

Missiological Implications Deriving from the Combination of Anthropology, Psychology, and Religion

by Jane Thayer

- I. Anthropology and psychology contrasted
 - A. They ask different questions.
 1. The Human Relations Area Files (H. Barry 1980) have information concerning many everyday behaviors of people around the world. Collected largely by anthropologists.
 2. Dealing primarily with observable behavior, these data are not of particular interest to psychologists, who want more abstract information. (X-320) *& experience & feelings & personality type*
 - B. They have different methodologies.
 1. The anthropologists (comparative religionists) are primarily limited to what they can observe or to historical study of past events. (Sharpe 99)
 2. Psychologists can in a sense cause things to happen and observe by implication. (Pulling habits out of rats) (Sharpe 99) *staged experiment* *altered states of being*
- II. Contemporary interest in religiosity/spirituality
 - A. Interest grows out of human development, which is psychology's domain. *SUPREMACY VALUE*
 - B. Psychology's interest in religion began at its own beginning.
 1. Psychology of religion began with great enthusiasm at the beginning of the century.
 2. Interest dropped for 50 years following the entrance of behaviorism; by 1930s psychology of religion was "in total eclipse." (Hay 1985)
 3. In the mid-1970s the American Psychological Association started a special-interest group for "psychologists interested in religious issues." Growing rapidly. (Collins 222).
- III. Review of James's Varieties of Religious Experience (*→ 1902*) - *widely translated, translated*
 - A. Where James fits with other psychologists.
 - B. Biographical information on William James *→ went to Harvard.*
 - C. What prompted the writing of the book: Gifford Lectures *→ Principles of Psych 1890 → Dewey & Pierce → Pragmatism*
 1. Preparation. Data and health
 2. Audience. Typical lectures, from 60 down to 15; his, from 250 ending with 400. (Hay 1985) *version*
 - D. Purpose: To defend "experience" against "philosophy" as being the real backbone of the world's religious life and to make the reader believe that although all the special manifestations of religion may have been absurd (creeds and theories), yet the life of it as a whole is mankind's most important function. (Condensed quote. In Rambo 1982)

Psychoanalysts → attached
 Behaviorists → volgan
 ↳ epiphenomenal.
 projectus

read conversion → wholeness. More realistic & ultimately more whole

- E. His introductory lectures. Studying the pathological. His tone.
- F. James's two categories of religious types are the "healthy-minded" and the "sick soul." *guilty, morbid, sin, 2 story, 2nd story - optimistic, one story world*
- G. How James views conversion; most lengthy topic at 88 pages.
- H. James's personal stance on religion. *Removed - detached - Methodist without a Savior. Conversion → wholeness*

IV. Why psychology needs anthropology

- A. Psychological research may be culture-bound if it is tested only in one culture. (Child 1984)
 1. Triandis & Lambert, 1980-81 have a handbook of cross-cultural psychology; summarizes replications on many topics. (Child 1984)
 2. Overemphasis on nativist theories of child development, attributing to genetic factors or presence or absence of some universal process that which is culture-caused. (CC 1984)
 3. Example of G. Stanley Hall's "storm and stress" and M. Mead's observations (Alexander 1984, 332) *Coming of Age in Samoa.*
- B. Cross-cultural replications can sometimes "unconfound" variables. *Robert Devereaux*
- C. Cross-cultural replications can sometimes separate individual and contextual factors. (CC 1984)
- D. Successful cross-cultural replications produce robust hypotheses. *Kohlberg - 75 male white → generalizations (need to get)*

V. Why anthropology needs psychology

- A. Some anthropological theorists have found behavioristic and psychoanalytic concepts useful in developing their accounts of culture. (Child 1984)
- B. Cognitive structuralism's interest in the deep structure of the mind is dependent on psychology.
- C. Anthropological issues associated with human development look to psychology for understanding.
- D. Research methodology with human subjects benefits from psychological research methodology and findings.



VI. Missiological implications of combining anthropology, psychology, and religion.

- A. Major aspects of religiosity/spirituality are centered in the domains of psychology.
 1. Missionaries and leadership training--Are they dealing with spiritual growth?
 2. Glen Johnson and Fowler's faith interview protocol and Mezirow's perspective transformation.
- B. One of the goals of missiology is conversion, a psychological (in part) phenomenon.

- 5) Conversion
- 1. Personality Dev & Culture = Noting Connection
- 2. Pathology & Culture.
- 3. Methodology - Rorschach, TAT,
- 4. Child Recurs

- 1) Crosscultural Counseling
 - { D. Augsburger
 - { D. Hesseltine
- 2) J. Joenen - insight

VII. A few sources

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- Hay, D. 1985. Re-Review: William James' The Varieties of Religious Experience. The Modern Churchman 27 (2):45-49.
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- Perry, R. B. 1948. The Thought and Character of William James. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
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Life Spans of Psychologists Who Dealt with Religion

