevitability that their acceptance is assured."¹¹ Included in this grouping of innate ideas were the ideas of God, space, time and motion. Through these innate ideas comes an ability to rationalize and logically deduce the evidence for the truth of scientific hypotheses. To rely solely on sense data was often misleading.

The most memorable aspect of Descartes' philosophy was of course his dualism. Brett notes the following results of Descartes' dualism in psychology:

We thus find growing up a mechanistic biology and physics alongside of a separate science of mind using only the method of introspection. Watson and Pavlov on the one hand and Titchener and Wundt on the other were the final flowers of Cartesian dualism. They were his descendants in more than their concentration of what they deemed mind rather than body or what they deemed body rather than mind. In their use of ultimate units like reflexes or sensory atoms as explanatory principles they were following up, also, the Cartesian search for simple natures from which the motions of the body or the workings of the mind could be rationally deduced.¹²

When Descartes split up his object of study into mind/soul and matter/body, and allowed scientific inquiry into the latter only, he set up a crucial agenda for psychology. Those who wanted to study the soul were forced to borrow from the scientific methodology of the time to attain any legitimacy (those who tried such "unscientific" methodology as introspectionism were not effective in the long run). Descartes had left no instructions for how the "soul" side

of his dichotomy was to be studied. Unfortunately his warnings against the scientific study of the soul were not heeded in the push to add legitimacy to those interested in the soul. He left a double message: To study effectively is to study scientifically (after his methodological dogmatism) but you cannot study the mind using these means (after his theological commitments). Those wanting to study the mind "effectively", took the first part of the message to heart, and closed their eyes to the second part.

Thomas Hobbes was very much influenced by Galileo and his theory of motion. In Hobbes' view: "The followers of Bacon spent too much time on new-fangled devices and experiments and too little on deducing consequences from the fundamental theory of motion... They preferred their eyes, ears, and fingertips to their brains."¹³ His attachment to Galileo's geometry encouraged Hobbes' use of motion mechanics as the explanatory device for human behaviour. Unfortunately, this assumption of "efficient causes" remains with psychology to the present. Brett explains:

Of course he was right in saying that human actions have efficient causes - external stimuli, movements of the sense-organs, internal motions and so on. But this does not mean that a list of any such movements could ever be sufficient to explain actions. For actions are distinguished by the goals towards which movements are directed; the goal makes the movements part of an action of a certain sort. And since we cannot specify precisely which must be involved in attaining the goal, so also we cannot specify precisely which antecedent movements are sufficient to initiate behavior.¹⁴

Although Hobbes may be seen to share aspects of Descartes'

deductive methodology in his unenthusiastic response to Bacon's empiricism, only his mechanical inclinations were highlighted by empirical psychology.

The mid-seventeenth century brought with it what Brett calls the "observationalist tradition", which is typically associated with the empiricists, Locke (1632), Berkeley (1684) and later, Hume (1711). Murray cautions against the convention of historians of psychology who interpret the rationalism of Descartes "as the nearly mechanical 'cause' of empiricism and materialism."¹⁵ He notes that John Locke, for instance, does not even mention Descartes in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Further, he finds a number of rationalistic elements in Locke's view of "intuitive" knowledge and morals.¹⁶ Murray points out that rationalism, empiricism and materialism are often found "side by side throughout intellectual history".¹⁷ This continues on even in the present day but unfortunately psychology is unaware of the myriad forces at work. Our psychology has become painfully consistent in its encouragement of empiricism in methodology whilst turning a blind eye to the rationalistic elements (in the form of a priori assumptions, etc.) which guide the practitioners of that methodology.

For the present, Locke's empiricism is of most interest as it has obviously been the more influential aspect of his philosophy of science. Brett notes that "at the close of the seventeenth century speculative thought seemed likely to

fall back into the chaos from which Descartes strove to rescue it... What had been temporarily lost was the idea of method: it was this that Locke restored."¹⁸ Boring sees Locke's empirical methodology as "the necessary complement for experimental psychology".¹⁹ Locke's focus on sensations set the stage for future psychology and encouraged the idea of the association of the sensations which was later made primary in the work of Wundt.

Immanuel Kant (1724) represents a return to rationalism. Murray identifies Kant's rationalism in the Kantian proposals of "the innate, logical structure of thought and language, the a priori principles of perceptual organization, [and] the stages of cognitive and moral understanding".²⁰ Of special importance for the present discussion, is Kant's discouragement of the study of the mind.

The mind, unlike external nature, does not stand still as we attempt to observe it. Indeed, the very attempt to observe its contents alters them, moreover, what is most defining about the human mind are the a priori categories of pure understanding and, as we have seen, these are not 'given' by experience and do not have empirical content.²¹

Kant distinguished between two types of selves: the noumenal self described above "was a presupposition of experience ... about which nothing could be known" ²² and the phenomenal self, whose structure and content could be "analysed by epistemologists ... [and] whose outward manifestations could be studied in the discipline which [Kant] called

anthropology".23

Another major Kantian contribution to psychology was his contention that science is measurement. For Kant:

Science is characterized by mathematical as well as empirical description. This was an extrapolation of Newtonian practice, and as a methodological prescription it had a profound effect on successive psychologists. It introduced the craze for measurement in psychology and reinforced the yearning for scientific respectability amongst psychologists which had started with Humes's Treatise.24

Logical empiricism will now be discussed more directly, through the person of Auguste Comte (1798). Comte is usually acknowledged as the founder of positivism. The following is a passage typical of his positivism and exemplary of the influences it was to have on the psychology of religion:

[Comte believed that] cultures pass through three distinct stages: the theological, which is superstitious; the metaphysical, in which hidden physical forces or causes replace deities; finally the scientific, in which positive knowledge replaces superstition and "metaphysics".25

Logical positivism evolved from Comte's positivism to rid philosophy of various metaphysical concerns, such as the rationality of theism. If being religious was primitive then studying religions with any sort of empathy was akin to betraying the whole of the positivist enterprise. Consistent with the verificationist principle of logical positivism, which collapses the meaning of any proposition into the evidence for that proposition, Comte agreed with Kant that the mind was not directly observable and was therefore

unverifiable. In this way he dismissed most of psychology, promoting only two particular methods of studying the mind. The first was similar to the phrenology that was in vogue at the time,²⁶ the second involved "the direct observation of the products of mental life", which he called sociology.²⁷ Comte's positivism culminated in the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle which included Wittgenstein²⁸, Schlick, Carnap, Reisenbach and their followers.²⁹ "Once we have exhausted the data of sense, there is nothing else that can be said either of the world or ourselves."³⁰ Logical empiricism continued as a general theory of knowledge, which guided the science of academic psychology, after the Vienna Circle disbanded.

The empiricist agenda beginning with Bacon and continuing with the observationalist tradition of Locke, Berkeley and Hume was highlighted in the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle. It can be seen to contain the roots of the following assumptions of our psychology's philosophy of science. As was outlined in the introduction there is first the question of the place of psychology in the study of religion. This particular question was not to be addressed until the turn of the twentieth century, however, the empirical philosophers discussed above did address a related question, that is: "What is the place of psychology (or its vintage equivalent) in the study of mind/soul?" Assuming that religious experiences are somewhat related to the

workings of the mind and cognition, then the scientist's concern for dabbling with things of the mind should be related to the concern for dabbling in things religious. This is a major assumption in itself and many readers may find it questionable, but at some fundamental level religious experience and mind must be related, if only incidentally.³¹

The observationalist tradition, and its followers, embodied a materialism which would encourage the view that mind could be reduced to material phenomenon, in opposition to the mind/body dualism of the rationalists. In this way the tradition set the stage for present-day study with its "conquest through reduction" approach. The implications for the study of religion are typically negative as can be imagined. These implications will be highlighted in the works of the psychologists in the following three chapters.

The second grouping of assumptions outlined in the introduction are related further to aspects of the materialism outlined above, and of course to empiricism. For the observationalist tradition these aspects were crucial, especially as they were later crystallized in the logical positivist movement. As has been made clear in the foregoing, the reductive materialism which accompanies the above approach leaves little room for holistic explanations of various human experiences - religious or otherwise. As

for the rampant empiricism of the approach, it is enough to note that psychology eagerly embraced the empiricism and materialism derived from the Vienna Circle and continued allegiance to logical empiricism remains the underlying cause of the present-day crisis.

Interestingly enough, David Hume's empiricism, taken to its logical conclusion, argued against the ability to observe causal connections. It was the rationalists who argued for this ability. Psychologists in present day academia seem to simply ignore the threat of inconsistency, posed by Hume, when they champion empiricism by insisting on experimental designs that "prove" causation.³²

The rationalist philosophers, especially Descartes and Kant, can be seen as a mixed blessing for the psychology of religion. As has been noted, their refusal to reduce the mind to the level of empirical discourse was probably a healthy precedent to set for the later scientific study of religious experience. This will become especially clear in the work of William James. However, their methodological dogmatism remained their greatest legacy. The mathematical model for science was vigorously embraced. In the end, their cautions against the application of such methodology to the study of the mind were lost amidst the furor of the new science. Brett puts the most emphasis on Kant's role in this regard:

The combination of observationalism [empiricism] with the Kantian prejudice about mathematics encouraged the view that science progresses by the accumulation of measurements, the noticing of correlations or laws between the sets of measurements, and the final relating laws under theories. Psychologists, increasingly self-conscious about the status of their studies, thought that respectable scientific theories would emerge if only enough mathematics were used in making the initial observations.³³

Cartesian and Kantian cautions against reductionist approaches to the study of the mind can be seen as discouraging of the materialistic psychologism of much present-day, academic psychology. Their rationalism revealed serious flaws in the empiricist enterprise. However, it was their dogmatic, mathematical methodology which was to set the trend for the twentieth century. This aspect of their philosophy of science fit well with the logical positivist school and its penchant for measurement.

As this discussion approaches the final years leading up to the work of William James, the appropriate aspects of the work of Wilhelm Wundt will be highlighted. Locke's focus on sensations and the resulting associationism of Hume set the stage for Wundt (1832) and his structuralist psychology. Wundt sought the best of both worlds "in attempting to build an empirical science [of associationism] on the foundation of [rational] introspection".³⁴ Murray notes further that "we may judge his success by observing that there are not many Wundtians around any longer".³⁵

Wundt was both an empiricist and an experimentalist. He believed that psychology must be based on experience but his criterion for which experiences should count and which should not was not as strict as the empiricists of today would prefer. Wundt's allegiance to introspectionism is typical in this regard. In order to control the sometimes "subjective" nature of introspectionism, Wundt advocated experimentation. Wundt referred to experiments as "the means by which we may so control our mental processes that the disturbing influences which the condition of observation tends to exercise upon them is counteracted".³⁶ Brett notes that:

Psychologists of the earlier schools were usually in too great a hurry to reach the object of the idea, to settle whether it was or was not representative of reality. Wundt proceeds from the idea to its elements, the sensations thence to the elements in the sensations, namely, strength, or intensity and quality.³⁷

The psycho-physics of Fechner and Weber remained dominant in Wundt's work, however he understood the difficulties of transferring objective observation methods from physics to psychology, a science where observation could only provide the scientist with the processes of his/her own mind.³⁸ However, Murray writes that Wundt "nevertheless hoped that experiments would solve the problems of formulating valid laws of psychic causality".³⁹ Wundt's Volker Psychologie can be seen as an attempt to develop a psychology that was appropriate for social phenomena. Unfortunately, it was virtually ignored by academic psychology although it was to

have a large influence in sociology.

One aspect of Wundt's thought, that will be found again in the the works of James, is his voluntarism. This belief in the will runs contrary to simple associationistic theories "according to which presentations and ideas are unchanging objects subject to the operation of simple laws such as similarity or contiguity."⁴⁰ Wundt's voluntarism involved instead the view of psychic life as "a flow of events [which are] dependent on the operation of [the] will."⁴¹ This view typically opposes a deterministic materialism, which posits that all human behaviour can be predicted from the "proper" understanding of physiology. The American movement was to borrow selectively from Wundt, leaving out his particular brand of associationism and structuralism and adopting his experimentalism.

As with the rationalists, Descartes and Kant, Wundt can be seen as a mixed blessing for mainstream, academic psychology as it began to develop in the United States. If the Americans had adopted his understanding of the subjective nature of empirical observation, and his championing of the will, it may have tempered the experimental zeal which he engendered in the American movement. As will become especially clear in the chapter on John Watson, this zeal was to have a negative effect on the study of human experiences such as the religious experience.

Even though true experiments on these types of experiences are difficult to design for ethical reasons, the experimental ideal is still upheld and carries over into the correlational questionnaire studies which, as explained in the introduction, make up the bulk of present-day research.

It should be noted at this point that the foregoing description of pre-twentieth-century philosophy of science has not been made in order to show a causal relationship between pre- and post-twentieth-century thought. Murray has already cautioned us against such scholastica successionis civatium in his discussion of Locke, for instance. The foregoing description was written to make a different claim - one that is stated quite eloquently by Robinson:

The claim is not that the nineteenth-century provided contemporary psychology with an irresistible legacy but that contemporary psychology is nineteenth-century psychology in its most global respects.⁴²

Further, where contemporary (read mainstream, academic) psychology has deviated from nineteenth-century thought, such deviations are not always scientifically motivated. Robinson notes that physics, for example, has given up on designing perpetual motion machines "because the conservation of energy legislates against them".⁴³ The absence of "orthodox Wundtians" and the introspectionist agenda cannot be attributed to a theory that has disproven the existence of minds, consciousness, or our ability "to reflect upon our private experiences", because no such theory exists.⁴⁴ Rather, the absence is to be understood,

largely, as "the result of the inability of the accepted method of psychological inquiry to address these subjects".⁴⁵

The contemporary psychologist, if only insensibly, has made a metaphysical commitment to a method and has, perforce, eliminated from the domain of significant issues those that cannot be embraced by that method.⁴⁶

Religious experience appears to be one of the areas which has often been eliminated.

NOTES

1 See for example, Peters, Brett's History and History.

2 Peters, Brett's History, p. 33. Note also that given the pervasive use of gender-biased pronouns in the quotations cited throughout this thesis, the reader is asked to assume the [sic] notation from this point on, whenever the bias occurs.

3 Ibid., p. 33.

4 Ibid., p. 36.

5 D.N. Robinson, An Intellectual History of Psychology. (Revised ed.; New York: Academic Press, 1981), p. 12. He notes further that, "it is far from clear that psychology has attained this status". (p. 12)

6 Peters, Brett's History, p. 352.

7 Ibid., p. 26.

8 Ibid., p. 352.

9 Ibid., p. 335.

10 Ibid., p. 353.

11 E.G. Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology (2d ed.; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), p. 165.

12 Peters, Brett's History p. 357.

13 Ibid., p. 380.

14 Ibid, p. 383.

15 Murray, History, p. 202.

16 Ibid, p. 202.

17 Ibid, p. 202.

18 Peters, Brett's History, p. 415.

19 Boring, History, p. 169.

20 Murray, History p. 284.

21 Ibid, p. 284.

22 Peters, Brett's History, p. 533.

23 Ibid., p. 533.

24 Ibid., p. 533.

25 Murray, History, p. 332.

26 The advent of phrenology is indicative of the role of physiology in the history of psychology. The idea that specific mental functions could be directly tied to specific areas of the brain vacillated in popularity but achieved marked success with the work of Broca. The law of specific nerve energies was also influential as it was discovered that the nerves of the visual system, for example, could be stimulated in any way (either through pressure, heat, etc.)

but the result would always be visual. This is why when one rubs one's eyes one often sees flashes and stars. Both of these directions in physiology encouraged a deterministic materialism which is naturally discouraging for the study of the religious experience.

27 Murray, History, p. 333.

28 Although Wittgenstein's writings influenced the logical positivists, he was critical of the movement.

29 Murray, History, p. 333.

30 Ibid., p. 333.

31 This type of argument may in turn sound reductionistic, though not necessarily materialistic. The disadvantages of holding this position include the encouragement of cognitive interpretations of religious experience including Piagetian stage theories of children's capacities to understand religious narratives, eg. R. Goldman, Religious Thinking From Childhood to Adolescence (London: Routledge, 1964). These approaches assume that religious knowledge will be experienced according to the cognitive stages of the person being studied, although many anecdotal reports from parents reveal a wide variety in the abilities of children to understand and interpret their religious life. Further, it is a well-documented fact that comprehension comes long before production in the speech development of children. Relationships with the numinous may be understood by the child at levels well beyond her/his cognitive capacity in more mundane affairs, but these may

not be evidenced by her/his verbal reports. For the moment however, the assumption of a correlation between mind and religious experience will be maintained at some level to illustrate the difference between those figures whose materialism precludes even consciousness and those who refuse to reduce mind simply to matter. Surely the latter would be more healthy in their approach to religious experience in particular, than the former.

32 Rorer & Widiger give the following illustration of "the pitfalls of combining muddy thinking about causality with slavish devotion to pseudo-rigorous experimentalism", in their description of typical attribution theory and attitude change studies reported in the social psychology literature:

Typically, these studies involve two groups, one of which is subjected to some manipulation and the other of which is not. The mean scores of the groups are compared and if they differ, it is concluded that the manipulation caused the individuals to shift their ... attitudes, attributions or whatever ... At least two things should be noted about this dreadful literature. First, between-persons data are being used to make an inference of a within-individual effect. Second, a group effect (summed over persons) is being used to infer a causal effect whose nexus is located within the individual. Neither inference is warranted ... "

From Personality, p. 440.

33 Peters, Brett's History, p. 543. Brett also makes an illustrative comparison with the physical sciences in this regard:

Measurement by itself does not produce scientific hypotheses any more than do laboratories or grants for research. In the physical sciences a tremendous amount of preliminary qualitative analysis not only proceeded the use of quantitative techniques, but also provided

assumptions about the physical world which were included in measuring devices ... But psychologists attempted to measure without sufficient qualitative knowledge of functional relationships which would both enable them to follow up relationships worth exploring and provide the necessary basis for measuring devices.

(p. 535)

34 Murray, History, p. 286.

35 Ibid., p. 286.

36 Peters, Brett's History, p. 505.

37 Ibid., p. 506.

38 Murray, History, p. 178.

39 Ibid., p. 178.

40 Ibid., p. 179.

41 Ibid., p. 179.

42 Robinson, Intellectual History, p. 397.

43 Ibid., p. 397.

45 Ibid., p. 397.

45 Ibid., p. 397.

46 Ibid., p. 397.

CHAPTER TWO

By the late nineteenth century the psychology of religion proper begins to develop in the West. Interestingly enough, out of the five history of psychology texts reviewed, only two had entries for the psychology of religion. Boring was one but his entry referred not to William James' Varieties of Religious Experience, the seminal work at the time of Boring's writing, but to a work by one of James' students, G. Stanley Hall. Hall is known more for his mainstream experimentalism than his contributions to the comparatively exotic field of religious studies. Although the work of William James is highlighted by all the authors in some way, his work on Varieties is never given much emphasis. Instead his Principles of Psychology becomes the focus. It is in the Principles that James' philosophy of science is dealt with the most, although his presentation is far from clear. The problem of elucidating the philosophy behind his psychology will become the focus of the first section of this chapter. The Varieties of Religious Experience, as well as The Will to Believe will then be discussed.

As mentioned earlier, the American psychology movement was especially enamoured with the experimentalism of Wundt but his associationist bent was not particularly well-received. It would seem that the American psyche was

better suited to functionalism and the Darwinian revolution. Boring notes that "by 1900 the characteristics of American psychology had become well-defined. It had inherited its physical body from German experimentalism, but it had got its mind from Darwin".¹

The functionalism of Darwin encouraged a change in psychology from the "description of the generalized mind to the assessment of personal capacities in the successful adjustment of the individual to his environment".² Boring gives a number of reasons why this change was accepted and encouraged so readily by the Americans. He notes that America, the new pioneer country, was ready-made for Darwinian functionalism. "Survival by adaptation to the environment was the key to the culture of the New World".³ Along with this pioneer force was the reaction against hereditary right and theological dogma borrowed from the Renaissance, reinforcing the recognition of personal achievement and scientific inquiry.⁴

Boring's agenda at this point is not well-disguised and his Western bias of "predict and control"; "divide and conquer", becomes evident in the following passage:

It is as natural to be a functionalist as it is to want to predict, to be more interested in the future than the past to prefer to ride facing forward in the train. The future concerns you because you think you might change it if you had the ability....the functional view is the natural view.⁵

This functionalism, along with the experimentalism inherited

from the Germans, can be seen as the precursor of mainstream psychology in general and the behaviourist movement in particular.

Bakan's essay "Politics and American Psychology" describes some of the reasons why experimentalism became so popular. He notes that in the nineteenth century psychology was the study of "men and morals" and research was largely funded by American Protestant groups. By the middle of the century however, science and scientists had become entrenched in academy where a "two-step" vision of science was emerging. Here scientists were engaged in pure research: "knowledge is first developed by experiment and theory, and is only subsequently applied to concrete problems".⁶ Bakan writes that the scientist was becoming "the role monitor of, or even developer of, fact".⁷

Policy in the affairs of men was not his business any longer. That was to be left to the increasingly powerful people in the spheres of trade, manufacture, finance and politics. It is in this context that experimental psychology was introduced into the academy. It was clearly a form of psychology that was sufficiently remote from human conduct as to not be bothersome to the new economic and political powers. Science was rising in prestige and the moral psychology was declining.⁸

Bakan describes how the new scientific psychology shed its image of moral authority, abandoning the more "classical concerns" of the nineteenth century, in order to enjoy "some of the advantages that its status as a science provided".⁹

William James emerged out of this functionalist/

experimentalist milieu as one of American psychology's earliest leaders, however he was not necessarily ready to abandon the nineteenth century in its entirety. James' functionalism may be seen as arising from his views of cognition as a function of mind - "mind has a use and it can be observed in use".¹⁰ As for experimentation, James often used experiments but he apparently did not like to.¹¹ This may be due to the fact that James' view of consciousness as a steady, continuous stream, rather than a "mere congeries of elements", was not particularly amenable to experimentation.¹² Through experimentation, James felt psychology had lost "the real whole in seeing only the elementary artifacts of its method".¹³

Wilshire's book William James and Phenomenology: A Study of "The Principles of Psychology", outlines a more revealing aspect of James' assumptive systems by painting James as a phenomenologist, even though the term "phenomenology" had yet to be coined in James' day. Wilshire writes that the American tradition of construing James' as a functionalist is misleading:

It is all very well to say that James believed that mind performed a biological function in adjusting the organism to the environment; but if it is not added that he also believed that the function of the mind cannot be rendered exclusively in biological terms, but requires irreducibly mentalistic ones expressing the way the environment appears to an organism conscious of its ends as its own, then more is concealed than revealed. Moreover, it must be added that James' conception of mentalistic terms is very different from that of an introspectionist. He is neither a pure

functionalist, nor an introspectionist, nor a behaviorist; if he is any single thing he is a pioneering phenomenologist.¹⁴

High and Woodward who compare the work of Gordon Allport and William James, highlight James' view of the will as the guiding component of his phenomenology. Human free will was the rallying point around which James attempted to reconcile humanism and physiological psychology.¹⁵ James understood the physiological and behavioural mechanisms underlying human activity but he was able to conceive of them as "serving the interests (purposes, ideals, needs) of the whole person".¹⁶ Later behaviourists were to pick up on James' functionalist understanding of behaviour and physiology to the exclusion of his phenomenological approach to free will. In fact, Boring describes the later school of behaviourism as "the child of James' functionalism".¹⁷ This seems to be a mis-reading of the same James who wrote in a letter to D. S. Miller "my first act of free will shall be to believe in free will".¹⁸ The teleology underlying James' views of free will and the goal-directed nature of consciousness will be discussed further at a later point in the thesis.

James' most influential work in the psychological community is his Principles of Psychology. It is a voluminous work covering a number of areas and consistent with the author's own philosophy of mind, it follows along a stream of consciousness which is difficult to consolidate

into one package. For this reason, it has sometimes been viewed as lacking internal consistency as James' thought on certain issues progresses throughout the text. What follows is an analysis of his Principles with emphasis on the apparent contradictions that arise in the area of particular interest - James' materialism and empiricism.

One of the driving questions underlying most of the Principles is that of the origin and characteristics of mind/cognition/consciousness. In the section entitled "The Scope of Psychology" he criticizes what he calls the "spiritualist" view which explains mental faculties by positing the existence of a soul or mind, an absolute entity which can be reduced no further. He writes that this sort of explanation does not really tell one anything. Further, there seem to be a number of variables within this one irreducible entity which points to the view that faculties within the soul/mind, such as memory, "do not exist absolutely, but work under conditions".¹⁹

He also criticizes the associationist explanations of mental faculties for being unable to account for the effects of variables such as "exhaustion, hypnotism, old age, and the like".²⁰ He then arrives at the perhaps surprising conclusion that:

Bodily experiences, ... and more particularly brain-experiences, must take a place amongst those conditions of the mental life of which psychology need take account. The spiritualist and the associationist

must both be 'cerebralists' to the extent at least of admitting that certain peculiarities in the way of working of their own favorite principles are explicable only by the fact that the brain laws are a codeterminant of the result.²¹

However, later he begins to argue that for the physiological account to triumph, it must be shown that consciousness must have evolved along with the rest of the physiology. Consequently, "if evolution is to work smoothly, consciousness in some shape must have been present at the very origin of things."²² The difficulties begin when the typical theories of "mind stuff", aggregating over time to form our present consciousness, are postulated. James writes: "no possible number of entities (call them as you like, whether forces, material particles, or mental elements) can sum themselves together ... atoms of feeling cannot compose higher feelings, anymore than atoms of matter can compose physical things."²³

In the end he returns to the idea of the soul as the least logically inconsistent, and those who were cringing throughout his journey into reductive materialism are able to breathe a sigh of relief. He writes:

The soul [could be viewed as] a medium upon which ... the manifold brain-processes combine their effects. Not needing to consider it as the 'inner aspect' of any arch-molecule or brain cell, we escape that physiological improbability; and as its pulses of consciousness are unitary and integral affairs from the outset, we escape the absurdity of supposing feelings which exist separately and then 'fuse together' by themselves. The separateness is in the brain-world, on

this theory, and the unity in the soul world; ...²⁴

The only problem he sees remaining is the metaphysical one of understanding how the mental and physical worlds interact with one another. He notes that this trouble, "since it also exists inside of both worlds, and involves neither physical improbability nor logical contradiction, is relatively small."²⁵ Finally, he makes an important distinction between consciousness and soul: "The bare PHENOMENON, ... the IMMEDIATELY KNOWN thing which on the mental side is in apposition with the entire brain-process is the state of consciousness and not the soul itself."²⁶ This seems to leave the psychological function of the soul in question. James' views on consciousness and the soul will be returned to shortly.

Another section of importance in the Principles is entitled "Methods and Snares of Psychology" in which James discusses his concerns about both introspectionism and the experimental method. He writes of the first:

[The introspectionist] must not only have his mental states in their absolute veritableness, he must report them and write about them, name them, classify and compare them and trace their relations to other things. Whilst alive they are their own property; it is only post-mortem that they become his prey ... [In other words] no subjective state, whilst present is its own object; its object is always something else.²⁷

He concludes that "introspection is difficult and fallible" however, he sees this as a problem for "all observation of whatever kind".²⁸

What follows is James' rather lengthy but typically eloquent and candid view of the experimental method:

[This method] asks of course every moment for introspective data, but [it] eliminate[s] their uncertainty by operating on a large scale and taking statistical means. This method taxes patience to the utmost, and could hardly have arisen in a country whose natives could be bored. Such Germans as Weber, Fechner, Vierordt and Wundt obviously cannot; and their success has brought into the field an array of younger experimental psychologists, bent on studying the elements of the mental life, dissecting them out from the gross results in which they are embedded, and as far as possible reducing them to quantitative scales. The simple and open method of attack having done what it can, the method of patience, starving out, and harrassing to death is tried; the mind must submit to a regular siege ... What generous divination and that superiority in virtue which was thought by Cicero to give man the best insight into nature have failed to do, [the experimenters] spying and scraping, their deadly tenacity and almost diabolical cunning will doubtless someday bring about.²⁹

Because all scientific methods in psychology involve some amount of introspection and because the object of psychology and the subject studying the object are one and the same, psychology encounters special difficulties. James discusses the object of psychology below.

The object of every thought ... is neither more nor less than all that the thought thinks, exactly as the thought thinks it, however complicated the matter, and however symbolic the manner of the thinking may be. It is needless to say that memory can seldom accurately reproduce such an an object, when once it has passed from before the mind. It either makes too little or too much of it. [emphasis mine]³⁰

This keen awareness of the difficulty of monitoring one's own thoughts (let alone another's) arises from James' view of consciousness as a continuous stream which cannot be

isolated into little bits for the purpose of psychological investigation. Unfortunately our language works against the understanding of this phenomenon. James' discusses this difficulty in a section entitled "The Misleading Influence Of Speech":

Naming our thought by its own objects, we ... assume that as the objects are, so the thought must be. The thought of several distinct things can only consist of several distinct bits of thought or 'ideas'... The continuous flow of the mental stream is sacrificed and in its place an atomism, ... is preached, for the existence of which no good introspective grounds can be brought forward, and out of which presently grow all sorts of paradoxes and contradictions, the heritage of woe of students of the mind.³¹

The stream of thought which James advocates plays a major role in The Varieties of Religious Experience. He lists five characteristics of thought which lend themselves to stream-like imagery:

- 1) Every thought tends to be part of a personal consciousness
- 2) Within each personal consciousness thought is always changing
- 3) Within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous
- 4) It always appears to deal with objects independent of itself
- 5) It is interested in some parts of these objects to the exclusion of others...³²

It is through the first characteristic that we achieve a sense of ego or "I". It is the stream of thought which becomes the "knower". This in apparent opposition to his earlier discussion of the soul. Here we have another example of James' vacillation between some type of reductive materialism and Cartesian dualism, only this time he opts

for the former. Although our common sense would have us believe in a separate and individual Ego or Self or Soul, James concludes that:

The Soul-theory is, ... a complete superfluity so far as accounting for the actually verified facts of consciousness goes. So far, no one can be compelled to subscribe to it for definite scientific reasons. The case would rest here, and the reader be left free to make his choice, were it not for other demands of a more practical kind ... "33

For some reason, James decides to let scientific concerns become primary over metaphysical ones at this point, though he still leaves room for the soul/ego/mind when the "practical demands" of common-sense or divine inspiration tell us otherwise.

Continuing with James' five characteristics of thought, he notes that it is largely due to the second characteristic that the object of psychology proves to be so difficult to reproduce and, as in the third characteristic, isolate. The fifth characteristic relates to James' view of attention as directed by the will. The idea of the will marks another point of discrepancy in the Principles.

At earlier points, James seems to encourage a teleological view of the human character. Even human physiology is viewed as contributing to the fulfillment of human ideals and goals. For example he writes:

Furthermore, thought is spontaneous or free, whilst all material activity is determined ab extra; and the will can turn itself against all corporeal goods and appetites, which would be impossible were it a

corporeal function.³⁴

However, later in volume two of the Principles James decides that like the soul, the will is a concept "unnecessary and impractical for psychology to decide upon one way or the other".³⁵ He does at least note "the extraordinarily intimate and important character which the phenomenon of effort assumes in our own eyes as individual men".³⁶

It is interesting to note James' intimacy with both the soul and the will in The Varieties of Religious Experience. He believes in the efficacy of both concepts even as he admits that they may not be necessary for scientific psychology to take account of. Scientific psychology, is of limited use when used as a tool for studying religion. These limitations will be discussed shortly. For now, it is enough to note that James is intimately aware of the nature of the beast he is studying in The Varieties. For example, he writes:

The truth must at least be confronted that we are dealing with a field of experience where there is not a single conception that can be sharply drawn. The pretension, under such conditions, to be rigorously 'scientific' or 'exact' in our terms would only stamp us as lacking in understanding of our task.³⁷

In the second volume of James' Principles his rationalism takes precedence. Of empiricism he writes: "This notion of the outer world inevitably building up a sort of mental duplicate of itself if we would only give it time, is

so easy and natural in its vagueness that one hardly knows how to start to criticize it".³⁸ Of course James knows precisely where to begin.

The manner in which we now become acquainted with complex objects need not in the least resemble the manner in which the original elements of our consciousness grew up. Now, it is true, a new sort of animal need only be present to me, to impress its image on my mind; but this is because I am already in possession of categories for knowing each of its several attributes, and of a memory for retracing the order of their conjunction.³⁹

The next step is to use this rationalist argument to point out the error of labelling science "empirical". "The order of scientific thought is quite incongruent either with the way in which reality exists or with the way in which it comes before us".⁴⁰ He confesses that somehow it usually works and thus science becomes "a practical guide to our expectations as well as a theoretic delight".⁴¹ However, he does not see how these scientific systems can possibly be called the "immediate results of 'experience' in the ordinary sense".⁴² He continues:

[The genesis of scientific theories] is strictly akin to that of the flashes of poetry and sallies of wit to which the instable brain-paths equally give rise. But whereas the poetry and wit ... are their 'own excuse for being' and have to run the gauntlet of no further test, the 'scientific' conceptions must prove their worth by being 'verified'. This test, however, is the cause of their preservation, not that of their production.⁴³

He concludes then that there are "ideal and inward relations amongst the objects of our thought which can in no intelligible sense whatever be interpreted as reproductions of the order of outer experience."⁴⁴

In a set of lectures entitled "The Will to Believe" (published in book form in 1897) James begins to outline his views of religion and science in ways which foreshadow the contents of The Varieties. He begins by pointing out the fallibility of the notion that "scientific evidence" is all one needs to "steer safely between the opposite dangers of believing too little or of believing too much".⁴⁵ He points out the naivete of those who hold that "intellectual insight is [all that] remains after wish and will and sentimental preference have taken wing" or that "pure reason is what then settles our opinions".⁴⁶

Instead he points to the myriad other elements that enter into our decisions to believe in scientific truth claims or to disbelieve religious truth claims. He notes in the case of our belief in "molecules, the conservation of energy and democracy" that it is not scientific insight, but "the prestige of the opinions [which] makes the spark shout from them and light up our sleeping magazine of faith".⁴⁷

Our reason is quite satisfied, in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of every thousand of us, if it can find a few arguments that will do to recite in case our credulity is criticized by someone else. Our faith is faith in someone else's faith, and in the greatest matters this is most the case. Our belief in truth itself, for instance, that there is a truth, and that our minds and it are made for each other, ... what is it but a passionate affirmation of desires in which our social system backs us up?⁴⁸

All this by way of saying that criticizing the believer for not having sufficient empirical evidence for the belief is like the pot calling the kettle black. Further, when sceptical empiricists tell us "how sinful it is to be Christians on such 'insufficient evidence', insufficiency is really the last thing they have in mind. For them the evidence is absolutely sufficient, only it makes the other way".⁴⁹ Now James is not a sceptic, to be sure he understands the practicality of empirical evidence, he just attempts to be open to alternatives - an empiricist continually in a certain amount of doubt.

Returning to the scientific method in particular, James voices concern over the paranoia expressed in the scientist's commitment to avoiding error, often at the cost of seeking truth. To continually avoid error - "better go without belief forever than believe a lie" - merely shows the "preponderant private horror of becoming a dupe".⁵⁰ The verificationist principle has fed this paranoia:

Science has organized this nervousness into a regular technique, her so-called method of verification; and she has fallen so deeply in love with this method that I may even say she has ceased to care for truth by itself at all. It is only truth as technically verified that interests her. The truth of truths might come in merely affirmative form and she would decline to touch it.⁵¹

James' philosophy of science as interpreted through the Principles of Psychology and The Will to Believe involved a number of assumptions which become even clearer

in his psychological study of religion, The Varieties of Religious Experience. In The Varieties James studies religious conversion experiences of "the sick-souled" and "the healthy-minded", through the analysis of diaries, letters and other personal statements.

Throughout The Varieties, James defends the scientific study of religion. Psychology has a place though it is a carefully delimited one. To clarify his position he notes the difference between two basic methods of scientific inquiry. The first method asks the questions "What is the nature of the subject? How did it come about? What is its constitution, origin and history?" The second method asks "What is its importance, meaning and significance now that it is once here?"⁵² He notes, for example that the Bible might not survive inquiry number one, intact, but inquiry number two would put it in a much more favourable light.⁵³ James proceeds to study religious conversion experiences using psychological inquiry of the first type.

Using inquiry number one, James discovers that many of the religious converts he has studied could be classified as pathological. Interestingly enough, he allows that inquiries about meaning and importance would probably find such pathology a benefit which would lend to the authority of the converts.⁵⁴ For James, such psychological analysis of the pathology of religious converts is valid and necessary.

However, he does not use this claim to legitimate psychologism. James notes that this particular habit seemed to be very much in vogue, having developed out of medical materialism. He writes: "medical materialism finishes up Saint Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of occipital cortex, he being an epileptic".⁵⁵

He writes further of materialism:

Modern psychology, finding definite psycho-physical connections to hold good, assumes as a convenient hypothesis that the dependence of mental states upon bodily functions must be thorough-going and complete. If we adopt the assumption, then of course what medical materialism insists on must be true in a general way if not in every detail.⁵⁶

James then asks whether such a materialistic account can pronounce judgements, one way or the other about spiritual significance.⁵⁷ This latter concern belongs to the domain of inquiries like type two, that is inquiries into the significance and importance of a particular phenomenon. Psychology can only make inquiries of the first type - those which ask "what is the nature and origin of the phenomenon?"

Now James supposes that one day we might discover those aspects of the liver, for example, which "when it alters in one way the blood that percolates it, we get the methodist, when in another way we get the atheist", but what can this have to do with the truth claims of the methodist vs, the

atheist? If organic causation derides truth claims "none of our thoughts and feelings, not even our scientific doctrines, not even our disbeliefs, could retain any value as revelations of the truth".⁵⁸

James points out that this method of refutation through psychological analysis would never occur to those involved in the natural sciences, for instance. Their opinions are tested "by logic and by experiment no matter what their author's neurological type".⁵⁹

As in The Principles, James appears to be unsure of how far he should condemn materialism or even psychological reductionism. In the above he seems to conclude that materialism may eventually prove to be well-founded, such that various secretions can be shown to influence methodism, however he remains critical of the usefulness of such information. James' phenomenology would posit that "mind is not reducible to an isolated, nor even a contingently correlated, event, but that it must be understood to be internally related to the world".⁶⁰ We cannot talk about the methodist inclinations evidenced by the endocrine system without fitting such analysis into the context of the larger worldview of the subject. Without this contextual analysis the endocrinal information is of little interest or use.

In The Principles at least, Wilshire notes that "the

possibility of a thoroughgoing materialism both attracts and repels" James.⁶¹ James makes it abundantly clear that "mental states cannot be correlated [with brain states] until they are specified, and [from his phenomenological inclinations] they cannot be specified in isolation from their cognitive objects".⁶² In The Varieties he comes closest to accepting that materialism may indeed make sense but a concern is voiced over the hurry to specify neural activity before consciousness has been adequately specified.⁶³ "Moreover, what a thought is in the [neural] compositional sense is almost ridiculously irrelevant to what the thought means".⁶⁴

Returning more specifically to his psychology of religion, James elucidates the criterion he feels a religious sentiment should be judged on:

Their value can only be ascertained by spiritual judgements directly passed upon them, judgements based upon our own immediate feeling primarily; and secondarily on what we can ascertain of their experiential relations to our moral deeds and to the rest of what we hold as true.⁶⁵

It is in this and other passages that James describes his empiricism - an empiricism which includes feelings and experiences which may not be available to the experimenter. For example, when discussing religious perception, he writes:

It is as if there were in the human consciousness a sense of reality, a feeling of objective presence, a perception, of what we may call 'something there', more deep and more general than any of the special and

particular 'senses' by which psychology supposes existent realities to be originally revealed.⁶⁶

So James defends the place of psychology when inquiries about the nature and origin of religion are being discussed. His empiricism allows him to explore a number of psychological phenomena which other scientists might discount. However, even his own brand of empirical psychological method is not to be used to make judgements about the truth of certain religious experiences.

Leuba serves as an illustrative contrast to James' assumptions about materialism and empiricism in the psychology of religion. He is very critical of James and in his Psychological Study of Religion, written approximately ten years after James published The Varieties, Leuba outlines what he feels are the two sides to the debate. On the one side is the claim that "what is.... most essential in religion is a matter of revelation, of intuition.... and not a matter of reflection or of philosophy".⁶⁷ On the other side is the claim of psychology's right "to submit every content of consciousness to scientific study, whether it be dubbed 'inner', 'spiritual' or otherwise".⁶⁸

Leuba argues that the theological claim for the experiential nature of religion makes the gods of religion empirical entities, and as such they are indeed amenable to scientific study.⁶⁹ It seems that Leuba extends his definition of "empirical" to include deities, even as he

constricts his definition to discount the deities. This will become clearer shortly.

For Leuba the place of psychology is to "observe, compare, analyze and ... determine the conditions and consequences of the facts of ... religious life".⁷⁰ On the surface this seems to parallel James' point that psychology can only make inquiries concerning the origin and nature of the religious experience. However, Leuba criticizes James for limiting psychology to inquiries of this type.⁷¹ Leuba sees psychology as providing alternative explanations for religious phenomena. He shifts from describing the psychological processes underlying various religious experiences, to reducing those religious experiences to nothing but those psychological processes, thereby, explaining away any need for theological truth claims. He commits psychologism in precisely the manner described by James. However, he seems to have missed this section in James' writing because he offers no defense for his actions and seems to be unaware that James has dealt fully with the problem already.

For example, Leuba is dismayed that even after James shows that instantaneous conversion can be explained by the theory of the "subliminal", James refuses to reduce the experience to a psychological process.⁷² James writes:

But if you, being Orthodox Christians, ask me as a

psychologist, whether the reference of the phenomenon to a subliminal self does not exclude the notion of the direct presence of Deity altogether, I have to say that as a psychologist I do not see why it necessarily should.⁷³

Leuba feels that this sort of statement is a rejection of the empiricism James purports to hold. However, as has been discussed earlier, these statements are indeed consistent with James' empiricism with its wider scope and its break with experimentalism. Leuba states in a final passage: "William James' effort to find in religious experiences phenomena warranting the hypotheses of divine action is a fiasco".⁷⁴

Leuba represents that aspect of psychology which has stifled the study of religion. His reductionistic philosophy leaves no room for theological significance. This attitude continues to plague the psychology of religion even to the present, but it has seldom been articulated in such an obvious way, as Leuba has done here.

In sum, James' philosophy of science entailed a number of assumptions which showed positively in his psychological study of religion. In general, as was evidenced in his lectures "The Will to Believe", he was understanding of religious belief and critical of those who used science as a way to undermine religious belief. He outlined a well-defined place for psychology in the study of religion and he criticized those who over-stepped the boundaries and

resorted to psychological reductionism (psychologism). For example, when it came to scientific psychology, on balance, James seems to have believed that concepts such as soul and will were superfluous to the agenda. As a result, when it came to studying religious experiences where soul and will are primary, he refused to allow scientific psychology to make judgements in these areas. Theological and philosophical topics such as these cannot be commented on by a scientific psychology - to do so would be psychologism through naive reductionism.

James' proto-phenomenology advocated an empiricism of sorts but he avoided the typical methodological product of logical empiricism (experimentation) whenever possible. Further, his awareness of the subjective/rational component of observation kept him critical of the empiricist claim to objectivity.

James seemed to waffle on the issue of materialism, but even when he acknowledged the explanatory power of physiology, he cautioned against reducing thought to physiological mechanisms, before the proper understanding of thought's object was achieved. As was seen in the above discussion of psychologism, James acknowledged that physiology might be able to explain religious conversion, for example, but he failed to see the usefulness of such an approach. Unfortunately, present-day academic psychology is

quite enamoured with the materialistic approach. James' misgivings seem to have fallen on deaf ears, as Leuba's interpretation will attest to.

NOTES

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- 4 Ibid., p. 508.
- 5 Ibid., p. 551.
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Theoretical-Historical Perspectives, ed. R.W. Rieber and
K. Salzinger (New York: Academic Press, 1980), p. 128.
- 7 Ibid., p. 129.
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- 9 Ibid., p. 129.
- 10 From Boring, History, p. 515.
- 11 Ibid., p. 511.
- 12 Ibid., p. 512.
- 13 From Ibid., p. 512.
- 14 B. Wilshire, William James and Phenomenology: A
Study of "The Principles of Psychology". (London: Indiana
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- 15 R.P. High & W.R. Woodward, "William James and Gordon
Allport: Parallels in Their Maturing Conceptions of Self",
Psychology: Theoretical-Historical Perspectives, ed. R.W.

Rieber and K. Salzinger (New York: Academic Press, 1980), p. 66.

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17 Boring, History, p. 513.

18 W. James, The Letters of William James, vols. 1 & 2, ed. H. James (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920), p. 147.

19 W. James, The Principles of Psychology, vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), pp. 2 - 3.

20 Ibid., p. 3.

21 Ibid., p. 4.

22 Ibid., p. 149.

23 Ibid., p. 158.

24 Ibid., p. 181.

25 Ibid., p. 181.

26 Ibid., p. 182.

27 Ibid., p. 189 - 190.

28 Ibid., p. 191.

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30 Ibid., p. 275.

31 Ibid., pp. 195 - 196.

32 Ibid., p. 225.

33 Ibid., p. 348.

34 Ibid., p. 343.

35 James, Principles, vol. 2, p. 578.

36 Ibid., p. 578.

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York: The New American Library, Inc., 1958), p. 47.

38 James, Principles, vol. 2, p. 630.

39 Ibid., p. 630.

40 Ibid., p. 634.

41 Ibid., p. 634.

42 Ibid., p. 636.

43 Ibid., p. 636.

44 Ibid., p. 639.

45 W. James, The Will To Believe And Other Essays in Popular Philosophy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), pp. x-xi.

46 Ibid., p. 8

47 Ibid., p. 9.

48 Ibid., p. 9.

49 Ibid., p. 14. 50 Ibid., p. 18.

51 Ibid., p. 21.

52 James, Varieties, p. 23.

53 Ibid., p. 23.

54 Ibid., p. 25.

55 Ibid., p. 29.

56 Ibid., p. 29.

57 Ibid., p. 29.

58 Ibid., p. 30.

59 Ibid., p. 32.

60 Wilshire, Phenomenology, p. 9.

61 Ibid., p. 35.

62 Ibid., p. 218.

63 Ibid., p. 220.

64 Ibid., p. 220.

65 James, Varieties, p. 32.

66 Ibid., p. 61.

67 J.H. Leuba, A Psychological Study of Religion: Its Origin Function and Future (New York: Ams Press, 1912), p. 209.

68 Ibid., p. 211.

69 Ibid., p. 212.

70 Ibid., p. 269.

71 Ibid., p. 271.

72 Ibid., p. 273.

73 W. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, (1902), p. 242.

74 Leuba, Psychology, p. 274.

CHAPTER THREE

Chronologically, the second decade of the twentieth century saw the introduction of both behaviourism and psychoanalysis into mainstream, Western psychology. For purposes of comparison, however, Freud and Jung will be discussed one after the other in the following two chapters. This of course leaves the figure of John Watson for discussion in the present chapter.

It seems necessary at this time, to defend the inclusion of Watson in a review of historical figures who have, through various assumptions underlying their philosophy of science, subsequently affected both their own psychological study of religion and the study of religion in present-day academia. One might correctly point out that Watson, and many of the behaviourists who followed, had little or nothing to say about religious experience. It will become clear shortly, however, that Watson's method and scientific assumptions have very much affected mainstream, academic psychology in the West in general. As has already been shown in the introduction, what has held for mainstream psychology in general most certainly holds for more specific areas of interest, such as the study of religious experience.

One assumption underlying the claim that behaviourism

still affects mainstream thought is the view that the so-called "cognitive revolution", in which behaviourism's scourge was said to have finally and thankfully been destroyed, never actually occurred. Those holding this view typically point out that even though consciousness has once again been allowed back into the purview of the science of psychology, the methodological and philosophical assumptions underlying the study of consciousness have remained the same as when the behaviourist model held sway.¹ The human machine remains the model of choice and cognition/ thought/ consciousness is processed in present day psychology through "information-processing" theory - a revolutionary idea indeed.²

Returning to the period under discussion, the publication of the article "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It" (1913) and the companion volume Psychology From the Standpoint of a Behaviorist (1919), marked Watson's entrance into the heady world of scientific controversy.² He was born in the U.S. in 1878 and died in 1958. Robinson notes that although Watson is often touted as the "father" of behaviourism, one must also acknowledge that "fatherhood entails grandparents, at least one mate, and offspring". In this way, "the significant fact of behaviorism" is not its authorship but its reception".³ Leahey provides a description of the cultural milieu which may have contributed to Watson's eventual reception:

Classical behaviorism was very American in its pursuit of utopia. The United States founded itself in a revolution based on a new view of the state, and Americans ever since have sought the perfect society. Watson held out the possibility of a utopia founded on scientific principles discovered in the laboratory but applied to human affairs.⁴

Bakan ties in the rise of behaviourism with "the assault on human liberty" which exemplified early to mid-twentieth century American culture. He cites as other examples, "McCarthyism, the attack on Oppenheimer, the uncontrolled growth of the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover, the excesses of the CIA, ... etc".⁵ Bakan also illustrates an interesting parallel in the USSR, where Pavlov was enjoying his role as "the darling of both Lenin and Stalin".⁶ Bakan quotes Stalin as saying that communism was once based on "the power of ideas", but was now realized in the "power of authority".⁷ Bakan traces the parallel effects of the power of authority in the behaviourist movement in America:

It is, ... in the common democratic tradition to celebrate 'the power of ideas' in contrast to 'the power of authority.' Behaviorism and Pavlovianism conspired to undermine the validity of the power of ideas, and to assert the role of punishment. But by keeping the role of reward, it allowed the possibility of a kind of fascism with a friendly face, all the more culpable for its seeming humanitarianism.⁸

Watson never made attempts to disguise the control underlying his agenda for behaviourism. He writes in his book Psychology From the Standpoint of a Behaviorist, that the role of psychology is to formulate "laws and principles whereby man's actions can be controlled by organized society".⁹ And further:

Psychology endeavors to guide society as to the ways in which the environment may be modified to suit the group or individual's way of acting; or when the environment cannot be modified, to show how the individual may be moulded (forced to put on new habits).¹⁰

He notes also that psychology must keep itself from asserting any moral standards, in order to maintain a neutral science. He is obviously oblivious to the values he is encouraging in his predict and control paradigm.¹⁰ He reiterates the control function of his psychology in his apologetic Behaviorism, originally published in 1924, where he writes:

The interest of the behaviorist in man's doings is more than the interest of the spectator - he wants to control man's reactions as physical scientists want to control and manipulate other phenomena. It is the business of behavioristic psychology to predict and to control human activity.¹²

The scientific milieu which set the stage for behaviourism was comprised of a number of different elements. Animal psychology, especially the work of Thorndike and Pavlov, can be identified as a precursor to Watson's methodology. Originally, animal psychology had a strong functionalist base (after Darwin). Consciousness in animals was investigated for its function as facilitator of adaptive evolutionary behaviour.¹³ Unfortunately, the investigators began to worry that inferring consciousness from adaptive behaviour might be superfluous.¹⁴ Watson took advantage of the growing uncertainty about the place of consciousness in animal study and suggested that:

Since the relation of animal consciousness to animal behavior is essentially stipulative, experimentally

indeterminable, and irrelevant to problems that can be investigated experimentally, it is fruitless to continue trying to solve all those problems which pertain to the relationship. Therefore, ... we would be better off to drop all concern with consciousness in comparative psychology, and study only that which can be experimentally investigated, that is behavior itself.¹⁵

However, Watson continued to lobby against functionalism and the study of consciousness not only in the realm of animal psychology, but also in general psychology. He made a number of claims to defend this extension. For example, he writes in Behaviorism:

Literally hundreds and thousands of printed pages have been published on the minute analysis of this intangible something called 'consciousness'. And how do we begin work upon it? Not by analyzing it as we would a chemical compound, or the way a plant grows. No, those things are material things. This thing we call consciousness can be analyzed only by introspection - a looking in on what takes place inside of us. As a result of this major assumption that there is such a thing as consciousness and that we can analyze it by introspection, we find as many analyses as there are individual psychologists. There is no way of experimentally attacking and solving psychological problems and standardizing methods.¹⁶

Mackenzie, in his book Behaviourism and the Limits of Scientific Method, writes that underlying Watson's concern was the desire to eliminate "unobservables" which included "the repudiation of consciousness elsewhere than in comparative psychology and the subsequent repudiation of other unobservables generally".¹⁷ Further:

The rejection of unobservables throughout psychology could not be justified, as the rejection of consciousness could be justified, simply by appeal to the impossibility of getting on with research while restricted to the old introspective formulations. The more widespread rejection required rather an appeal to

the physical sciences as providing an external standard of objectivity against which introspective psychology as a whole could be tried, found wanting and rejected.¹⁸

Watson had decided to either "give up psychology or else make it a natural science".¹⁹

As was discussed in previous chapters, logical positivism was making its presence well known at this time, and was being particularly well-received in the field of physics. Generally, this movement encouraged objective, empirical methodology over all other concerns. It has also been noted that physics has since abandoned this philosophy. The long term effects of Watson's adoption of logical positivism through his glorification of physics will be discussed further in the person of Percy Bridgman and his infamous operationism. For now, the effects on behaviourism in the early twentieth century can be seen in the attempts of behaviouristic psychology to employ exclusively the "objective" study of human behaviour in terms of conditioned reflexes, under highly controlled experimental lab settings.²⁰ Writes Watson: "The rule, or measuring rod which the behaviorist puts in front of him always is: can I describe this bit of behavior in terms of stimulus and response?"²¹

Mackenzie questions the motives underlying Watson's valuation of objective methodology over and against introspection when he notes that Watson promoted the study

of the conditioned reflex well before the reliability of that method was proven. "It thus had not been shown to have precisely that degree of inter-experimenter reliability, the absence of which was supposedly the justification for rejecting introspectionism."²² He concludes that:

"'objective psychologists' rejected introspection because they were anti-mentalistic: they did not become anti-mentalistic on the basis of having had to reject introspection".²³ That Watson was influenced by extra-scientific assumptions when he adopted a philosophy of science which ignores the presence of extra-scientific assumptions is ironic, and from the standpoint of the psychology of religion, unfortunate. It would seem that once again empiricism triumphed over rationalism, as the tenets of logical positivism and its derivative, logical empiricism, were embraced by the behaviourists in particular and then, through the crusades of Watson and his followers, by psychology in general.

Like Descartes and Kant before him, Watson's greatest legacy was his methodological dogmatism. The particular results of his early experiments became out-dated very quickly, but his triumph of method over all else (whether it be general theory or specific results) continued on.²⁴ As was noted earlier, the gap between data and theory was encouraged to a large extent by the downfall of functionalist evolutionary theory in the study of animal

consciousness. Mackenzie notes that as "the attempted evolutionary analyses came to seem outmoded and irrelevant ... the suggestion that attention might better be confined to mere data, with theoretical interpretation repudiated on mere principle, was an obvious and welcome one".²⁵ The ability to stay within the limits of "mere data" is of course an assumption this thesis hopes to put into question.

In 1931, Skinner completed his doctoral dissertation, in which behaviourism and logical positivism were presented together through the work of physicist Percy Bridgman. Bridgman's "operationism" marked the culmination of logical positivism's hold on physics and his statements are duly reiterated in the history books - as they will be here - with a sense of wonder and dread. He writes:

The concept of length is therefore fixed when the operations by which length is measured are fixed: that is, the concept of length involves as much and nothing more than the set of measures by which length is determined. In general, we mean by any concept nothing more than a set of operations, the concept is synonymous with the corresponding set of operations.²⁶

That such rules may be applied to the concept of length is open to question,²⁷ how much more controversial then to apply operationism to concepts such as anger or mystical experience? ²⁸ The behaviourists would of course eschew both of the latter concepts on principle. Brett writes:

It is significant that Behaviourists have concentrated mainly on the study of simple motor skills. But even in that limited sphere Behaviourism is to be criticized not simply for its restrictive and outworn conception of scientific method; it is also to be criticized for

having a very naïve and inadequate view of what constitutes behaviour.²⁹

Brett sees operationism as "one of the clearest examples of the continuation of the observationalist tradition into the twentieth century".³⁰ Skinner even claimed that he never used hypotheses, but approached the data prepared for whatever presented itself to him.³¹ Such a naïve empiricism can be criticized in the same way that the empiricists of the observationalist tradition were criticized in chapter one. The operationist, clinging tightly to the naïve empiricist, is also a victim. Brett writes:

Just as it is salutary to say that observation is decisive in testing hypotheses, but misleading to say that scientists 'start from' observations, so also is it salutary to say that scientific terms are meaningful because there are concrete operations by means of which it can be determined whether or not a term is applicable or whether or not what is asserted in a sentence containing scientific terms is true or false, but misleading to say that scientists define terms by means of 'operations' or that terms 'stand for' operations.³²

Irrespective of the devastating attacks sustained by logical positivism in the present day, operationism continues in mainstream psychology with surprising tenacity.³³

As was remarked upon at the beginning of this chapter, Watson had little to say about the psychology of religion. However, the assumptions underlying his work allow some insight into how a psychology which still holds his assumptions might treat religious experience. In general, Watson's crusade against the unscientific can be seen as a crusade against religion, philosophy, ethics, or any other

'nonobjective' phenomena. The following excerpt from

Behaviorism is illustrative:

The behaviorist, who has been trained always as an experimentalist, holds, ... that belief in the existence of consciousness goes back to the ancient days of superstition and magic. Magic lives forever. As time goes on all of these critically undigested, innumerably told tales get woven into the folk lore of the people. Folk lore in turn gets organized into religions ... Some of our greatest biologists, physicists, and chemists, when outside of their laboratories, fall back upon folk lore which has become crystallized into religious concepts. These concepts - these heritages of a timid savage past - have made the emergence and growth of scientific psychology extremely difficult.³⁴

Just as in Comte's positivism, religion is the stage which civilization must grow out of if science is to triumph.

Religion is given little or no respect as a phenomenon. This same attitude pervades much of present day study as was described in the introduction.

Watson's position on materialism is not indicative of his general effect on the psychology of religion. For example. Watson was reductionistic in his thinking, but this did not lead to the type of physiological materialism which has proved so stifling for religion in the periods before and after Watson. Indeed, Watson even criticized the physiologists as being too reductionistic - this from the same man who reduced all elements of human psychology to stimulus - response mechanisms.³⁵

Watson's most devastating effect on present day

psychology of religion results from his continuation of the observationalist tradition in the form of extreme empiricism and its running mate, operationism. Ignoring the myriad presuppositions informing his "objective" empiricism, Watson almost single-handedly destroyed a number of concepts which did not fit into his agenda. Murray notes the case of Watson's crusade against imagery, a concept of particular relevance to the study of religion. Watson felt that "all cases of so-called visual imagery could be analyzed into cases of verbalization" and he remained "convinced that images [are] unproven ... mythological, the figment of the psychologists' terminology".³⁶ As a result, research on imagery "almost vanished from the American scene until the late 1960's".³⁷

As has been discussed previously, the eventual return of "things cognitive" to the mainstream sphere in Western psychology did not mark a complete break from the behaviourist tradition. Operationism still exists in a varied format, in the questionnaire and psychological testing domain. Empiricism is still the acknowledged ideal, even when "unobjective" variables such as religiosity are being measured. The objectivity lacking in the variable in question is made up for in the methods used to measure the variable, with the typically dry result. Further, Watson's views on the nature of religion in general have continued, such that comparatively few psychologists have undertaken to

seriously study the religious experience.

NOTES

1 For an expanded form of this argument see J. Rychlack, The Psychology of Rigorous Humanism (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1977), pp. 202 - 206, and T. H. Leahey, A History of Psychology (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), pp. 374 - 376.

2 Leahey, A History of Psychology: Main Currents in Psychological Thought (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice-Hall Inc., 1980), pp. 374 -376.

3 Robinson, Intellectual History, p. 404.

4 Leahey, History, p. 287.

5 Bakan, Politics, p. 138.

6 Ibid., p. 139.

7 Ibid., p. 139.

8 Ibid., p. 139.

9 Watson, Psychology From the Standpoint of a Behaviorist (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1919), p. 2.

10 Ibid., p. 2.

11 Ibid., p. 2. Other examples contrary to the value-free science espoused by Watson are found in the following section on personality titled "Reactions to conventional standards", where Watson writes:

Put specifically to him [the subject whose personality is being analysed] such questions as whether under any circumstances it is ever justifiable to tell a lie, to steal to cheat, to fall in love with an engaged or

married woman and tell her about it? ... Has his early home, ... implanted fixed modes of reacting which are not in line with his present environment - that is, is he easily shocked, for example, at seeing a woman smoke, drink a cocktail or flirt with a man? ... Would you classify the individual as being foppish and overdressed; does he resort to beauty treatments perfumery, etc?

From Watson, Standpoint, p. 402.

12 J. B. Watson, Behaviorism (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1970), p. 11.

13 B.D. Mackenzie, Behaviourism and the Limits of Scientific Method (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 75.

14 Ibid., p. 77.

15 Ibid., p. 90 - 91.

16 Watson, Behaviorism, p. 4.

17 Mackenzie, Limits, p. 97.

18 Ibid., p. 97.

19 Watson, Behaviorism, p. 4.

20 Interestingly enough, most of the experiments were carried out not on humans but on animals, specifically rats. Watson writes in a revealing passage: "I never wanted to use human subjects. I hated to serve as a subject. I didn't like the stuffy artificial instructions given to subjects ... With animals I was at home [emphasis mine]." J.B. Watson, "Autobiography", A History of Psychology in Autobiography, vol. 3, ed. C. Murchison (Worcester, MA: Clark University Press, 1936), p. 27.

21 Watson, Behaviorism, p. 6.

22 Mackenzie, Limits, p. 9.

23 Ibid., p. 13.

24 Peters, Brett's History, p. 698.

25 Mackenzie, Limits, P. 55.

26 P. Bridgman, The Logic of Modern Physics (New York: Macmillan, 1927), p. 5.

27 T. Rogers, "Operationism in Psychology: A Discussion of Contextual Antecedents and an Historical Interpretation of Its Longevity", Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences (1989), p. 140.

28 Examples of operational definitions of both anger and mysticism are given on page 7 of this thesis.

29 Peters, Brett's History, p. 702.

30 Ibid., p. 701.

31 Ibid., p. 700.

32 Ibid., p. 700.

33 T. Rogers, Operationism, p. 139 - 153.

34 Watson, Behaviorism, p. 2.

35 Watson, Standpoint, p. 20.

36 Murray, History, p. 278. Murray also notes that Watson's view is so contradictory to most human experience that perhaps Watson lacked visual imagery himself.

37 Ibid., p. 278.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sigmund Freud was born in 1856 and grew up in Vienna. Daniel Robinson writes that Freud "was the product of that marvelously contradictory climate of German thought in which science was defined in the positivistic, deterministic, and physicalist language of Helmholtz and in which philosophy was Hegelian".¹ When Freud received his doctorate in 1881, Wundt's laboratory had been productive for two years and Darwin's theory had been in print for over twenty years.² This intellectual backdrop will be elaborated on shortly.

The significance of Freud's work on the present day study of religion in mainstream, Western psychology cannot be asserted with the same confidence that was presented in the discussion on Watson, for example. Psychoanalysis was never fully embraced by mainstream, academic psychology but remained a fringe element, taking up residence instead in the companion field of psychiatry. Leahey writes:

For all of Freud's influence on Western culture, the relations between psychoanalysis and academic psychology have been ambivalent. No psychologist can be ignorant of psychoanalysis, and its concepts are discussed even in texts that call them wrong. Academic psychologists have been critical of and even hostile to Freud's ideas (when they have not ignored them), and psychoanalysts have generally remained aloof from experimental psychology.³

Psychoanalysis was criticized by mainstream psychology for

not being empirically based, and for being unsystematic in its methodology. By the time of Freud's introduction to the United States, the mainstream psychology of Western academia was characterized by the growing influence of parametric theory, which would be encouraged further by the behaviourist movement. Bakan describes parametrics as the theory "that all human functioning is the result of a set of identifiable variables. Research, then, is simply the work of identifying and studying the patterns of covariation among these parameters."⁴ Statistical analysis was beginning to make its presence known.

Psychoanalysis flourished outside this community, largely due to its reception in the humanities. Bakan maintains that "the American academic psychologist rejected this Freudian 'underground' psychology ... Virtually no funds were ever made available for psychological research that would be consonant with this psychology of the underground."⁵

Noting the rejection of Freudian theory by mainstream, academic psychology on issues of general methodology, one might be tempted to conjecture that Freud would correspondingly evoke dissonance with that community on more specific issues like religion. If the psychology which rejected Freud was one whose parametric theories sounded the death knell for meaningful studies of religion, then perhaps

his opposition to this community would indicate, conversely, that studies of religion would fare better in the domain of psychoanalysis. Unfortunately this was not the case.

There are at least two reasons why Freud's psychology, creative and theoretical as it was, did not help improve the situation for the psychological study of religion, either in his own time, or in the present day. First, it should be noted that even if Freud did not live up to the empirical ideal of academic experimental psychology, he still shared that ideal. "Freud believed that all of the methods he employed, as a research physiologist, clinical neurologist, and medical psychologist, were essentially similar in that they were all based on systematically observing empirical events and recording them."⁶ In The History of Psychiatry: An Evaluation of Psychiatric Thought and Practice From Prehistoric Times to the Present, the authors exalt Freud for what they call his scientific approach:

Under Freud's championing and practice of psychoanalysis the fact that psychology - the study of personality - can have the same cumulative and operational characteristics as the natural sciences was established.⁷

They also note the now obligatory characteristic of radical empiricism: Freud "worked - and saw himself - as a scientist, not a philosopher, proceeding from observation to generalization. He refused to begin with speculation".⁸

The writings of Freud which dealt with religion and

civilization in general, mark what the above authors see as the beginning of Freud's more speculative writings.⁹ Here Freud the philosopher (after Hegel) was supposed to have moved beyond Freud the positivist (after Helmholtz). Unfortunately, his philosophy of science had become well-entrenched by this time and it continued to assert itself even in his "speculative" writings, with the typical negative results for religion.

When the uncompromising valuation of empirical science guides the study of religion, a phenomenon witnessed a number of times in the preceding chapters occurs. Religion is relegated to the position of pre-scientific superstition. Science is the ideal and religion must be transcended if the scientific society is to develop properly. This is evidenced a number of times in Freud's writings on religion. As will be discussed shortly, religion in general was seen by Freud as "satisfying in its wholeness and certainty."¹⁰ "It derives its strength from its readiness to fit in with our instinctual wishful impulses."¹¹ Freud was typically suspicious of phenomena which satisfied human wishes. He continually held up science as renunciatory and therefore superior in this regard. He writes of scientific investigation as "slow, hesitating and labourious". And of religion: "No wonder the gentlemen in the other camp are dissatisfied. They are spoilt: revelation gave them an easier time".¹²

A second and perhaps more important explanation for the Freudian devaluing of religion can be seen within the specific details of psychoanalytic theory itself. What follows is a brief exploration of the roots of psychoanalytic theory. Rather than attempting to mount a comprehensive assault on Freud's work, the balance of this chapter will involve the more specific presentation of Freud's psychology of religion. Details from his more general theory will be briefly described only when they are needed to augment this presentation.

In their essay "The Assimilation of Psychoanalysis in America", authors Green and Reiber chart the beginnings of the theory of unconscious with Herbart, a nineteenth-century German philosopher.¹³ In opposition to Kant's criticism that mind/thought cannot be scientifically studied because it cannot be properly measured, Herbart postulated the addition of force or intensity as a dimension of mind in addition to the previously inadequate dimension of duration. Using this new dimension, Herbart postulated that ideas have different forces or intensities in contrast to each other.¹⁴ "When an idea is overcome by an opposing idea, it is pushed back or repressed below the light of conscious attention."¹⁵ Herbart also postulated that repressed ideas return to a more "primitive form".¹⁶ Both of these postulates anticipate Freudian theory.

Further anticipations may be found in the views of the nature and cause of sickness which were espoused by Benedict Morel in the 1850's.¹⁷ Morel highlighted the influence of adverse physical and social conditions in the environment, and he also extended the purview of human "degenerations" to include not only the usual physical ailments but also a number of psychological ones. Green and Reiber cite the following rather exhaustive list:

Alcoholism, drug addiction, mental deficiency, languor, inertia, apathy, melancholy, malaise, ... suicidal tendencies, ... pyromania, kleptomania, erotomania nymphomania, and necrophilia.¹⁸

Parallels with later Freudian thought can be found both in the application of the label of "illness" to psychological disorders, as well as in the explicit recognition of the sexual nature of a number of the disorders.

Freud's use of inhibited sexual excitation as the primary etiological tool in his therapy and theory can be seen as a reflection of the Vienna culture of Freud's time. Krafft-Ebbing's work Psychopathia Sexualis was published in Vienna in 1886 and was read by both Freud and Jung, for example. Green and Reiber note that "sexual preoccupations pervaded the sophisticated literary and bohemian society of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in which Freud grew up".¹⁹

For Freud, religions are very much related to human

sexuality as expressed within the family (here one should note that Freud's theories of religion arise almost exclusively from his experiences with Catholicism and Judaism). From his theories of the original Oedipal conflict where the horde of sons joined together to supplant the father and later through collective guilt deified the father, to the modern day celebration of the eucharist where once again the Oedipal instincts are revived, Freud highlighted the role that instinctive sexuality has played in human relationships with the supernatural.²⁰

Freud hypothesized that religion serves as a continual reminder of the collective guilt incurred with the original Oedipal conflict and repeated daily in the fight between individual desires and societal constraints. Religion demands the renunciation of id instincts but it also allows these instincts to be fulfilled at some level, especially through the propagation of the God as Father myth. Freud sees religion as a substitute for a properly internalized super ego which would internalize societal constraints and impose true renunciation without the comforting illusion of a Father in heaven.

If the world was progressing as it should then as ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, the individual would renounce the sexual, selfish urges of the id, internalize societal constraint through the super ego, and become

civilized.²¹ To reach the higher stages of the scientific age phylogeny should in turn recapitulate ontogeny and abandon the mass neurosis which has developed out of its sexually-driven relationship with the divine father.²²

In Civilization and its Discontents Freud sums up his disappointment in the tenacity with which this mass delusion has continued in the face of the scientific age. He writes that belief in a "God the Father"—

is so patently infantile, so foreign to reality, that to anyone with a friendly attitude to humanity it is painful to think that the great majority of mortals will never be able to rise above this view of life.²³

Of the collective nature of the illusion of religion, he writes:

— each one of us behaves in some one respect like a paranoic, corrects some aspect of the world which is unbearable to him by the construction of a wish and introduces this delusion into reality. A special importance attaches to the case in which this attempt to procure a certainty of happiness and a protection against suffering through a delusional remoulding of reality is made by a considerable number of people in common. The religions of mankind must be classed among the mass delusions of this kind. No one, needless to say, who shares a delusion ever recognizes it as such.²⁴

The collective guilt underlying the rituals and religious practises of the worship of the Father is likened to the behaviour of obsessive compulsives in "Obsessive Acts and Religious Practises".²⁵ For example, the repression of an instinctual impulse is said to typically lie at the bottom of an obsessive act.

In the course of the repression of this instinct a special conscientiousness is created which is

directed against the instinct's aims: but this psychical reaction-formation feels insecure and constantly threatened by the instinct which is lurking in the unconscious. The influence of the repressed instinct is felt as a temptation, and during the process of repression itself anxiety is generated ...²⁶

Likewise, "the formation of a religion, also seems to be based on the suppression, the renunciation, of certain instinctual impulses ... "²⁷

A sense of guilt following upon continual temptation and an expectant anxiety in the form of fear of divine punishment have, after all, been familiar to us in the field of religion longer than in that of the neurosis.²⁸

Volney Gay in his work Freud on Ritual:

Reconstruction and Critique, attempts to argue that Freud's use of the word "suppression" in the above quote, indicates that Freud differentiated between religious ritual which involved suppression and obsessional neurosis which involved repression.²⁹ The latter, because of its unconscious component, is said to be of a neurotic nature, whereas suppression as a conscious effort is not. Gay maintains that:

If neurotic anxiety is a function of repression, and if the anti-instinctual mechanism typical of religious acts is suppression (and not repression), then it would seem to follow that the "anxiety" which Freud ascribes to pious individuals who perform certain religious rituals cannot be neurotic anxiety.³⁰

However, all Freud's later texts on religion including Totem and Taboo, The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Moses and Monotheism, argue further not just for the neurotic

qualities of certain religious rituals, but for the unhealthy, immature nature of the entire enterprise of religion. Volney Gay's hopes that psychoanalysis can now be reinterpreted to show that "the ego ... develops through and encourages ritualized patterns of behavior", seem to run contrary to the bulk of Freud's later works on religion.³¹

Judith Van Herik offers perhaps the most compelling interpretation of Freud's work on religion in her book Freud on Femininity and Faith. Van Herik's reading of Freud has alerted her to the similarities between Freud's critique of religion and his critique of femininity.³² Underlying both religion and femininity is wish fulfillment. Underlying their polar opposites, science and masculinity, is renunciation of illusion. She writes:

Renunciation of illusion is Freud's consistent critical principle; it grounds both his critique of femininity within the theory of gender and of illusion within the theory of religion. In these terms, the specific values which Freud awards masculinity measure the valuable in general. The specific failures in value which he attributes to femininity measure such failures in general.³³

For Freud, feminine gender identity is either fulfillment in itself, or it allows for fulfillment to be experienced. In the first instance, women (as it is women who are typically feminine) "function as libidinal objects for men; as such femininity represents libidinal fulfillment, the temptations of the pleasure principle and the psychical dangers of wish fulfillment to the male ascetic, cultural hero, or theorist".³⁴ In the second instance, femininity allows for

gratification and fulfillment in the woman because it allows her "to experience gratification that is renounced in ideal masculine development because the feminine attitude retains a dependent and consoling libidinal tie to paternal figures".³⁵ The polar opposites to both femininity and religion are found by Freud in the renunciation of wish evidenced in both the the development of masculinity by the healthy individual and the development of science by the healthy civilization.

Further evidence of this interpretation comes from the discrepancy in Freud's treatment of Judaism in Moses and Monotheism and Christianity (specifically Catholicism) in The Future of an Illusion. Although Freud often sounds his critiques against religion in general, there is a markedly different tone in his writings about the Mosaic tradition. Van Herik points out that the difference follows a recognizable pattern - Judaism is renunciatory, Christianity is wish fulfillment. The following passages from Moses and Monotheism are illustrative. Freud writes that renunciation in the Mosaic tradition begins with the injunction against making an image of God.

[This injunction] signified subordinating sense perception to an abstract idea; it was a triumph of spirituality over the senses; more precisely an instinctual renunciation accompanied by its psychologically necessary consequences [eg. ego maturity].³⁶

Christianity, on the other hand, is seen by Freud as relieving the guilt of the Jews (and the growing guilt of

all their contemporaries) which arose originally over the murder of the Father. Unfortunately it was precisely this guilt that had kept the religion great, both spiritually and ethically. Paul relieved this guilt by preaching of the sacrificial death which had relieved the world of its sin (the sin of the murder of the Father couched in more acceptable terms as "original sin").³⁷ Freud writes that subsequently: "The Christian religion did not keep to the lofty heights of spirituality to which the Jewish religion had soared".³⁸

A paradox develops when one reads both Moses and Monotheism and The Future of an Illusion, together. Van Herik articulates the confusion in the following passage:

On the one hand [Freud] charges religion with offering illusory consolation that only a wish fulfillment can provide, and, on the other, he sees the stringent renunciations enforced by Judaism as, if anything, too demanding of the psychic economy. He treats the second situation as mentally and culturally valuable just as masculinity is valuable, while he denies such value to femininity and to Christian illusion.³⁹

Van Herik points out that what Freud criticizes in the Christian religion especially is the "passive, dependent, and compliant longing for paternal consolation".⁴⁰ This matches precisely his critique of feminine gender identity that was presented earlier. The "dissolution of the Oedipal complex ... entails renunciation of submission to fathers ... For Freud ... it is the 'ideal' outcome of masculine development."⁴¹ Freud finds such renunciation in the Mosaic

tradition, where "the father figure is not emphasized in his procreative or nurturant functions".⁴²

Instead, he appears from outside and chooses his people placing restrictions on them, which, when they are repudiated and then accepted, elevate his people to unprecedented intellectual, ethical and spiritual heights.⁴³

Van Herik's thesis alerts one to the dangers of the empiricist who ignores his or her pre-empirical values and assumptions. Green and Reiber hypothesize that Freud's background in hypnosis predetermined him to be less conscious of his own role in his therapy and theory:

Psychoanalysis reflects Freud's early orientation in hypnotic therapy [in that] he continued to conceive of his role as essentially that of the hypnotist. In hypnotic therapy, the patient's memories and fantasies were supposedly something completely apart from the hypnotist. Similarly in psychoanalysis, Freud assumed that he himself - who he was and what he did - had no reflection in the content of the patient's memories and communications.⁴⁴

That Freud was a male brought up in the Jewish tradition and trained as a scientist cannot help but make the reader leary of his polemic for the masculine ideal of renunciation, nurtured in the Mosaic tradition and now ready to take flight into the scientific age. Van Herik is perhaps a little more generous in her analysis when she writes:

It is useless to ask which comes first chronologically in Freud's thought: his respect for renunciation or for masculinity. Both are there in some form from the start, and when the masculine renunciatory dynamic is discovered in the Mosaic tradition and in the scientific attitude, belief in the value of masculinity, of renunciation, and of Judaism is transformed into a 'scientific theory'.⁴⁵

Although Freud's general theory was largely rejected by mainstream academic psychology, his philosophy of science entailed a number of assumptions which paralleled those of the mainstream discipline and subsequently reiterated the mainstream stance towards religion and the study of religion. Freud's views on the place of psychology in the study of religion will be discussed first.

Vande Kemp notes that Freud was aware of the dangers of psychologism when he stated that ideas which fulfill wishes are not necessarily false. Further examination of the validity of the evidence for or against the idea, within the logical framework of the idea, is necessary to ascertain truth or falsity.⁴⁶ De Luca writes that Freud "concedes that it is possible that there might be a God and even one corresponding to the ideas man has of Him."⁴⁷ However:

[Freud] considers the expression of man's relation to God - religion - as man made: the forms which religion has taken grew out of the culture of the time or the particular psychological disposition of the individual person. Thus religion is man's attempt to relate or communicate with another being whom he calls God.⁴⁸

Unfortunately Freud seldom makes clear the boundaries which he feels his analyses must respect. In many cases his agenda seems clear - to convince society that it is ready to throw off the comforting illusion of God the Father, and to replace it not with a better expression of the divine, as De Luca maintains, but with positivistic science, the repudiation of the metaphysical. Van Herik concurs:

For Freud the data of the history of religions is data

for psychology because religious theories are distorted projections of psychical states onto the world. Psychoanalytic studies of religion will, in his view, reverse the projective process and decode the distortions so that the beings and forces of the supernatural realm will be correctly understood as psychical. Withdrawal of projections from the natural world will free human minds to understand nature scientifically.⁴⁹

Freud's materialism makes his agenda even clearer. Through his discussions of the psychical nature of the deification of the father figure in Totem and Taboo, or through the further reductions found in his attempts to correlate psychical phenomena with brain activity,⁵⁰ Freud uses psychoanalytic theory to judge the validity of theological truth claims without compromise. Freud even worried that the Catholic Church would ostracize him after his writings about the origins of monotheism, assuming that his theories would infringe in a dangerous way upon Catholic truth claims.⁵¹

It is perhaps Freud's empiricism that is of the biggest concern here, especially when he is later compared with Jung. For Freud, empirical, positivist science was the model of renunciation which humankind should emulate. It was not his empirical methodology which hindered the study of religion, as most empiricists would decline to label his methodology empirical. Rather it was his valuing of empirical science within his own theory of psychical development, which devalued religion, and the religious.

As was discussed earlier, Freud's own empirical ideal also blinded him to his presuppositions and assumptions. Although one does not want to speculate too much, Freud the patriarchal, Jewish, scientist certainly seemed to bring a few of his own pre-scientific values to his empirical observations of gender, and especially of religion. Freud's observations of the masculine nature of science will be discussed further in the feminist critique of science offered in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

NOTES

1 Robinson, Intellectual History, p. 378.

2 Ibid., p. 378.

3 Leahey, History, p. 216.

4 Bakan, Politics, p. 132.

5 Ibid., pp. 132-133. Bakan adds that "within the universities, battles were fought repeatedly between students ... whose view of psychology was informed by the underground, and their experimentally, behavioristically minded psychology teachers." Further, "one of the major aims of the introductory [psychology] course was to impress students with the possibility of a so-called scientific psychology and to derogate the ever-present enemy, the

psychology of the underground". (p.133)

6 Kendler, Historical Foundations of Modern Psychology (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987) p.240.

7 F. G. Alexander & S. T. Selesnick, The History of Psychiatry: An Evaluation of Psychiatric Thought and Practise from Prehistoric Times to the Present (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 181.

8 Ibid., p. 199.

9 Ibid., p. 199.

10 J. Van Herik, Freud on Femininity and Faith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p.71.

11 S. Freud, "The Question of a Weltanschauung", Lecture 35 of New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1933), Vol. XXII of The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, trans., ed. J. Strachey (24 vols.; London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1953 - 1974), p. 175.

12 Ibid., p. 182.

13 M. Green & R. Rieber, "The Assimilation of Psychoanalysis in America", Psychology: Theoretical-Historical Perspectives, ed. R. W. Reiber & K. Salzinger (New York: Academic Press, 1980), p. 265.

14 Ibid., p. 265.

15 Ibid., p. 265.

16 Ibid., p. 265.

17 Ibid., p. 279.

18 Ibid., p. 280.

19 Green & Reiber, Psychoanalysis in America p. 266.

20 An expansion of this discussion can be found in Freud's Totem and Taboo (1913), SE XIII.

21 The idea that renunciation is the key to civilization is discussed in Freud's Future of an Illusion (1927), SE XXI:7-9.

22 The phylogenetic history of culture and its recapitulation in ontogeny is discussed in Freud's Civilization and Its Discontents (1930), SE XXI.

23 Freud, Civilization, p. 74.

24 Ibid., p. 81.

25 Freud, Obsessive Acts and Religious Practises, SE IX:117 - 127.

26 Ibid., p. 121.

27 Ibid., p. 121. 28 Ibid., p. 122.

29 V. Gay, Freud on Ritual: Reconstruction and Critique (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979).

30 Ibid., p. 8.

31 Ibid., p. 9.

32 J. Van Herik, Femininity and Faith, p. 5.

33 Ibid., p. 18.

34 Ibid., p. 107.

35 Ibid., p. 107.

36 Ibid., p. 144.

37 Ibid., p. 174.

38 Ibid., p. 112.

- 39 Ibid., p. 22.
- 40 Ibid., p. 21.
- 41 Ibid., p. 21.
- 42 Ibid., p. 192.
- 43 Ibid., p. 192.
- 44 Green & Reiber, Psychoanalysis in America, p. 273.
- 45 Van Herik, Femininity and Faith, p. 199.
- 46 Vande Kemp, Psychologism, p. 105.
- 47 A. De Luca, Freud and Future Religious Experience
(Totowa, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1976), p.
2.
- 48 Ibid., p. 2.
- 49 Van Herik, Femininity and Faith, p. 147.
- 50 Physiological reductionism of this sort is discussed
by Freud in Moses and Monotheism, trans. K. Jones (New
York: Vintage Books, 1939), p. 124.
- 51 Ibid., pp. 68 - 70.

CHAPTER FIVE

Carl Jung was born in 1875 in Switzerland. His upbringing was "drenched in - an ethos of Protestant devotion and piety".¹ When he left home to pursue university studies he embraced the secular, scientific world and eventually abandoned his Protestant involvements.² His relationship with Freud and the psychoanalytic movement started well before he and Freud actually met in 1906, and Jung became a loyal subscriber to the psychoanalytic faith. However, the coupling of Jung's divergent ideas on sexuality and religion with Freud's patriarchal impositions and low tolerance for deviations from his theory led to a number of disagreements between the two men. In 1914, when the rift in their relationship grew too deep to repair Jung broke off all contact with Freud and went through a period of self-examination which further cemented the convictions of his divergent views.³

For purposes of this discussion, Jung will be presented with less description than prescription. That is, his psychology of religion will be examined not for how it affected present day psychology of religion, as it probably cannot be said to have exerted substantial effects, but rather for how it should affect present day study. Like

Freud, Jung was rejected by the mainstream psychology of academia. However, as was argued in the previous chapter, Freud was still able to influence mainstream, academic psychology of religion, both then and now, because his promotion of the positivistic, scientific ideal through his psychoanalytic valuation of renunciation reiterated the second class status of religion and religious people which was endemic to mainstream study, then as now.

Although Jung claimed to be an empiricist his phenomenological stance set him apart from the positivist/operationist connotations of the empiricism which surrounded him. Jung writes:

Notwithstanding the fact that I have often been called a philosopher, I am an empiricist and adhere to the phenomenological standpoint. I trust that it does not collide with the principles of scientific empiricism if one occasionally makes certain reflections which go beyond a mere accumulation and classification of experience. As a matter of fact I believe that an experience is not even possible without reflection because 'experience' is a process of assimilation, without which there could be no understanding.⁴

In this way he is like William James who recognized the rational components of empiricism and whose "radical" empiricism championed all experience, not just operationalized sense perception, as the harbinger of truth about the world.

Jung's expansion of the boundaries of "empirical fact" included the contents of the unconscious, dreams, historical

documents, and religious creeds.⁵ Alexander and Selesnick note with dismay that "unfortunately Jung's orientation toward psychology was affected by mystical and esoteric thinking; it was ... a tendency to occultism, astrology and mysticism".⁶ They note further that this resulted in his work being more influential among "speculative philosophers, poets and religionists than in medical psychiatry".⁷

For Jung, the truth of any idea was not related to its verification through operationism. An idea is true by virtue of its psychological existence.⁸ Critics have accused Jung of being relativistic and irresponsible in this regard - "delusions exist but certainly they are not true".⁹ Jung feels that statements such as these betray an incredible arrogance which he would rather avoid. It is for this reason that he "insists upon the criterion of existence, both in the realm of science and in the realm of religion and upon immediate and primordial experience".¹⁰ He writes further: "Facts are facts and contain no falsity. It is our judgement that introduces the element of deception".¹¹ He illustrates this point further with the following comparison:

Psychology deals with ideas and other mental contents as zoology for instance deals with different species of animals. An elephant is true because it exists. The elephant, moreover, is neither a conclusion nor a statement nor a subjective judgement of a creator. It is a phenomenon. But we are so used to the idea that psychical events are willful and arbitrary products, ... that we can hardly liberate ourselves from the prejudiced view that the psyche and its contents are nothing but our own arbitrary invention or the more or less illusory product of assumption and judgement.¹²

Jung's view of the "truth" of various psychological entities, especially religious ideas, will be elaborated on in the discussion of Jung and psychologism at the end of the chapter.

As was presented in the above quote, Jung argues that the unwilling nature of many of the components of the psyche disallows for the typical Freudian argument that the religious components, especially, are willed into the service of the ego in its mediation between the id and the super-ego. Reducing the existence of God images in the psyche to personal motives, is as unacceptable to Jung as holding the cancer patient responsible for the cancer.¹³

Another parallel with William James is found in Jung's general view of science - both men had the ability to see the flaws of the tool they employed. In The Undiscovered Self, Jung writes:

Most of the natural sciences try to represent the results of their investigations as though these had come into existence without man's intervention, in such a way that the collaboration of the psyche - an indispensable factor - remains invisible.¹⁴

When it comes to understanding not just the natural world, but the individual human psyche, Jung argues that scientific knowledge must be laid aside. The law of averages will not lend to an understanding of the individual experience.¹⁵ On the other hand, Jung's study of Eastern cultures awakened him to a wholism which enabled him to understand the

collective nature of parts of the unconscious, for example. Coward argues that because of the modern scientific focus "on the minutia of empirical evidence, modern psychology often lost sight of the larger whole."¹⁶ In this way the "emphasis upon the holistic or collective nature of the unconscious was seen by Jung as one of his major contributions in helping to restore the balance between the part and the whole in modern, Western thought."¹⁷

Employing this critical view of science, injected with a healthy dose of theoretical musing, self-exploration, and and myriad background research in the folklore, anthropology and religion of Eastern, African, European and North American cultures, Jung's psychology of religion can be seen as probably the richest and most productive of any before or after him. As with Freud, Jung's general theories will only be expounded upon when his more particular theories of religion require further explanation. It should be noted that in some ways this is an artificial separation, as much of Jung's general theory evolves around the religious life of the human psyche. This point will be addressed later in the chapter.

The most important aspect of Jung's psychology in general, and his psychology of religion in particular, is the theory of the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is a racial heritage of images or archetypes.

These represent universal human reactions to typical situations such as fear, struggles against superior power, relationships between the sexes and between children and parents, hate, love, birth and finally death. Writes Jung: "Although we human beings have our own personal life, we are yet in large measure the representatives, the victims and the promoters of a collective spirit whose years are counted in centuries".¹⁸ The key to healthy personality development is to search for objects in the external world which can become symbolic and personal representations of the collective archetypes within, to raise the unconscious archetypes to conscious awareness, and to strike a balance between the opposite forces of the archetypes by unifying them under the God/Self archetype. The special implications of this archetype will be discussed shortly.

The process of symbol formation is called individuation and for Jung it was very much a religious process. He views the religions of the world as cultural efforts to supply creeds and images which could be used in the symbol forming process of individuation. "Religions in their concrete forms are crystallizations of the archetypes present in the collective unconscious".¹⁹

The archetypes are independent elements which arise unwilling in the form of the recurring themes and images of world religion folklore and myth.²⁰ The God/Self archetype

was mentioned earlier as the unifying archetype and it, of course, has particular significance for religion. Jung describes the archetype in the following passage:

There is in the unconscious an archetype of wholeness which manifests itself spontaneously in dreams, etc. and has a tendency independent of the conscious will, to relate all other archetypes to this center. Consequently, it does not seem improbable that the archetype of wholeness occupies as such a central position which approximates it to the God-image. The similarity is further borne out by the peculiar fact that the archetype produces a symbolism which has always characterized and expressed the Deity ... 21

For Jung, the God archetype, if truly individuated, eventually becomes the Self, uniting the opposing forces of the collective unconscious. He notes that one of the more effective images for symbolizing the God/Self archetype is the mandala, which as a circle, is equal and balanced in every way.²²

Religion, then, plays a central role in Jung's theory of the healthy psyche and in his prescriptions for the unhealthy psyche. This is not to say that he is not critical of the religious institutions of the twentieth century. In many ways he feels that modern Christianity, especially, has failed to provide images that could become individuated representations of the various archetypes including the unifying archetype of the God/Self. In this way modern Christianity has contributed to the twentieth century malaise of the Western hemisphere.²³

The major religious traditions of Western culture, that

is the Jewish and Christian traditions, have failed to provide adequate images for the conscious accessing of the unconscious archetypes, resulting in mass projection. Western culture is too extroverted in this way and has lost touch with the inner psyche, causing an unhealthy psychical imbalance. Jung sees the popularity of Eastern religious traditions in North America, especially, as indicative of this need for balance with the internal and the external. 24

The doctrines and creeds of Western religious traditions reflect this extroversion in that they have become progressively codified "and in so doing have externalized themselves to such an extent that the authentic religious element in them ... has been thrust into the background". 25 Religious traditions and convictions are no longer based on inner experience but on "unreflecting belief" which, says Jung, is "notoriously apt to disappear as soon as one begins thinking about it". 26 Belief is not an adequate substitute for inner experience.

Further shortcomings of Western traditions arise when the mythological symbolism (of Christianity in particular) is taken too literally and "comes into insufferable conflict with knowledge". 27 Jung notes: "Despite all the mental exertions of the councils and of scholastic theology, they failed to bequeath to posterity an intellectual

understanding of the dogma that would lend the slightest support to belief in it".²⁸ Creeds and dogmas are tools only, and it would seem that the creeds and dogmas available to Western peoples are proving to be inadequate ones.

As has been discussed previously, Jung believes that mental health results when the collective unconscious is in a state of balance between the archetypes of opposing forces, whether they be good and evil, masculine and feminine, light and dark. To individuate the archetypes one requires an image that can sustain this balance in order to form an adequate symbol. The images of Western traditions do not encourage this balance. One example of the imbalance encouraged by Christian doctrine is illustrated by the highlighting of the triune God.

The trinity allows for only one half of two very important pairs of opposites, the masculine half of the feminine/masculine pair, and the good from the good/evil pair. For the God/Self archetype to become truly individuated a balance must be struck. This requires Christian symbolism to acknowledge both the feminine and the evil aspects of the God, if it is to be of value to the Western psyche.

Jung notes that the Roman Catholic Church has acknowledged, to some extent, the value of the feminine pole

by utilizing the figure of Mary. Protestants, however, still tend to feel that the Assumption of Mary jeopardizes the authority of Jesus.²⁹ Both Protestant and Catholic alike refuse to acknowledge the evil pole of their God, even though many have argued that the evil side is obvious, especially in the Old Testament. Jung illustrates this last point by analyzing the Book of Job, published as Answer to Job, in 1954.

For Jung, the biblical story of Job points to the psychological truth that "Yahweh equals a totality of inner opposites".³⁰ Those who argue that evil arises from the human creation and not God are forgetting that "the Serpent in Paradise was not made by man and that Satan is one of the Sons of God, prior to man".³¹ Jung notes that if "Man were positively the origin of all evil, he would possess a power equal or almost equal to that of the good which is God".³²

Jung's suggestions often strike the orthodox as overstepping the boundaries of psychology in the worst way. Newton has noted that "while several thinkers have stated that people use their own gods, there is probably no one who has come so close as Jung has to saying that people also make their own gods".³³ This is a misreading of Jung that is difficult to avoid. For Jung, the God exists. He has experienced God and does not need to believe in God.³⁴ The symbols through which Jung has experienced this God are

those symbols which integrate the inner psyche and the external world - the mandala is one such symbol. The immergence of the mandala in the human psyche can be seen as an unconscious response to the split between good and evil; a striving for unity; "a compensation for ... psychic cleavage".³⁵ There are a number of symbols within Christianity that would also be appropriate (over and above the Trinity symbol, for example). Jung writes that there are plenty of places in scripture from which a point of departure and development of the Christian myth could be made but we let it grow stagnant.³⁶ In this way it may sound as if Jung is advocating that we are free to make our own symbols (rather than our own gods, as Malony states) however, even this adjustment is incorrect as Jung posits that only certain symbols will do (as outlined above). Further, the process is often two-way - sometimes a symbol chooses you.

In the end, Western society must curtail its external projections and come to grips with the needs of its psyche. "The development of the human consciousness demands a withdrawal of all attainable projections, ... no doctrine of God in the sense of a non-psychological existence can be maintained any longer."³⁷ This is not to suggest that God cannot exist outside the psyche, only that psychologists cannot properly speak of this God; it is inaccessible to human analysis in terms of our language. Jung explains:

We find numberless images of God, but we cannot produce the original. There is no doubt in my mind that there is an original behind our images, but it is inaccessible. We could not even be aware of the original since its translation into psychic terms is necessary in order to make it perceptible at all ... Why should we be so immodest as to suppose that we could catch a universal being in the narrow confines of our language? We know that God-images play a great role in psychology, but we cannot prove the physical existence of God ... If I keep to a statement that I can prove, this does not mean that I deny the existence of anything else that might exist beyond it.³⁵

Such opposition to the stifling Occam's Razor which encouraged behaviorists to deny the existence of consciousness, is refreshing to say the least. It also makes fairly clear Jung's position on psychologism:

I approach psychological matters from a scientific and not from a philosophical standpoint. In as much as religion has a very important psychological aspect, I am dealing with it from a purely empirical point of view, that is, I restrict myself to the observation of phenomena and I refrain from any application of metaphysical or philosophical considerations.³⁹

Jung's disparate use the terms "empiricism" and "science" as in the above passage has already been pointed out. It was noted that his empirical assumptions paralleled those of William James, as opposed to John Watson, for example. His assumptions about materialism differ from James' whose waffling on the matter often seemed to end with at least psychic/physical parallelism, occasionally lapsing into some type of reductive physiology. However both men agree that the reduction of religious experience to physiological mechanisms is foolhardy at best and dangerous at worst.

Jung fears that his call for the withdrawal of outward projections of God will be interpreted as a call for psychological materialism, which of course leads to physiological materialism by those who are so inclined. He writes:

If the historical process of the despiritualization of the world - the withdrawal of projections - is going on as hitherto, then everything of a divine or demonic character must return to the soul, ... At first the materialistic error seems to be inevitable. Since the throne of god could not be discovered among the galactic systems, the inference was that it had never existed. The second inevitable mistake is psychologism: if god is anything, he must be an illusion derived from certain motives, from fear for instance, from will to power, or from repressed sexuality.⁴⁰

The criticisms of Freud are obvious here. Jung's humbleness before ultimate concerns he could not fathom and Freud's arrogance in reducing ultimate concerns to the most simple variables he thought possible, remains the most marked difference in the two men's style and resulting psychologies. Jung sums up his views on materialism with an interesting solopsist twist:

It is an almost ridiculous prejudice to assume that existence can only be physical. As a matter of fact the only form of existence we know of immediately is psychic. We might well say, on the contrary, that physical existence is merely an inference, since we know of matter only in so far as we perceive psychic images transmitted by the senses.⁴¹

In sum, Jung's science of psychology involves a number of philosophical assumptions which reflect positively in his study of religion. Unlike Freud, Jung's entire theory of self-development is religious in nature. Religion is not to be replaced by science, though religious symbols and creeds

must be able to take the secular, scientific outlook of Western society into account in such a way that the symbols and creeds do not come into "insufferable conflict with knowledge". Related to this general positive outlook is Jung's refusal to allow science, especially psychology, to reduce God, for example, to some mental process. Jung did not allow his psychology of religion to become materialistic in this way. Further, although his science involves empiricist assumptions, these are markedly different from those assumptions underlying the logical empiricism of present-day psychology. In this way, his assumptions can be compared roughly with James' phenomenological approach. All of these aspects of Jung's science of psychology, in general, and religion, in particular, would be improvements over the present-day study. The humanistic psychology of transpersonal theory can be seen as an application of these improvements, and will be presented in the following chapter.

NOTES

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- 20 Jung, Answer to Job (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), p. 180.
- 21 Ibid., p. 177.
- 22 Jung, Memories, pp. 334 - 335.

23 Jung, Undiscovered Self, pp. 47 - 49.

24 These points are discussed further in Jung's Psychology and Western Religion, cited previously.

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31 Jung, Western Religion, p. 262.

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33 N. Malony (ed.), Current Perspectives in the of Religion (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), p. 62.

34 Jung, Interview: Face to Face (London: BBC, 1959).

35 Jung, Memories, pp. 334 - 335.

36 Ibid., p. 332.

37 Jung, Western Religion, p. 278.

38 Ibid., p. 259.

39 Jung, Psychology and Religion, p. 2.

40 Ibid., pp. 102 - 103.

41 Ibid., p. 11.

CHAPTER SIX

The decade of the sixties brought with it growing dissent over a number of issues and academic psychology was not exempt from the growing wave of criticism of the status quo, especially in the United States. When we last left academic psychology it was in the throes of behaviouristic fervour. Skinner had invented the "air crib" - "a large, soundproof, germproof, air conditioned box for giving children mechanized care for the first two years of life".¹ The generation raised in the air crib came of age in the sixties; the times were ripe for change.

In 1964 a number of disillusioned psychologists met in Connecticut to discuss their options. The group included Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Gordon Allport among others. In their reaction against the behaviourists, the group searched for alternatives. The other major force in psychology which, as described earlier, was flourishing outside the academy, was of course psychoanalysis. Maslow writes that Freud could at least be credited for looking at the right questions - the behaviourists "not only had no answers but [they also denied] the very questions themselves".² However, Freud, of course, was not such an improvement as, in Maslow's words, "psychoanalysis often comes perilously close to being a nihilistic and value-denying philosophy of man" - a philosophy this group

of dissenters was reacting against.³

Dissatisfied with the prevailing views of both the behaviourists and the psychoanalysts, the group resolved to form a new movement – the "third force" of humanistic psychology. The new movement was very much influenced by Husserl's phenomenology. His "radical theory of subjectivity ... had its impact upon humanistic psychology by emphasizing the phenomenology of one's self, the conscious experience of one's own individuality".⁴ This theory is of course similar to that found in the works of James and later, Jung.

In the rebellion against a "natural science interpretation of human psychology", the humanists were able to agree on a number of issues.⁵ Kendler discusses these below:

By rejecting the tenets of natural science which place such a heavy reliance on public (objective) observations, humanistic psychologists feel free to accept verbal reports of self-observation as reflecting the inner experiences of a person ... The core subject matter of humanistic psychology is conscious experience but the methodological requirements for observing and interpreting mental events are more relaxed – a humanistic psychologist might say less compulsive – than the criteria employed by natural science psychologists.⁶

The American Association for Humanistic Psychology gives four principles which guide the movement, including "a centering of attention on the experiencing person"; on the human qualities of "creativity, valuation and self-realization"; on meaningfulness as a criterion for the

selection of areas of study and the methodology employed; and on the development "of the potential inherent in every person".⁷ The implications for a humanistic psychology of religion are clearly positive, especially with regards to the concern of the present thesis, evidenced in the third principle of the Association. Meaningfulness, not "objectivity", is the whetstone against which research decisions are judged as appropriate, and viable.

The confidence in the ability of humanity to strive for and attain positive psychological goals through the triumph of the will, remains one of the trademarks of humanistic psychology and is especially evident in the writings of Abraham Maslow (1908 - 1970). Maslow writes that his interest in the positive potential of humanity began in the thirties. He found the "behavioristic, positivistic, 'scientific', value-free, mechanomorphic", psychology of the time unable to rise to the task of answering the questions he was asking.⁸ This does not mean that he had given up on science per se. Indeed, he was able to see in science the very human triumphs he was interested in. He writes:

The history of science, or at least of the great scientists, is a story of sudden and ecstatic insights into the truth, truth which is then slowly, carefully, cautiously validated by more pedestrian workers ... I think, for instance, of Kekule's dream of the benzene ring ... Too many people of limited vision define the essence of science as cautious checking, validating of hypotheses ... ⁹

These ecstatic insights or "peak experiences" became

the focus of Maslow's work, and of special interest to this particular presentation, he noticed that such experiences were typically religious in nature.¹⁰ He envisioned a new scientific psychology that could appropriately deal with these experiences - "all that is needed for science to be a help in positive human fulfillment is an enlarging and deepening of the conception of its nature, its goals, and its methods."¹¹ He writes further:

[Science] need not abdicate from the problems of love, creativeness, value, beauty, imagination, ethics and joy, leaving these altogether to "non-scientists", to poets, prophets, priests, dramatists, artists, or diplomats. All of these people may have wonderful insights, ... and may even be correct and true much of the time. But however sure they may be, they can never make mankind sure ... Science is the only way we have of shoving truth down the reluctant throat. ¹²

Maslow obviously recognized the power of science in the Western secular world. At the same time, however, he decried the split between the religious sphere and the scientific sphere which had resulted in the power of the latter. He argues that:

This separation [of the religious and the scientific] permitted nineteenth century science to become too exclusively mechanistic, too positivistic, too reductionistic, to desperately attempting to be value-free. It has mistakenly conceived of itself as having nothing to say about ends or ultimate value or spiritual values. This is the same as saying that these ends are entirely outside the range of natural human knowledge, that they can never be known in a confirmable way ... ¹³

These concerns indeed relate to the very complaints this thesis has been addressing. The results of this dichotomized worldview have been evidenced in the dull and meaningless

results of mainstream, academic psychology of religion.

Maslow is even more cutting when he criticizes this attempt at a value-free science:

[This attempt] dooms science to be nothing more than technology, amoral and non-ethical (as the Nazi doctors taught us). Such a science can be no more than a collection of instrumentalities, methods, techniques, nothing but a tool to be used by any man good or evil, for any ends, good or evil.¹⁴

Religion suffers in this dichotomy as well. Paralleling the concerns of Jung, Maslow writes that the religion isolated from the factual world will lose its meaningfulness as it is made to be the enemy of scientific knowledge.¹⁵

Maslow viewed spirituality as the "highest of human possibilities".¹⁶ For this reason he held that even humanistic psychologies would not be complete until they had been "refocused and brought under a spiritual or transpersonal point of view".¹⁷ He writes:

I should say also that I consider Humanistic, Third Force Psychology to be transitional, a preparation for a still "higher" Fourth Psychology, transpersonal, transhuman, centered in the cosmos rather than in human needs and interests, going beyond humanness, identity, self-actualization, and the like.¹⁸

Transpersonal psychology became the fourth force envisioned and in some ways created by Maslow and the third force humanists. The works of Jung were utilized as models for the new, broader study of consciousness which encompassed not just Western ideas but Eastern schools of thought as well. In the following passage Robert Ornstein

describes the return to the original questions of psychology which characterizes the transpersonal movement;

Psychology is, primarily, the science of consciousness ... Psychologists are now returning to the essential questions of our discipline: How does the mind work? What are the major dimensions of human consciousness? ... What means are there to extend human consciousness? These questions have not yet had a full treatment within academic science, having been ruled out of inquiry by the dominant paradigm of the last 60 or so years. ... [Unfortunately], teachers and their students become sidetracked in their study, and wind up investigating One Minor Aspect of One Possible Means of Approaching Psychological Problems. The central aim, the context, the original impetus to study consciousness may be forgotten. There is, therefore, a continuing need to reestablish the basis of psychology and to link research with that of other students of consciousness, such as William James and Carl Jung, and the "esoteric" psychologies of other cultures such as Sufism, Yoga, and Buddhism.¹⁹

Note that the transpersonal expansion Eastward is accompanied by a return to the Western past, through the appeal to James, for example. It should also be noted that the transpersonal theorists have taken heed of Jung's warning against the carte blanche adoption of Eastern philosophy and religious tradition by Westerners.

Paralleling the views of the humanistic movement out of which transpersonal theory developed, Charles Tart writes that although the scientific veneer of mainstream academic psychology has hindered adequate study of things "spiritual", science cannot be abandoned by the West, in favour of yoga meditation, for example.²⁰

We are twentieth-century Westerners, with science in general and scientific psychology in particular as important parts of our backgrounds. Some of us may be able to drop that background and accept a particular transpersonal psychology as our primary frame of reference. But for many of us, what we learn about the

spiritual side of ourselves must at least coexist with, and preferably integrate with, our heritage of Western science and culture.²¹

Michael Washburn describes the essence of the transpersonal movement in the introduction to his book The Ego and the Dynamic Ground:

A chief objective of transpersonal theory is to integrate spiritual experience within a larger understanding of the human psyche. Transpersonal theory thus is committed to the possibility of unifying spiritual and psychological perspectives. In being committed to such a unification, however, transpersonal theory is not advocating a program of reduction, of the spiritual to the psychological ... Although [it] aims at a genuine synthesis of psychological and spiritual perspectives rather than a one-sided reduction ... it does not consider these two perspectives to be absolutely on a par. Rather, it accords a higher status to the spiritual standpoint. For transpersonal theory assumes that spiritual experience is expressive of humanity's highest potentialities.²²

The transpersonal movement calls for a bridge between the Western, scientific attitude and the spiritual psyche or soul of Western society. The construction of this bridge was attempted by James but was abandoned by his followers in favour of his more physiological and behavioural concerns which could more adequately mesh with the scientific character psychology was trying to acquire for itself. Jung broke with Freud in his attempt to build a similar bridge and in many ways Jung's bridge stands almost complete. Unfortunately it remains unused, ignored by the scientific psychology which was bred in James' day and which now flourishes in the academy, rising from its lair only on

occasion to defend itself as a science against those who charge that it is not. Such defensiveness by the questionable science does not encourage bridge building when things spiritual (and therefore non-scientific) loom on the other side of the chasm to be bridged.

It would seem then, that the transpersonal theorists have their work cut out for them. First, how to convince scientific psychology that a spiritual side exists to bridge with? Second, how to convince scientific psychology that if a spiritual side exists, it needs exploring with methodology true to the nature of the spiritual? As argued in the introduction of this thesis, present day, mainstream, academic psychology no longer seems to want to ignore the spiritual side.²³ However the second question still poses difficulties. Methodological rigour encouraged by unexamined presuppositions about the efficacy of empirical and material philosophies has resulted in a psychology of religion which is dry, unenlightening and bereft of significance for the subject of such study - the person having the religious experience.

Tart believes that psychology can be salvaged if it recognizes its confusion of "the powerful tool of scientific method with [the] philosophy of physicalism".²⁴ It is the purpose of this thesis to draw such philosophical assumptions out. If they remain unexamined they may prove to

be harmful, especially when they underlie the study of subjects which do not conform to their implied standards. For example, the assumption Tart calls "physicalism" asserts that "reality exists independently of our perception of it" and further that such a physical reality is the ultimate reality.²⁵ A good scientific psychologist, working under this assumption, will explain phenomena in ways which use physical, materialistic descriptions. If this same psychologist then uses these explanations when studying religious experience, certain difficulties of the type described above will result. People typically describe religious experiences as internal and spiritual. Such experiences do not conform then to the empirical, materialistic assumptions underlying the psychologist's philosophy of science. "Thus, to a physicalistic philosophy [such experiences] are epiphenomena, not very worthy of study unless they can be reduced to a physical basis."²⁶

What follows is an example of transpersonal theory's treatment of spiritual life through the psychology of Washburn. The philosophy of science underlying his transpersonal theory is not one that reduces levels of explanation to the physical only, and it is not one that maintains either a) that empirical, objective observations of the spiritual are the most valuable way to gather knowledge or b) that empirical, objective observations can even be made about such phenomena. As has already been

highlighted by Washburn, the theory resulting from such a variant philosophy of science refuses to revert to psychologism. The spiritual cannot be reduced to the psychological.

In the same way that Jung's treatment of religion was difficult to tease out from his more general theory, transpersonal psychology typically involves the study of religious experience as it is manifested in the larger realm of the development of the self. Indeed, the very nature of the fourth force, as Maslow envisioned it, was a science of psychology that was the spiritual. Again, as with Jung, the transpersonal movement can be seen to have had little effect on mainstream academic psychology of religion. As has been argued previously, the new cognitive psychology of mainstream academia is of course nothing really new at all. It still embodies the assumptions present in the behaviourist movement, and as such is unreceptive to the humanist movement that criticizes those assumptions.²⁷ Due to this state of affairs, Washburn's transpersonal theory will be presented in terms of what it can offer to improve upon the mainstream academic psychology of religion.

Washburn models his transpersonal theory after Jung's dynamic and archetypal approach,²⁸ which he calls the "dynamic dialectical paradigm". Elements of the more classical Freudian conception of repression are also

involved. There are three main characteristics of the approach, two of which are evident from the title of the paradigm. First, the paradigm is dynamic in that it focuses on the development of the ego in its interaction with the dynamic unconscious. The dynamic unconscious manifests itself both in psychological and spiritual expression. "It is assumed that these two expressions are not effects of two different dynamic realities but are rather two different modes of appearance of the same power, the power of the Dynamic Ground. Libido and spirit, ... are ultimately one."²⁹ Second, the paradigm is triphasic in its conception of ego development. The three phases are outlined below.

The pre-egoic or body-ego stage is the first stage and it corresponds with Freud's pre-Oedipal phase. During this stage the individual responds instinctually, is open to the "maternal presence" of both the physical parent and the mental archetypal image, is aware of the numinous qualities of life, and typically thinks in "creative but crude" cognitive images.³⁰

The egoic or mental-ego phase marks the second and longest phase of individual development. It begins in what Freud called the latency period and reaches its peak near the end of adolescence after which it levels out and becomes the chief characteristic of the ego's development for most people, until they die. The ego at this point has the

following characteristics: a system of repression which essentially removes the ego from the Dynamic Ground with which it was initially intimate; a corresponding estrangement with the physical and instinctual; a veneer of ego independence which appears to have resulted in a healthy personality capable of formal operations at the cognitive level; and finally a nagging doubt, a crack in the veneer, which typically makes its appearance in the mid-life crisis and which may serve as the impetus for moving to stage three.³¹

The third stage is the transegoic stage, the point of integration. Freud's typically deterministic, negative outlook does not provide a corresponding psychodynamic stage. If the doubt expressed in the second stage has a large enough impact, the journey towards integration may begin. The journey usually begins with a religious conversion experience - the Dynamic Ground - the locus of the spiritual - begins to reassert itself. At this stage there is finally a transcendence of "the dualisms that plague the mental ego - eg., the dualisms of mind and body, thought and feeling, logic and creativity, civilization and instinct, and, most basically, ego and Ground".³² The characteristics which accompany this transcendence are similar to those Maslow found to accompany peak experiences. The Jungian ideal of the marriage of the opposites within the collective unconscious, and in turn the balance between

the inner self and the external world is represented at this stage of "the rooting of the ego in the Ground and [the] felicitous infusion of the ego by the Ground".³³

Finally, the third aspect of Washburn's model is its dialectical quality, which results directly from his conception of the triphasic interplay between ego and Ground described above. The pattern of ego development is not a linear one but rather one of "negation, return and higher integration".³⁴ The young ego in the first stage precipitates the second stage by negating the Ground. If the second stage results in enough psychic discomfort at the separation between the ego and the Ground then the seeds have been sown for the integration of the third stage, though this stage is seldom completed. In this way the classical thesis, antithesis, synthesis pattern is recapitulated. It should be noted, however, that the synthesis is not a "union of equals; rather, the ego, in submitting to nonegoic life, is rerooted in the Ground and becomes a servant of spirit".³⁵

The bipolar nature of the psyche exemplified by the egoic split with the Ground is further discussed by Washburn in chapter one. He writes:

The non-egoic pole is the source of all dynamic, biophysical, instinctual and affective potentials, and it is the point of origin of creatively spawned images and symbolic meanings as well. In contrast, the egoic pole is the center of operational cognition and rational volition. The egoic pole is the part of the

psyche that is responsible for forging concepts, performing analyses and inferences, ... and in general, operating in a logical, discursive, deliberate, linear, and durational manner.³⁶

In some ways the above dichotomy resembles the id/ego model of classical psychoanalysis. Washburn points out, however, that the resemblance fails in so far as Freud's id is solely unconscious, base and primitive. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious is closer, in that like the non-egoic pole it is "the source of psychic energy, the basis of instinctual life, the procreator of the emotions, and the spawner of timeless archetypal images ... it is also the source from which spring higher symbolic meanings and spiritual possibilities".³⁷

The picture of the spiritual life as presented above, is one of healthy striving for a return to psychic unity. The religious quest is healthy and is encouraged. The reuniting of the ego with its Dynamic Ground implies that the highest spiritual state is the original state which one should strive to return to. There is great difficulty implied in the journey back, "the odyssey of the hero into the underworld",³⁸ but the difficulties encountered are not viewed as indicative of underlying pathology, for example. Returning to the Dynamic Ground is recognized as a necessary evil - the long, dark night of the soul - a descent which marks the beginning of the final return. Washburn calls it "regression in the service of transcendence".³⁹ Further, the return is not one of the triumphant ego, but one of the

prodigal son. The ego returns to the greater power to be a servant of the spiritual side of the dialectic.

From the preceeding, brief foray into Washburn's transpersonal theory, the following assumptions can be discerned. First, the terms discussed, both psychological and spiritual, are not reduced to merely physical, materialistic entities. Although the reunion of the ego with the Dynamic Ground implies a reunion of all opposites, including the mental and the physical, there is no triumph of the one over the other. If there is any triumph it is the eventual triumph of the Ground - the locus of the spiritual - over the repentant mental ego.

Second, the place of psychology is clearly delimited to avoid psychologism. The spiritual triumph of the Ground is a religious quest which can be represented in psychological terms, but cannot be reduced to those terms. As with Jung, the line between the two is thin, but discernable. The identification of the religious quest with the psychological concept of the reassertion of the Dynamic Ground, does not mean that the object of the religious quest is only a psychological reality.

Third, the terms used in Washburn's theory - "Ground", "ego", etc. - refer to the experiential, but they could not be "empirically" verified in a way that would satisfy the

empiricism at issue in the present thesis. Washburn's empiricism is more of the phenomenological type exemplified in James' "radical" empiricism. Jung emphasizes the same view when he champions the experience of God, for example, over the belief in God.

Tart articulates what a science of psychology would look like if it encapsulated the above assumptions in its underlying philosophy. He insists that the basic method of science could, and should, remain the same. In other words the principles of observation and testability, for example, would still be maintained but the narrow definitions of "observation" and "testability" previously encouraged by underlying assumptions of materialism and empiricism, would be avoided. The transpersonal science of psychology will be evaluated further in the conclusion section which follows.

NOTES

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3 Ibid., p. 7.

4 Kendler, Foundations, p. 407.

5 Ibid., p. 413.

6 Ibid., p. 413.

7 Taken from O. Strunk, Jr., "Humanistic Religious Psychology: A New Chapter in the Psychology of Religion", Current Perspectives in the Psychology of Religion, ed. H. N. Malony (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.:Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977) p. 31.

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11 Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (2d ed.; D. Van Nostrand Co., Ltd., 1968), p. viii of the preface to the 1st ed.

12 Ibid., p. viii.

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14 Ibid., p. 12.

15 Ibid., p. 12.

16 M. Washburn, The Ego and the Dynamic Ground: A Transpersonal Theory of Human Development (State University of New York Press: Albany, 1988) p. 2.

17 Ibid., p. 2.

18 Maslow, Towards, pp. iii-iv of the preface to the 2d ed.

19 R. Ornstein, The Nature of Human Consciousness: A Book of Readings (W. H. Freeman: San Francisco, 1973), p. xi.

20 C. Tart (ed.), Transpersonal Psychologies (Harper and Row: New York, 1975), p. 4.

21 Ibid., p. 5.

22 Washburn, Ego, p. 1.

23 See p. 1 of the introduction of this thesis.

24 Tart, Transpersonal, p. 5.

25 Ibid., p. 21.

26 Ibid., p. 21.

27 Washburn, Ego, p. 2.

28 Ibid., p. 4.

29 Ibid., p. 4.

30 Ibid., pp. 4-5.

31 Ibid., p. 5.

32 Ibid., p. 5

33 Ibid., p. 6.

34 Ibid., p. 6.

35 Ibid., p. 11.

36 Ibid., p. 13.

37 Ibid., p. 20.

38 Ibid., p. 20.

39 Tart discusses this issue further in
Transpersonal, pp. 22 - 36.

CONCLUSION

The psychology of religion practised in Western academia was shown to incorporate the following assumptions about science in its underlying philosophy. First, as to the place of science in studying religion, it was observed that if psychological explanations could be found for religious experiences then often these explanations were offered to reduce the religious experience to "nothing but" a psychological process. Attribution theory was found to be typical in this regard, representing what seems to be the historical trend of psychologism in mainstream, academic study.

Psychologism is very much tied to a second assumption held by the science of mainstream psychology: the assumption that materialistic explanations are the most valuable. Materialists view the world as essentially reducible to physical elements - the understanding of the world is best achieved by reducing one's level of discourse to the physical. Psychologism is a type of materialist reductionism which, depending on one's theory, can even result in reducing all psychological phenomena to the physiological (the discipline of physiological psychology comes to mind here). Religious experience is one of a number of human experiences which are reduced to mere psychological phenomena and often from there to physiological/neural

phenomena, by mainstream, academic psychology.

A third assumption underlying the science of psychology in present-day academia is reflected in both the epistemology and the methodology of the scientists. This is of course the assumption of empiricism which involves the view that a) knowledge about the world comes directly and objectively through sensory experience with little or no filtering or editing on the part of the subject who is having the experience and b) to study other subjects, the scientist must limit the effects of all the subjects' previous experiences and all the scientist's previous experiences by making external, observable, repeatable measures that will therefore be as "objective" as possible. The effects of such empiricism on the study of religion are typically negative as very few religious experiences are either external, observable or repeatable. Further, those aspects of religion which are external, observable and repeatable, are also unenlightening and often misleading (church attendance being the obvious example). Finally, in an attempt to move beyond the unenlightening, psychology sometimes studies those aspects of religion that are not external, observable or repeatable. Of course to legitimize such study, objective methods such as the questionnaire must be used (though the objective nature of the questionnaire has been challenged). Questionnaires are one of the most popular ways to operationally define whatever aspect of

religion is being studied with the result that the religious variable is often trivialized (see for example studies of mysticism where mysticism is operationally defined as a score of x on the "M" scale).

All of the above assumptions fall under the philosophy of logical empiricism which was adopted by psychology to legitimize its claim as a science. Psychology still clings to this philosophy, even though logical empiricism has been abandoned by virtually every other science. Logical empiricism was derived from the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, which has historical roots back through the positivism of Comte to the empirical tradition begun by Bacon. The rationalist tradition can be seen as contributing to present-day psychology through its dogmatic methodological rigour, exemplified by Kant.

In this way, present-day academic psychology is very much in a time warp. Psychology's more recent history has not helped to move the discipline much further along, as was illustrated by the perpetuation of psychologism, materialism and empiricism in the works of Watson and Freud. The works of James can be interpreted a number of ways. His concerns about psychologism, materialism and empiricism are clearly articulated in his psychology of religion, however, his general psychology was the more influential and here he vacillated continually, especially on the issue of

materialism. His physiological materialism was always accompanied by warnings about the necessity of specifying thought's object before one plunged in to the physiology of thought itself. However, present-day psychology's obdurate commitment to materialism makes for a particular editorial stance when the works of James are reviewed such that James' misgivings about materialism are seldom highlighted. Related to this is the relatively few citings of The Varieties of Religious Experience in history of psychology texts, compared to the citings of the Principles of Psychology.

The psychology of Jung was then presented in contrast to the preceding approaches. It was found that Jung's psychology involves assumptions which have a far more positive effect on his study of religion. Jung's entire theory of the individuation of the Self is based upon the religious process of symbol formation. There is no sense that religion must be overcome by a mature, scientific society, as was found in the theories of Freud and Watson. Further, Jung set up definite boundaries for his psychology. God was not to be reduced to a psychological archetype, for example. The archetype was an image of God. Jung's empiricism was similar to the radical empiricism of James. Jung championed experience above all else, and his definition of experience included both physical and mental, external and internal. He has no need to "believe" in God, for example, he knows God exists because of his

experience of God. Finally, Jung discouraged reductive materialism and gave the psyche - both conscious and unconscious - ontological reality, in this regard.

The humanist movement was presented as a continuation of the improvements in the psychology of religion that were found in Jung. The presentation of transpersonal theory included an articulation of what an improved science of religion would look like. Science could progress as usual, except it would abandon the materialist assumptions which have previously guided it. In this way the science could employ a phenomenological philosophy. The attempts at "objective" study would be tempered by a better understanding of the rational elements involved in the a priori assumptions of the observers in the study. The validity of the study would be judged "by the positive impact of [religious] experiences upon a person's life".¹ Wilshire sums up the philosophy behind a phenomenological program thus:

A central doctrine of phenomenology is that mental states are intrinsically referential and worldly, that they cannot be specified in isolation as elements of another 'realm' and that what they are as non-physical entities (assuming that this makes any sense at all) is at best a peripheral matter.²

Assuming that religious experiences are somewhat related to mental states, it would seem that a phenomenological science, of the sort described above, would avoid the methodological problems found in the mainstream, academic psychology of religion.

There have also been criticisms of mainstream, academic psychology from within the discipline itself. Gergen, a social psychologist, writes the following:

As we see, a single overarching model of human functioning appears to prevail throughout mainstream social psychology, a model that is derived from and sustained by prevailing meta-theoretical commitment. One might wish to defend this commitment on the basis that it has provided a degree of unity across a variety of highly diverse enterprises. It has furnished a paradigm within which science could demonstrate progression. Yet, if the central product of the science continues to be an elaboration and extension of a singular world-view, the science would seem to abnegate what many view as its fundamental aim, to expand understanding.³

Shames writes that since Watson, psychology has become the most "ideologically hardened of all the sciences".⁴ He continues:

... this obdurate commitment to empirical data - admitting virtually no other - and the experimental paradigm, has led psychology to an inverse relationship between the growing precision of its analysis and the shrinking significance - if not outright factitiousness - of the phenomena it treats.⁵

This seems to be especially true of the psychology of religion in mainstream academia.

The phenomenologist-based transpersonal science of psychology certainly seems to be a healthier one than mainstream, academic psychology, with regards to the above issues. The improvements are even more pertinent to the specific study of religious experience. However, there seems to be at least one fundamental assumption left, underlying

even transpersonal theory, that would delimit the study of religion. The general features of this assumption were described by Freud, in chapter five. This assumption is of course the two-part equation which reads: science equals masculinity, religion equals femininity.⁶ Freud was very adept at analyzing the relationship between the genders in modern society, he simply made the mistake of reifying these relationships through his theories of biological determinism (i.e., he confused the is/ought distinction).

Even transpersonal theory wants to maintain a scientific method which could test the results of theories to increase their predictive validity. Tart writes that transpersonal science must have theories which have "testable consequences ... If the predicted observations do not occur, then the theory must be rejected or modified, no matter how elegant, 'rational', or satisfying it is".⁷ This valuing of prediction and control to allow testability was at its height in psychology with the behaviourists, but as an ideal of general science it pervades all the psychologies discussed in this thesis to some degree. The transpersonalists, who have limited the degree of empiricism and materialism underlying their philosophy, still want to be recognized as a science, as defined above. A feminist review of the "genderization" of science, and consequently, religion, would criticize the claims of any science, transpersonal or otherwise, to fully understand

typically "feminine" experiences such as religion.

Keller describes the equation of science with masculinity by using examples of the language we use to describe science:

When we dub the objective sciences as 'hard' as opposed to the softer, ie., more subjective, branches of knowledge, we implicitly invoke a sexual metaphor, in which 'hard' is of course masculine and 'soft', feminine. Quite generally, facts are 'hard', feelings 'soft'. 'Feminization' has become synonymous with sentimentalization. A woman thinking scientifically or objectively is thinking 'like a man'; conversely, a man pursuing a nonrational, nonscientific argument is arguing 'like a woman'.⁸

She describes the once commonplace view that women "cannot, should not, be scientists, that they lack the strength, rigor, and clarity of mind for an occupation that properly belongs to men".⁹ She notes further that the women's movement has discouraged the open acknowledgement of the bias, but the above language examples show that the bias still exerts an effect.¹⁰

Other examples of the masculine genderization of science can be found in the way scientists have conceived of their object of study - nature. Bacon was particularly open about science and nature. He writes: "Let us establish a chaste and lawful marriage between Mind and Nature", and further, "I am come in very truth leading you to Nature with all her children to bind her to your service and make her your slave".¹¹ Male names for hurricanes aside, nature is feminine and it is up to the masculine science to conquer

and master her to allow the prediction and eventual control of her every whim.

Keller writes that "in characterizing scientific and objective thought as masculine, the very activity by which the knower can acquire knowledge is also genderized. The relation specified between knower and known is one of distance and separation."¹² Here Freud's analysis of the acquisition of gender roles becomes particularly pertinent. Feminist analyses of the genderization of science typically follow a psychodynamic explanation of one sort or another.

As a brief review of Freud's theory, male gender development is characterized by separation from the mother. To be male is to be separate from the primary caregiver. Feminine gender development involves identification with the mother. This basic difference in socialization marks the first step in demarcating masculine cognition as objective, with a distance between the knower and the known, and feminine cognition as identification - subjective and relational.¹³

Of special importance to the present thesis is the similarity between religious experience and femininity, which Freud made particularly clear. Even if his specific details have fallen into ill repute, the general idea that religious experiences tend to the subjective and relational

still holds. This relationship between things religious and things feminine leads to the negative evaluation of both by a masculine science. Keller summarizes:

If [science has become genderized] then an adherence to an objectivist epistemology, in which truth itself is measured by its distance from the subjective, has to be re-examined when it emerges that, by this definition, truth itself has become genderized.¹⁴

One of the major concerns that arises from a criticism of science and the attending attempts at "objectivity", is that of relativism. If one is questioning the usefulness of a masculine science to find the "truest" evaluation of religious experience for example, what principles is one using to evaluate "truth"? In other words, "If all knowledge is essentially independent of any objective content, then those who desire change can only point to their own subjectivist arguments in order to bring others around to adopt their preferred point of view".¹⁵

Many theories have been offered that attempt to argue both for the socially-constructed nature of science, for example, and for the ability to criticize that science, even though the criticisms themselves must be socially constructed.¹⁶ No theory seems to have satisfied both requirements yet but Sampson points in the direction such theories must start in:

While no clearcut constructionist position has emerged which we can simply adopt and follow, the overriding message of the preceeding attempts is clear and the

guidance to our continuing efforts unequivocal. Social constructions that become frozen in time and taken for granted, especially when they involve constructions that like personhood occupy a strategic position in reproducing societal arrangements, demand our scrutiny.. These are precisely the kinds of constructions that usually harbor the domination of one group by another while masking that very feature.¹⁷

Feminists would point out that the masculine construction of science harbors the domination of women. Keller writes:

Not only does our characterization of science thereby become coloured by the biases of patriarchy and sexism, but simultaneously our evaluation of masculine and feminine becomes affected by the prestige of science. A circular process of mutual reinforcement is established in which what is called masculine, and conversely, what is called feminine - be it a branch of knowledge [e.g., religion], a way of thinking or a woman herself - becomes further devalued by its exclusion from the special social and intellectual value placed on science and the model science provides for all intellectual endeavors.¹⁸

In this way, women especially are in a position to evaluate the "truth" of the construction which systematically dominates and devalues them, that is the masculine construction of science.¹⁹ Samson explains how such an ideological construction can be judged as either "true" or "false" in the following passage:

[An ideological construction] is true insofar as it accurately represents the reality of a given sociohistorical era or group. [In this way Freudian theory is true, for example.] It is false insofar as that truth may itself be a systematic distortion which serves the interests of some groups over others. At minimum, falseness exists whenever the given sociohistorical moment, with its particular practises and institutions, ... is reified and treated as though its forms were necessary, invariant, or natural.²⁰

It is hoped that by outlining the underlying assumptions of the methodology of mainstream, academic

psychology of religion in particular, and of science in general, that these assumptions will lose their stronghold, by being brought to a level of awareness that allows them to be evaluated and possibly changed. To borrow from Bakan:

My purpose is the same as the purpose of all intellectual enterprises: to contribute to emancipation. For, ... the science of psychology has been under the influence of [a number of] contextual factors in ways that are restrictive of development, and I hope, by offering such consideration, to work toward the removal of such influences.²¹

NOTES

1 Coward, Methodology, p. 134.

2 Wilshire, Phenomenology, p. 8.

3 K. Gergen, Toward Transformation in Social Knowledge (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982), p. 125.

4 M. L. Shames, "Lagging Behind the Papacy: Whither Psychology's Aggiornamento?", The Analysis of Psychological Theory: Metapsychological Perspectives, ed. H. Stam, T. Rogers & K. Gergen (Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1987), p. 26.

5 Ibid., p. 26.

6 Of course Freud split the religion side of the equation into those religions which were "renunciatory" and those that embodied "wish fulfillment", but it is still important to remember that both variables related to a phenomenon which was on the negative, feminine

side of the equation.

7 Tart, Transpersonal, p. 34.

8 E. Fox Keller, "Gender and Science", Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science, ed. S. Harding & M. Hintikka (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1983), p. 188.

9 Ibid., p. 188.

10 Ibid., p. 188.

11 From Ibid., p. 190.

12 Ibid., p. 191.

13 This demarcation is described further in M. F. Belenky, et al, Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind (New York: Basic Books, 1986) and C. Gilligan, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

14 Keller, Gender, p.198.

15 E. Samson, "A Critical Constructionist View of Psychology and Personhood", The Analysis of Psychological Theory: Metapsychological Perspectives, ed. H. Stam, T. Rogers & K. Gergen (Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1987), p. 47.

16 Samson cites the theories of T. Adorno, Negative Dialectics (New York: Seabury Press, 1973) and M. Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), for example.

17 Samson, Critical Constructionist, p. 47.

18 Keller, Gender, p. 202.

19 S. Harding defends this sort of standpoint theory in "Ascetic Intellectual Opportunities", Science, Morality and Feminist Theory, ed. M. Hanen & K. Nielsen (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1987), p. 82.

20 Samson, "Cognitive Psychology as Ideology", American Psychologist (July, 1981) 36:7, p. 731.

21 Bakan, Politics, p. 127.

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